The Modern French Novelist.

We quote the following from one of the lively sketches of "Men of the Second Empire" in the Pall Mall Gazette:-Newspapers were already counting thou-sands of readers where but a few years before they numbered only hundreds, and editors were trying to outbid each other in public favor by the number and quality of their feuilletons. For a considerable time the feuilleton, or serial tale, was deemed the most important part of a French paper. The bourgeois and his wife cared much more for the ingenious novel, exed out in daily doses of three columns, than for the brilliant leading article or the palpitating column of fulls dizers. It used to be calculated during the reign of Louis Philippe that a feuilleton signed "Alexandre Dumas" raised the circulation of a paper by at least 3000; and during the time that the Journal des Debats published the "Mysteres de Paris," by Eugene Sue, the sale of that journal was more than quadrupled. Of course, the introduction of the feuilleton produced an astonishing number of bad as well as good writers; but, taken all in all, the French novelists of twenty years ago were a body of men eminently su-perior in point of talent to those of the present day. One of the reasons of this is that the class of novel-readers was better then than now. Artisans and workmen had not yet begun to read these works of fiction with which the one sou newspaper has since fami-liarized them. Those who read the feuilletons were the bourgeois, who were necessarily more exacting than untaught readers can be. Criticism, too, had not yet become the meaningless thing to which French journalists of the Second Empire have reduced it. Gustave Planche, Cuvillier Fleury, Saint-Marc Girardin, and Sainte Beuve were all literary judges of rare merit, whose opinions were esteemed, and whose censorship excited dread enough to keep authors in subjection to the laws of good taste, good style, and common sense. But 1848 came, literature was swamped for a time in politics, and when the storm cleared away and literature rose again to the surface it was under new conditions, in a new atmosphere, and for a new class of people. Politics were completely hushed, journalists had chains to their pens. The serious, respectable newspapers might be counted on the fingers; the frivolous prints devoted to what was called "literature," that is, to scandal, nonsense, and gossip, were numbered by the hundreds. Universal suffrage had been proclaimed; the people—not much wiser, perhaps, nor more intelligent than their fathers, but nevertheless more proud and more inquisitive-were begining to ask the why and wherefore of things. They were learning to read. They were anxious for a certain semblance of instruction, and they wanted to have their newspapers like richer folk. Had liberty of the press existed, good and cheap papers might have been founded, as in England, to disseminate sound instruction and healthy opinions on political questions, but the six centime stamp prevented this. With a restrictive code of press regulations, such as that which the second empire had introduced, it was impossible to bring out a good political paper under three-half-pence (town price) or two-pence (country price). This suggested to certain capitalists the idea of starting the halfpenny paper, giving no political news, but crammed full of police reports and details of murders, and rendered double attractive by an interminable feuilleton relating the prowesses of escaped convicts. Of course the innovation succeeded. The halfpenny papers, daubed with the lucubrations of M. Tonson du Terrail or M. Emile Gaboriau, sold by the half million, and the more expensive papers, enticed by the success of their cheap rivals, took their cue from them and launched out into the same kind of literature; the only difference being that, in- | ruler of the nation. stead of describing the achievements of popular heroes like Rocambole, they addressed themselves to more polished sympathies, and spoke of swindling in high life, seduction, abduction, and, above all, adultery. The inevitable result of this movement was that French novelists soon came to be divided into two classes numbering about an equal number of adepts, viz.-those who catered for the upper classes, and those who contracted for of using arms to convert or destroy heretics the lower. Needless to say that these and infidels-a doctrine which, owing to a vacategories mutually despised each other; riety of causes, too numerous and complicated of the people," because, after making their out from amongst most of the Mussulman cutthroat hero triumph in two hundred and sixty-seven chapters, they imbued with this dogma, and their zeal in hanged him in the two hundred and sixtyeighth; and the former styling themselves 'realists," or "characterists," because in describing objectionable scenes they took care to leave out nothing of what ought to have been suppressed. To say that French novels are more immoral at the present time than they ever were before is to say nothing, for French novelists have never at any period plumed themselves upon that kind of morality which is required in England. But the novelists of the second empire are more cynically immoral than their predecessors. In the works of fiction written by authors of other generations, one finds chapters enough which might well have been left out; but in almost every case one feels that these chapters must have been written naively, without any fixed intention of shocking, and that the language of them is such as was tolerated by the nsages of the day. But there is no excuse of the sort to be alleged in defense of the French novelists of the present time. Propriety and decorum were never so loudly preached, nor, on the whole, so universally practised as they are nowadays. When, therefore, my friend M. Louis de Rose applies his graphic mind to the portrayal of incidents such as could form the topic of no conversation out of Mabille or the Casino Cadet, it is evident that he goes out of his way to do this, and that his only object is to give to his novels that strong flavor of patchouli which will ensure them a sale. Nevertheless, M. Louis de Rose, whose works adorn the table of every boudoir in Paris, passes in the world for a man of stainless principle, and possesses very lofty ideas as to the dignity of his profession. He is decorated, is in high favor at Court, is one of the committee of the Societe des Gens de Lettres, and would be accepted everywhere as an arbiter on any moot question of honor. Nothing would shock him so deeply as the supposition that he wrote his books with any object in view but the good of humanity. He modestly calls himself the slave of art. It is in obedience to this honored mistress that he produces a threevolume novel once a twelvemonth, and gives it a piquant title which attracts the whole of the Quartier Breda to purchase the work. His last novel was called "La Peche de Madame, and three editions of it went during the first week. A critic, evidently jealous and very much behind his age, remarked that it was a scandalous thing that a man should have been found to write such a book, and that anybody should have been found to buy it. This critic denounced the plot as something monstrous and grievous; but his

