BOOKS OF THE DAY.

THERE is now very little difference between historical romance and romantic history. In the former, facts were embroidered on a story; in the latter, a story is woven out of the facts; but the net result is much the same. A new and attractive example of this second method, with its alternations from documentary evidence to purely imaginative scenes and conversations, is "THE WITCHERY OF JANE SHORE," the Rose of London. The Romance of a Royal Mistress. By C. J. S. Thompson. With twenty-one Illustrations (Grayson; 12s. 6d.). The author's previous books were largely concerned with witchcraft, magic, alchemy, astrology, poison mysteries, and so on. Perhaps he was drawn to the present subject by the fact that his heroine was accused of sorcery and witchcraft when she fell from her high estate after the death of her royal lover, Edward IV., and that the King's marriage to Elizabeth Grey was also alleged to have been brought about by the same occult means. Such matters, however, form merely incidental phases of Jane's life, as here related, and the word "witchery" in the title refers to the charms of her person and character.

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Contemporary biographical material, it seems, is somewhat scanty, though including some letters from Jane's persecutor, Richard, Duke of Gloucester (afterwards Richard III.). In the preface, by the way, the author calls him "the Protector," a phrase which, unaccompanied by a name, I thought was usually reserved for Cromwell. More reliance is placed on later writers, particularly Sir Thomas More, who actually saw Jane in her old age. He bears eloquent testimony to her good qualities and the beneficent use she made of her influence over the King. "The dry facts I have gleaned," writes Mr. Thompson, "I have endeavoured to blend with some of the more interesting traditions. . . . Thus, in a series of episodes, I have tried to portray Jane Shore and present some idea of her personality rather than write a history of her time." On these lines he has produced a very appealing portrait.

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While his fictional passages are a trifle crude, he imparts an element of plot to the early chapters, in telling how Lord Hastings, unable to secure Jane for himself, conceived the idea of setting his royal master on her track, with a view to bringing her to Court within range of his own advances; and how the scheme failed because the amorous King proved more constant in his love than Hastings had anticipated. In Part II. of his book—Jane Shore in Poetry and Drama—Mr. Thompson gives in full the narrative poems by Thomas Churchyard (1587) and Anthony Chute (1593); part of Heywood's play on Edward IV.; Michael Drayton's "heroicall epistles" put in the mouths of Edward and Jane in the Ovidian manner; several ballads, and Nicholas Rowe's "Tragedy of Jane Shore." Shakespeare himself, of course, as Mr. Thompson recalls, mentions "Shore's Wife" in "Richard III.," where he describes Jane chiefly from Richard's hostile point of view.

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Jane, we are told, was a daughter of one Thomas Wainstead, a mercer of Cheapside. Her beauty became a danger to herself, and, having frustrated an attempted abduction, her father married her off to William Shore, a worthy goldsmith and banker of Lombard Street. There she lived with him for some years, and thither, according to Michael Drayton, Edward IV. visited her husband's shop in disguise to make her acquaintance. I was not aware of all these intriguing facts and traditions when I plied the clerical pen many years ago in that auriferous thoroughfare. They might have helped to lighten the tedium of the office stool. "In the time of Henry VII.," we read, "some of the houses occupied by the goldsmiths were remarkable for their gilded and carved frontages, and above the doorways swung great sign-boards emblazoned with heraldic designs, or ornamented with figures of animals and birds." In my time, this taste for pictorial emblems still survived to some extent in Lombard Street, and every morning I passed in to my daily labours beneath the sign of the Pelican.

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Finally, Mr. Thompson gives an interesting note on the portraits of Jane reproduced in his book as illustrations. None of them, he points out, is authentic, since in her time portraiture as an art had scarcely begun in England. Those that we have, he says, are imaginary pictures, dating from about the middle of the sixteenth century. Among them are two preserved at Eton College, but neither corresponds with Drayton's description of one that he saw there about 1669, which has apparently disappeared. Others given in the book are from the royal collection at Hampton Court, from King's College, Cambridge, and from various wood-cuts and engravings. There is a tradition that Jane pleaded the cause of Eton College when Edward IV. was considering the appropriation of its revenues. Despite the poverty and privations of her later years, she lived to be over eighty, and died about 1532, in the eighteenth year of the reign of Henry VIII.

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Jane Shore was a type of those women who are dependent on the bounty or caprices of men — a type much rarer nowadays, though still not entirely extinct. How the modern changes in the social and political status of women came about is ably outlined in a book on the forerunners of the feminist movement—"WOMEN IN SUBJECTION." A Study of the Lives of English-women before 1832. By I. B. O'Malley, author of "Florence Nightingale, 1820-1856" (Duckworth; 15s.). Jane herself is not mentioned, and there is only a passing allusion to some of her contemporaries, "the ladies of the Paston family who flourished in the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., and Richard III." In fact, the period before the eighteenth century is touched on very lightly. The author concentrates more on the pioneers, such as Mary Wollstonecraft, who helped to lead their sisters towards freedom, than on individual women "in subjection," for these latter naturally did not as a rule make their names famous and are treated for the most part in the mass. Nevertheless, one or two of the subservient sort are singled out for special study, and notably a woman who, in a later day, might have been in the same position as Jane Shore if her royal lover had been more faithful—the fair and gentle Mary Robinson, better known as Perdita. Her pathetic story affords matter for comparison, incidentally, between the fourth George and the fourth Edward as a squire of dames, to the advantage of the earlier prince. These affairs, of course, are entirely subsidiary to the main purpose of the book, which is to give a general picture of women's lives in the age that preceded feminism. The chapters about the education of girls are among the most interesting.

