LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS BIGHTS AND SENSATIONS IN FRANCE, GERMANY AND SWITZEBLAND. By Edward Gould Buffum. Received from Claxton, Remsen

& Haffelfinger. The author of this series of sketches was

well known as a journalist of much ability. He was attached to several of the leading papers of the United States, and distinguished himself as a vigorous and forcible writer on a vast number of topics. In 1858 he went to Europe, and finally settled himself in Paris as head of a bureau of correspondence, in which employment he continued up to the time of his death, which occurred not many months ago, at the age of forty-one.

With the educated eye of an experienced journalist Mr. Buffum saw everything, and knew how to present the salient points of a landscape so as to bring the scene vividly before his readers. With all the vigor and force of a well-trained newspaper correspondent, his style is not without elegance, and his sketches are entertaining and animated in their descriptions of persons, places, and the characteristic scenery of Europe. As a specimen of this work, we quote the following description of roulette as played at Hombourg:-

"I shall never forget my initiation into the mysteries of roulette. It was many years ago, upon a Long Island race-course, where an individual in a white hat, half covered with crape, a very flash vest and extravagant guardchain, was inviting custom by the not very attractive assurance to his prospective victims that 'the more they put down the less they would pick up.' So far as the fact was concerned, he was perfectly correct, and it must have been that there was a veln of honesty running through his nature which would not permit him to lend himself to a deception. The wheel he used was a 'twenty-eight roulette,' with 'advantages' to the bank of a 'single' and 'double zero,' and an 'eagle'—three in thirty-one, or a little less than ten per cent. But when it is understood that, besides these apparent and legitimate advantages, the wheel was what is known to the initiated as a 'snapper,' and that by simply touching a little concealed spring the honest individual in the white hat and flash vest could cause the ball to drop into 'red' or 'black' at pleasure, it requires no very intimate knowledge of the doctrine of probabilities to perceive that the prospect of winning at that game was 'poor indeed.' I know that all the pocket-money I had been saving for months disappeared like dew in a June morning, and that I was obliged to content myself with short commons of candy and cinnamon cigars for a long time afterward.
"It is not probable that at Hombourg the game

of roulette is played with such a certainty of profit to the bank and loss to the player, but, on the contrary, the legitimate advantages are considerably less than they are at Baden-Baden where the 'percentage' of the bank is derived from a 'single' and 'double zero,' while at Hombourg the former only militates against the player. The game is played upon a long table, covered with green cloth, around which the players sit or stand. In the centre of the table is a large hole, in which the roulette is fixed. This consists of a moving cylinder, the periphery of which is divided into thirty-seven compartments, severally numbered from 0 to 36, and separated from each other by little wires of rass. The cylinder is put in motion by a push against one of the four branches, forming a cross, which surmount it. During its movement a little ivory ball is thrown in the opposite direction; and this spinning round for a minute or more upon the immovable part of the apparatus, finally falls into one of the thirty-seven compartments. These, besides, containing each a number, alternate in color—one being 'red.' the next 'black,' and so around the entire circumference of the cylinder. Upon the number into which the ball falls depends the winning or losing of all the stakes upon the table.

"At either end of the tapis vert, on each side

of the cylinder, the thirty-seven numbers which it contains are painted in three columns, and the other chances which may be staked upon desig-

