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some to her father; with the birth of Elizabeth it became superfluous, and she was in some danger of the block. She submitted at length; signed away her rights; and, of course, succeeded in due time quite naturally, as Elizabeth succeeded her, in contempt of all previous fuss and of the fact that the sisters' claims were mutually exclusive. But *les choses les plus souhaitées n'arrivent pas*, or if they do it is never, we are told, at the right time. Mary had waited nearly twenty years for her triumph; she went into eclipse a young girl, and emerged a middle-aged spinster, allowed to begin life when it was too late. She seems far more essentially an old maid than Elizabeth, although she married; indeed what could be more old-maidish than that tremulous marriage, "not of the flesh," with the young man whose father she had been betrothed to thirty years before—the young man who had hoped so long to be let off this duty, but who, when compliance had proved unavoidable, treated the middle-aged Queen with respectful kindness, "more like a son than a spouse." There is something shadowy about *The Spanish Marriage*. What a different place it might hold now in the school-books had the child of which Mary was so cruelly twice disappointed after all been born! But *les choses les plus souhaitées n'arrivent pas*. And from an aesthetic point of view no conclusion could surpass the last years of the solitary woman, "now brought down to desolation," with nothing to fix her eyes upon but her own death and the accession of her enemy. Thus "Bloody Mary" gave way before "England's Elizabeth."

It is a perfect failure; but perhaps it could not have been made to fill the book unless the author had drawn pretty largely on imagination. Miss Simpson has, on the whole, repressed such impulses; history, she remembers throughout, is required of her, and must be stuck to. So she gives a generous proportion of her space to Lady Jane Grey, and to Wyatt's rising—the second immediately, the first remotely, concerned in her subject, yet it seems a pity. Such episodes cut up the book, which would have been scrappy even without them. Then, it is a weak point of the "occasion" she is dealing with that it should be, in itself, so futile. The usual details of ceremony, the usual enumeration of clothes, plates and dishes, the usual gratification of everyone at any show of good breeding in a royal personage—they are not, after all, much of a

climax. The long-drawn melancholy sequel—at least half of the real subject—is crammed into a page or two, the end abrupt. It is hard to see what could have been done about it. *The Spanish Marriage* was almost bound to be an awkward book—too long for its nominal theme, unless it was to have been minutely documented, a mere "source-book," and too short, if handled otherwise, to conceal patchwork. Miss Simpson has not evaded this problem, nor, for that matter, the slips of taste, the slight tendency to knowingness, which no light historian seems to be without. But she is—first of all merits—admirably readable. Her chapter-headings from Erasmus are perhaps rather a preciosity; but the last—one suspects that the others were put in to give it standing—is extremely neat.

GABRIEL: *Whither now?*

PETRONIUS: *To my closet.*

GABRIEL: *What to do there?*

PETRONIUS: *Why, I am asked for a marriage song, but I think I will rather make an epitaph.*