article only gave a fresh stimulus to the sale,

and three more editions disappeared before the month was out. M. Louis de Rose did not

send a cartel to the critic-it is only the small

a charming smile to one of his friends, that it was the fate of every man who rose to have detractors, and that he forgave the critic with all his heart. He was even generous enough to add that those who abused him did it only from ignorance, and because they did not understand him. "What you must look at in a work of art," he said, "is not the details, but the tout ensemble. Now, in the 'Peche de Madame' the tout ensemble is reflected in the last paragraph of the book, in which Madame, being deserted by her lover, repents and takes refuge in a convent."
"Yes," interposed the friend, "but how about
the chapters in which Madame has not yet re-"Those," exclaimed M. de Rose, are studies of character. Every page, as you may notice, is a careful analysis— an analysis of the various symp-toms which the passions may evoke." The friend was evidently as jealous as the critic, for he answered, "But everybody knows what those symptoms are; and I should have thought it scarcely necessary to go so far as you have done into details of social anatomy. You are not content to portray a vice; you dissect it." "Yes," nodded M. Louis de Rose, "and some day or other, probably when I am dead and gone, it will be my glory to have done so. Future ages will say, 'Volla un homme qui savait peindre son epoque; and they will feel grateful to me for having patiently resigned myself to calumny for the cause of art. The friend made no reply. Was it that he was convinced, or was it simply that when arguing a few days before with another novelist of the Second Empire he had beard the very self-same answer? It was a popular writer that time-a gentleman who had been delighting the masses during two years and five months with a serial tale about the adventures of a felon. "What!" he cried, "you complain that I allow my hero to escape from all the prisons where society puts him; that I make him succeed in all his plans, outwit the police, and baffle justice; and that by these means I incite the lower classes to dishonesty. But you forget, my friend, that I am simply painting my age. My book is a portrait—a faithful portrait of modern manners and modern people. If the colors are strong, you must blame nature or society, and not me. I am a realist, remember. I paint my characters as I find them, in a state of nature, and without any flimsy veils on."

The friend bowed, but on taking up a paper, to change the subject, he could scarcely help laughing on reading that an unhappy photographer, who was probably a realist too, had been sent to prison for six months for selling some faithful portraits of modern people, strongly colored, in a state of nature, and without any flimsy veils on.

Wahhabeeism in India. From the Pall Mall Gazette.

What is the origin and what is the object of the commotion which within the last few years has been noticed among the Mussulmans in different parts of India, and which very recently caused some apprehension of a conspiracy at Vellore? Most of the Indian journals, as also some official papers, designate the movement as Wahhabeeism—a religious system founded by one 'Abd-ul-Wahhab, a native of Najd in Arabia, about the middle of the last century, and which, with varying fortune, has maintained its hold over the country lying to the westward of the Persian Gulf. The central authority is at Riadh, in the province of 'Aredh, where a descendant of Sa'ud, 'Abd-ul-Wahhab's first convert and military champion, still rules over Najd and several of the adjacent maritime districts. The religion and government of this sect may be briefly described as a Mohammedan puritanism, joined to a Bedawin phylarchy, in which the chief is the political and religious