'Now, although at first view roulette appears to be an exceedingly complicated game, it is in reality a very simple one. The basis of it—the principle on which it depends—is the evident fact that the ball, having been whirled by the finger of the operator around the cylinder, must finally fall into one of the compartments of the wheel; of these there are thirty-seven, and the object of the player, who wishes to bet upon single numbers, is of course to hit the winning one. In order to simplify the explanation of the chances at roulette, let it be supposed that a florin—the smallest sum permitted to be staked at Hombourg—be placed by thirty-seven different players, one upon each number on the lapis. One of these must evidently be the winning number, while all the rest must lose. Let it be supposed that the ball, after spinning until it ses its momentum, drops into compartment six, which is declared the winning number. The croupier then takes the florin from each one of the other numbers, amounting to thirtysix florins, and pays thirty-five of them to the fortunate better upon 'six,' the winning number. Were the game a perfectly even one, did the bank have no advantage other than the player, it will be readily seen that the latter should in this case receive thirty-six instead of thirty-five florins. But here is exhibited the 'percentage, which exists in all banking games, and which a Hombourg provides the means for Miding and these splendid salons, and keeping in order these magnificent gardens. This 'per-centage,' as will be seen, is one in thirty-seven, or two and twenty-six thirty-sevenths per cent. To make still plainer this matter of 'percent-age' which obtains in all banking games, and which is but little understood by the uninitiated. let it be supposed that a single player at roulette should place an equal amount, say one florin. upon each number from zero to thirty-six inclusive, it is evident that he will win upon one, and lose on all the others. Now, were the game played without any 'percentage' or 'advantage to the bank, the banker should take the money from each and all of the losing numbers, and place it upon the winning one. The player would then receive thirty-six florins in addition to the one he placed upon the winning number: and this making up the amount he had staked upon them all, he might thus continue playing without profit or loss to the end of time. at present the game is arranged, the player se one florin at each turn of the wheel and in this manner the bank would, sooner or later, eat up the largest capital, without the player having the slightest possible chance of winning. Now although, of course, no player would be slily enough to bet in this manner, where it is palpable that he must lose and can-not win, it must be borne in mind that, even though he bet upon but a single number, this same percentage, or advantage, of the bank, which cannot in any manner be avoided, still remains, and that it must in time absorb his capital in the bank. Suppose a player to bet upon a single number during a whole day, week, month, or year—now the probability is that, as there are thirty-seven numbers, one of which must win at each turn of the wheel, each one will make its appearance once in thirty-seven times. But should this be literally exemplified in the turning of the wheel, our player in each series of thirty-seven, during which he would lose thirty-six times and win once, would still be the loser of the florin; as in the thirty-six times that he lost he would lose thin sax florins, while the one winning would he my him back but thirty-five. Of course the chances never run so regularly as they are supposed to do in this case, but it the less illustrates the upon a single number, the

divide his stakes among several; on any of the three columns, conwelve numbers each, or upon the first, in, or third series of twelve numbers, being paid double if he win, or may play upon rouge or noir, pair or impair, which designate the odd or even numbers upon manque and passe, the former comprising the numbers from one to ighteen inclusive, the latter from nineteen to

"It is a singular scene, one of these gaming-tables. Around it, from cleven in the morning until eleven at night, sit or stand the players, a exceedingly 'mixed' assemblage, gazing with covetous eyes upon the piles of gold and silver placed before the bankers, and watching with intensest interest the fluctuating chances of the game. There are males and females, old and young, leaders in the grand monde, and leaders and satellites in the demi-monde; people who play because they have pienty of money, and wish to amuse themselves, and people who play because they have but little money, and want more. There are noblemen and tilted ladies in abundance, and there are tradesmen and professional men and gamblers, all sitting or standing, and elbowing, and brought into the closest contact with each other. There are hard-faced people, men and women, sitting at the tables, who live year in and out at Hombourg, and make gambling a profession. gambling a profession. These are usually persons who have small, fixed incomes, and who flatter themselves that they have discovered 'systems' by which the games can be beaten, and the cruel divinity of chance circumvented, and who frequently sit for hours carefully noting the numbers as they appear at roulette, or pricking with a pin upon cards furnished for the purpose the winning color at rouge-et-noir, waiting for the combination to arrive which is embraced in their 'system.' "These 'systems' for winning at the bank are

numerous, but are all based upon the fallacy that chance is guided by law, which, if there be any such thing as 'chance,' is a contradiction in terms. The simplest and most apparent 'system' for winning at a banking game—one which appears palpable and positive to the uninitiated player—is that of commencing with a small stake, and doubling it until it wins, when it is evident that the player will be the gainer by the amount of his original stake. But there are three formidable obstacles barring the way to the success of this plan; could these be removed, the plan would be an excellent one, and one which would assuredly ruin all the gaming-tables of the world. The first of these is the lack of sufficient capital to enable an ordinary player to endure the losses. Suppose a player at roulette, for example, in the application of this 'system,' should commence by staking a five-franc piece upon one of the 'simple chances,' say, to simplify the matter, upon 'red,' and suppose that 'red' should lose, as red or black not unfrequently does twenty times in succession. unfrequently does, twenty times in succession-his last stake would, in this case, amount to 2,621,440 francs, and the entire amount lost in the twenty bets to 5,241,915, or about a million dollars. It is only the old school-boy illustration of the nails in the horseshoe, on a little larger scale. If the player were able to com-mence with a small stake, were there no limit to the amount which he should be allowed to bet, it is evident that, with an unlimited capital, he could, by this 'system,' inevitably and surely win. But the bank is too wise to permit this, and the stakes at all banking games are limited at either extremity with a 'minimum,' above which no stake will be accepted. At Hombourg the minimum at roulette is fixed at one, and at rouge-et-noir, two florins; and the maximum upon the 'simple chances' at roulette is four thousand, and at rouge-et-noir five thousand six hundred florins; so that a player commencing with the minimum at the former, would only need to lose twelve consecutive bets to attain the maximum, where he would be obliged, if he followed out his system, to return to his original stake, after having lost four thousand and eighty-three florins in the attempt to win one, which is all he would have done had he at any time in the series of twelve gained a single stake. A little practical experience in this matter of winning at a banking game by 'doubling' will soon convince any one, to his cost, of the impracticability of the 'system.' But, besides the obstacles mentioned, there is another, which no amount of care, circumspection, or boldness can overcome—the 'percentage' of the bank—the fact that when 'zero' appears at roulette, or the refail at rouge-et-noir, all parties on all sides and colors lose. This is sufficient alone to ruin all calculations, and destroy all probabilities of ever permanently winning by a 'system.'