K. JOHN

FOR THE GARDEN

The Garden of To-day. By AVRAY TIPPING. *Martin Hopkinson. 7s. 6d.*

Shrubs and Trees for the Garden. By A. OSBORN. *Ward Lock. 2s.*

The dews are heavy, the evenings are closing in, the garden is a forest of gaudy untidiness, the Michaelmas daisies are showing buttons of pink and mauve: it is time to turn to the gardening books. Both *Shrubs and Trees* and *The Garden of To-day* were published in the spring of the year—a fatal error on the part of their publishers, for what gardener with his heart and mind on his plants can look at a gardening book between April and September? The gardening book, like the catalogue, is for autumn and winter, for the dark nights, for the aconite days when the lilies of July and the tulips of April and even the almond blossom seem too sweet and miraculous ever to come again. In summer there is not a moment to spare for Mr. Tipping on meconopsis or Mr. Osborn on conifers; the very word meconopsis casually seen on a page of *The Garden of To-day* will cause the gardener to leap up, leave Mr. Tipping, and rush across the lawn to look at those satin blossoms, as blue as speedwell, crinkling open in the shade of the Cox's Orange tree. The blue poppies will lead to the lupins, and the lupins to the campanulas, and Mr. Tipping will be forgotten. But in winter it is different: the gardener, flowerless, will rush to him as to a comforter, for in his pages the flowers of summer have, as it were, been pressed and preserved, faded but still fragrant, full of memories of one summer and the promise of another. He will look eagerly then for what Mr. Tipping has to say on meconopsis and Mr. Osborn on conifers. He will be glad of their guidance. "We talked, my dear, of having another Ceanothus on the south wall. Not Gloire de Versailles, something different. What do you think? Shall we look up Osborn?" Down comes Osborn—a vast tome, as thick as two bricks. It is a fatal moment, for turning the pages of the book to look up Ceanothus, the gardener will inevitably find himself confronted with one of its three hundred illustrations. It will, perhaps, be *Clethra Arborea*—the lily of the valley tree. His mind will fill at once with that silly, delicious, exclusively horticultural longing. He half closes the book. A lily of the valley tree! Would there be room for it beyond the summer-house if he sacrificed the buddleia? He meditates with delicious gusto. And so the gardening book leads to the catalogue and the catalogue to the cheque, and the cheque to joy and bankruptcy.

Mr. Tipping, since he is an old gardener, will know these sensations all too well. "I was given a garden when I was seven," he says. "I am now seventy-seven and I still garden." There is nothing so delightful as an old gardener: panama-hat and green slippers, old pipe and spectacles, the long, lost stare of contemplation at the earth, the short-sighted peer of discovery among the seed-pans and the alpines. Mr. Tipping's book is hardly for the old and sagacious. They know too much. "It aims at being of some assistance to the modest amateur who in large measure conducts and in some measure cultivates his little Garden of Pleasure." There is a charming courage in its title—*The Garden of To-day*—and a freshness of horticultural spirit in the book itself. Mr. Tipping has lived through the rottenest age of English gardening—the scarlet geraniums standing like red coats about the statue of Queen Victoria, the carpet beds in parks—and his

COMPETITION

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Believing that there is considerable interest among the reading public in the question of better bookshops and wishing to obtain practical suggestions as to possible innovations and improvements, F. J. WARD'S BOOKSHOP offers the following prizes of books (to be chosen by the prizewinners themselves up to the values stated) for an essay of not more than 500 words on the above subject:—

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flowers are those of an age of experiment and discovery. He writes of them modestly, with charm and taste, deploring and gently condemning the vulgar and the ostentatious. *The Garden of To-day* is a wise, quiet, practical book, a charming legacy from one age of gardening to another.

Mr. Osborn's book is vast and exhaustive. With its six hundred pages of advice and description, and its three hundred alluring photographs, it is pretty sure to be the cause of much pleasure and bankruptcy. There is scarcely a tree or shrub between *Abelia* and *Zizyphus* that is not described, habit, cultivation, hardness and all. So that there is no longer any excuse for the suburban hedge of variegated privet or for those dim shrubberies of laurel and laurestinus. The garden of to-morrow, indeed, ought to be even a little nearer heaven than the garden of to-day.

H. E. BATES

THE PRUNTY STRAIN

The Gaelic Source of the Brontë Genius. By CATHAL O'BYRNE. *Sands*. 2s. 6d.

popular with the farmers who carted their lime at the kiln. Soon he became an overseer and won the heart of Alice McClorey, the local belle. On the very morning that the girl was to have been married, much against her will, to a wealthy farmer, Hugh Prunty made a runaway match with her. His daring won approval, and he settled down to a comfortable existence, winning renown as a *shanachie* or storyteller. His conventional son, Patrick, inherited the gift for traditional narration in a mild degree. Mr. O'Byrne is on more deceptive ground when he compares Gaelic nature-poems of the third century with descriptive scenes from *Wuthering Heights*. But his method is certainly beguiling, for he takes some of these specimens from a manuscript made in 1763 by one Patrick O'Prunty, a scribe whom some authorities believe to have been an ancestor of the Brontë family. In a further essay entitled "Charlotte Brontë Goes to Confession," Mr. O'Byrne deals with the well-known Brussels episode. The romantic runaway match of the grandfather was a "mixed" marriage, for Alice McClorey was a Catholic. But the impulse of a lonely woman of genius scarcely needs so distant an explanation.