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It is essential for the world's future comfort and security that the younger generation, which knew not the war, should be enabled to realise what it was like. There is, of course, no lack of literature on the subject, but much of it has been criticised as inaccurate or misleading, or not really typical, but merely representing the psychological reaction of some self-centred individual. No such complaint, I think, could be made against "TWELVE DAYS." By Sidney Rogerson. Foreword by B. H. Liddell Hart. With eight Drawings by Stanley Cursiter and a Coloured Frontispiece (Arthur Barker; 8s. 6d.). This strikes me as being among the best of the war books I have seen, for giving an objective and impersonal, and at the same time intensely vivid, picture of life in the trenches on the Western Front. As Captain Liddell Hart says: "This book is essentially communal; the author is merged in his battalion."

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As the title indicates, the scope of the narrative is strictly limited in time and place, but these twelve days in 1916 on one particular sector, not marked by any outstanding battle, but merely presenting the ordinary routine of the infantryman's life at the Front, form, as it were, a microcosm of the whole four years. "Every personal incident," says the author, "is real, and everything, including the conversations, is set down in its context." Captain Rogerson does not tell us whether his work is based on any diary kept at the time, or whether, after this long interval, he has drawn his picture from memory. In either case, the result is singularly arresting.

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In the last number of *The Illustrated London News* appeared some astonishing photographs of lions as domestic pets, at a South African homestead, associating with human beings on the most amicable terms. The big beasts are seen standing by a lady's tea-table just like a pair of well-trained dogs. These fascinating photographs, with many others taken in the same domestic surroundings or in the wild, occur in "LIONS WILD AND FRIENDLY." Presenting the King of Beasts as a companion and an interesting subject for photography in his natural habitat. The anecdotes of one who has reared lions as a hobby. By E. F. V. Wells, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S. With fifty-five Illustrations in photogravure (Cassell; 8s. 6d.).

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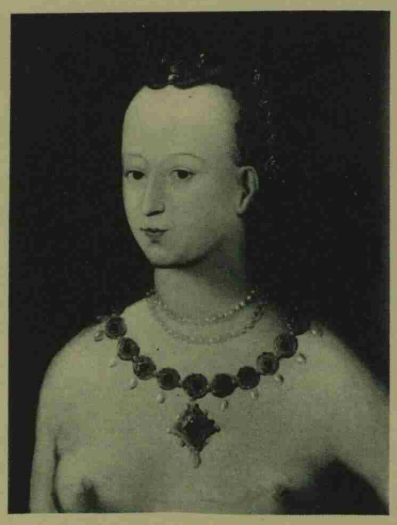
While appreciating to the full the wonder and beauty of the photographs, and the unique interest of the author's narrative; and while accepting his tributes to the geniality of the lion, even in its native haunts, when treated with tact and *savoir faire*; yet I must admit that I should feel a little nervous in approaching that house as a visitor. "Perhaps no other animal," writes Mr. Wells, "displays so varied a temperament or so many likes and dislikes towards human beings. For neither rhyme nor reason a lion will immediately show intense aversion to a person he has never seen before; on the other hand, to some who are equal strangers he will reveal the most friendly attitude." All the more I admire the author for rearing "thirty-three lions from cubhood to maturity." He reveals the character and mentality of these majestic creatures in quite a new light. I can easily believe that the lion would lie down with the lamb, if duly provided, at regular intervals, with a suitable quantity of cold mutton.

C. E. B.

"THE ROSE OF LONDON" IN THE DAYS OF EDWARD IV.: JANE SHORE—A PORTRAIT IN THE ROYAL COLLECTION AT HAMPTON COURT PALACE.

This picture, given as the frontispiece to Mr. Thompson's book, by permission of his Majesty, is an oil painting on panel measuring 3 ft. 3 in. by 2 ft. 5⅜ in. Along the top is an inscription—"Bakers (banker's) wife Mistris to a King." Mr. C. H. Collins Baker, the Surveyor of the King's Pictures, is of opinion that it is "not contemporary with Jane Shore, and can only be very dubiously connected with some earlier portrait." The costume suggests that it was painted about the latter half of the sixteenth century.

Illustrations reproduced from "The Witchery of Jane Shore." By C. J. S. Thompson. By Courtesy of the Publishers, Messrs. Grayson and Grayson. *(See review on this page.)*



TRADITIONALLY BELIEVED TO HAVE DISSUADED EDWARD IV. FROM DESPOILING ETON COLLEGE: JANE SHORE—A PORTRAIT ON PANEL, AT THE PROVOST'S LODGE, PROBABLY PAINTED IN THE LATER PART OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

ANOTHER PORTRAIT OF JANE SHORE PRESERVED FOR CENTURIES AT ETON COLLEGE: A PAINTING ON CANVAS, PROBABLY BY A FRENCH ARTIST ABOUT THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

"According to Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte" (in his "History of Eton College"), "no direct evidence can be adduced . . . that Jane pleaded the cause of Eton College when the King was considering the appropriation of its revenues. On the other hand, the fact that pictures of her have been preserved both at Eton and Cambridge for centuries gives some support to the tradition." The Cambridge portraits are at the Provost's Lodge of King's College. One is described as a copy of the Eton panel portrait, and is thought by some to represent Diane de Poitiers.