"Another exceedingly plausible 'system' of winning at a banking game is one based upon the Stream," and other popular airs. the theory of the 'equilibrium of chances' embraced in the aphorism that, within a given period, two simple chances will appear an equal number of times. The practical application of this system, the infallibility of which an author, who has recently published a book of advice to players, showing them how they can surely win, says is 'as certain as the return of day after night, is playing upon 'color,' or any other sim-ple chance, when it has either not appeared at all in a certain number of times, or when it is far in arrears of its opposite. If, for example, in a hundred turns of the roulette, 'black' had appeared but twenty times, and 'rcd' eighty, the player upon this 'system' would, with the idea of 'restoring the equilibrium,' commence betting and doubling upon the black. But in this 'system' there is no more certainty than in any of the others. It is probable although by no means certain, or capable of demonstration, either theoretically or practically, that the axiom assumed is correct, that were a man to live to the age of Methuselah, and should he in his carliest youth commence tossing a penny in the air, and continue this amusement during sixteen hours a day up to the time of his death-it is probable, although by no means positive, that during this long period of time nearly an equal number of 'heads' and 'tails' must have made their appearance. But the attempt practically to apply this theory of 'equilibrium' to any space of time-to hours, days, or even years—is, as any one can easily satisfy himself by trying it, a simple absurdity.

"Still more palpable and inviting to a young player is the idea that, after a 'simple chance' has lost a considerable number of times consecutively, it must soon win. If, for example, at rouletle, the 'red' has appeared at eight successive turns of the wheel, it seems evident to the superficial calculator that the probabilities are strongly in favor of 'black' on the next turn, and the temptation to bet upon it is to the neo-phyte almost irresistible. But this is a fatal Chance is subject to a certain degree of calculation, guided to a certain extent by mathe-matical law. Before the penny has been tossed, the chances are exactly equal that it will fall with 'head' or 'tail' uppermost, but the proba-bility is as three to one that 'heads' will not appear twice in succession-as seven to one igainst three consecutive appearances, as fifteen to one against four, and so on in arithmetical progression. But when these probabilities have been surmounted, when the penny actually has fallen with the 'head' up at four successive tosses, the chances again become exactly equal that it will fall 'head' or 'tail' upon the fifth, there being, after the former has been made, no connection between the fourth and fifth to-s. The same rule applies to roulette or rouge-e'noir. Before the turn of the wheel, the chances are as 255 to I that red or black will not win eight times in succession; but, having done so, upon the ninth turn the probabilities are relatively just what they were on the first, and the chances of red or black winning or losing exactly equal.

One of the most favorite of the 'systems' played at Hombourg and Baden-Baden, both against roulette and rouge-et-noir, and one the ausibility of which is particularly striking, is that known as the 'decomposed eight.' The theory of this system is that no eight coups will come in precisely the same order twice in succession. Thus, for example: if at roulet'e, during eight consecutive turns of the wheel, they it has arrivaged twice they it has a recovered twice they are the are they are the are the 'red' has appeared twice, then 'black' twice, then 'red' once, and black three times, the player of the 'decomposed eight' is prepared to back his opinion that the next eight turns will not yield precisely the same result in exactly the same order. To profit by this, he bets the minimum of one florin upon the 'black.' If it wins, his object is accomplished; his 'system' is verified; he has won his florin, and prepares to attack the following eight coups in the same manner. But should it lose, he then, nothing daunted places two floring wors the interest of daunted, places two florins upon the "black;" if that lose, four upon the 'red;' that losing, eight

upon the 'red,' then sixteen upon the 'black;' and thus doubling each time he loses, and always in opposition to the corresponding turn in the previous series of eight. It will be readily seen that, in accordance with this system, uness the two series of eight do successively pear in precisely the same order, the player must, at some time before he reaches the last number of the second series, win one florin. diagram will render this perfectly plain. Sup-pose the first series of eight to have appeared

and be marked as follows: BLACK, RED. S 2 3 In such case the player would exactly reverse this order, and make his bets as follows: -BLACK. | RED.

This system, upon which a book has been written, showing how, with a capital of two hundred and fifty-six florins, a certain and sure profit of sixty florius a day may be made at roulette, is however, as fallacious as any of the others. Its plausibility is very much heightened by the assumed irregularity of the coups in the series of eight against which it is proposed to be played. In principle, it would be precisely the same to assume that after 'black' had appeared eight times in succession, it could not immediately appear eight times more. The second series of eight is quite as likely to follow the first, in what may be called irregular, as in regular order; it is just as probable that in six-teen turns of the wheel the last series of eight should be the same as the first, as that the 'red' or 'black,' or any other 'simple chance,' should appear sixteen times in succession, which it does by no means unfrequently.

"There are many other more or less complicated 'systems,' professors of which are found ready to teach them to verdant pupils at all the gaming-hells of Europe. It may be safely said, however, that all are based upon fallacies and that, at least while the bank retains its 'percentage,' and limits the players to a 'maximum' and 'minimum,' no banking game can be beaten by a 'system.'

-From Turner Brothers & Co. we have received "The Virginians," the fourth volume of the handsome "Household Edition" of Thackeray's works in course of publication by Fields, Osgood & Co. This series will be one of the most popular editions of Thackeray's works published; it is cheap, and yet handsome enough to grace the shelves of the most fastidious of book buyers.

The same house sends us "My Daughter Elinor," an interesting new novel, by an anonymous author; and Part III of the cheap paper edition of Auerbach's charming romance of the "The Country House on the Rhine," translated by Charles G. Shackford; also the "Humpty Dumpty Trick Book," which will produce eight magical transformations. This affair will delight the youngsters. The Vocalist, No. 9, contains "Pulling Against

-From Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger we have received "Artemus Ward's Panorama." This is the lecture on the Mormons, as it was delivered in Egyptian Hall, London. It was not intended for publication, and although the manner in which the showman delivered it was infinitely amusing, his executors had much better have allowed it to remain out of print. The book is illustrated by coarse cuts of the "picters" as exhibited by Artemus Ward. The pleasantest portions of the book are the warm-hearted notices of the deceased humorist by Mr. T. W. Robertson, the dramatist, and Mr. E. P. Hingston, his executors. The affectionate manner in which these gentlemen speak of him will be highly appreciated by his friends on this side of the Atlantic.

-From D. Ashmead we have received "Jeremiah and his Lamentations," with notes, critical, explanatory, and practical, by Rev. Henry Cowles, D. D. This volume concludes the series of notes on the Old Testament prophets by Mr. Cowles, and, like those that have already been published, it will be appreciated by clergymen, as well as religious readers of all classes, as a valuable practical commentary on the Scriptures.

-The same house sends us "Taopi and His Friends; or, the Indian's Wrongs and Rights. This is a neatly-bound edition of an interesting work that was noticed in these columns some months ago. It contains "A History of a Mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church to the Santee Sioux Indians," by William Welsh; "Journal written at the Mission in Nebraska," by Rev. S. D. Hinman; "Address by Bishop Whipple, of Minnesota, at the funeral of Taopi, a Christian Chief of the Farmer Band of Santee Sloux Indians;" "Letter on Indian Civilization," by Major Cullen, of Minnesota; "Letter on Indian Civilization," by Hon, H. M. Rice, of Minnesota; "Letter on Indian Civilization," by Colonel J. B. Brown; "Report of Committee of Citizens sent to Washington to confer with President Grant;" "Concluding Appeal," and "Report of Indian Peace Commissioners appointed in 1867." This book is worthy of the perusal of all who are interested in Indian affairs.

-From T. B. Peterson & Brothers we have received "The Bride's Fate," a sequel to "The Changed Brides," by Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth. Of course everybody will want to know what the bride's fate was, and as the secret is well maintained until the end of the book, a large circle of readers may be counted upon for this story.

-We have received Parts 25 and 26 of "Zell's Popular Encyclopedia," which is brought down to the title "Ballymascanlon." This work is admirably edited by Mr. L. Colange, and when completed it will be the cheapest encyclopedia ever published. A vast amount of information is given in a con-densed shape, and the price is so low that any poor man can afford to purchase it, and have complete library in a single volume. Published by T. Ellwood Zell, Nos. 17 and 19 South Sixth street,

SPECIAL NOTICES. DEY CITY TREASURER'S OFFICE .-NOTICE.—The SEMI-ANNUAL ENTEREST on the Funded Debt of the City of Philadelphia, due July 1, 1969, will be paid on and after that date.

6 10 3w City Trossurer.

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NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS. The Board of Directors have this day declared a semi-annual dividend of FIVE PER CENT. on the capital stock of the Company, clear of National and State taxes, payable in cash on and after May 30,

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