In their creed the Wahhabis are perfectly LOOKING-GLASS. orthodox; the unity of God is the fundamental principle of their faith; they believe in Mohammed, but regard him as essentially mortal, though gifted with a divine mission; and the Koran, and the Koran alone, is their professed guide in all matters of faith and practice. This latter peculiarity is the most dangerous article of their creed, for it revives the merit latter calling themselves "educators to be noticed here, has been gradually dying sects. Sa'ud and his successors were strongly carrying it out was rewarded by the willing or forced subjection of some of the remotest provinces of Arabia to their sway. The Wahabbis of the present day are no less fanatical than their predecessors, but they have made no new conquests of late years, and it is notorious that some of the maritime tribes on the Persian Gulf would gladly be freed from their oppressions. Hence it is not probable that any emissaries from them have found their way into India: neither is it likely that there has been any intercourse between the Indian Mussulmans and these Wahhabis. That a similar reform may have sprung up among some of the zealots of the former, half-Hindooized as many of them are, is conceivable; but we question its having any connection with Wahhabeeism proper, and therefore the appellation given to it is a misnomer calculated to mislead. Our doubts in this respect are confirmed by reading in a Madras journal that "these puritans" in that presidency repudiate the title, "calling a Wahhabee a pig, and spitting at the same time." If there is any good ground for believing that the movement in India has a common origin, and is more or less under the same guidance, it ought not to be beyond the capability of our officials there to discover both, and to afford us some clearer insight into a system which cannot be Wahhabeeism, which may be something like it, and which it greatly concerns us as the rulers of that empire to understand thoroughly.

On this subject an Indian journalist supplies us with the following additional par-

ticulars:--

"The name Wahhabees was originally applied as a term of reproach by the orthodox Indian Mussulmans to certain sects of Reformers which have at different times sprung up in different parts of the country. most important of these sects accepted the title as a means of distinguishing themselves from the inert mass that had suffered vain traditions to incrust and overlay the inspired Koran. These Reformers, have very little in common with the followers of Abd-ud-Wahib of Nejd, nor is their Puritanism of such a pronounced character. The founder of this sect was Synd Uhmed, a British subject, born at Bareilly, who took service with Ameer Khan, Nawab of Tonk. On the subjugation of this petty prince, Syud Uhmed proceeded to Delhi, where he set up as a preacher and reformer (vide Cunningham's of the Sikhs'), and made many converts. The most zealous of his disciples was a moulvee named Ishmael, who was the St. Paul of the new sect, and by his writings gave form and consistency to the utterances of the Syud. In 1831 the latter was defeated and slain by the troops of Runjeet Sing, against whom he had warred continuously for two whole years. On

fry of literature who do this—but he said with | the death of Syud Uhmed, his followers dispersed themselves in various directions. own family fled to Tonk; but such of his disciples as were unable to make their way back to British territory effected their escape to the mountainous region beyond Peshawur, where they fraternized with the Yusufzyes, and became the nucleus of those desperate fanatics who have since given us so much trouble at

> "The doctrines of Syud Uhmed, promulgated by Moulvee Ishmael, found favor in the eyes of a considerable portion of the Mohammedan population of Delhi, Bareilly, Agra, and Allygurh. From the last named town several Moslems of high position in Govern-ment service migrated to Tonk several years before the mutiny, and thence kept up a constant correspondence with the refugees on the Peshawur hills, who were also joined by 'every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was dis-contented.' From this Moslem Cave of Adulemissaries were from time to lum time despatched throughout the length and breadth of India, and money was freely contributed, especially from Patna, to keep alive the smouldering embers of fanatacism. The border annals are filled with the oft-repeated tale of murder, raids, and petty warfare, instigated by the Akhoond of Swat, who may be styled the high priest of the Wahhabees, and for which we are largely indebted to our apathy in 1829 -30-31. The Moslem reformers, however, are not confined to the northwest frontier, they swarm likewise in Lower Bengal. Two of Synd Uhmed's disciples, known to the Bengalees as the Moulabees (Moulvees), exdisturbances at Baraset as far back as 1831-32, the existence of which was first communicated to the local magistrate by the commissioner of the dis-trict, who had been warned by Lord William Bentinck from Calcutta, in consequence of a letter addressed to a merchant of that city by an indigo planter settled near Baraset. In the neighborhood of Calcutta and Dacca these puritans or fanatics—call them what you will—pass by the name of Firajees, and are so far formidable that they supply money to the more active malcontents thickly scattered throughout India. The real matter for surprise, however, is not the existence of this danger, but the fact that the Government are now for the first time sensible of the necessity for caution, perhaps for action. They have all along persisted in regard-ing the Sittana raids as cattle-driving forays after the manner of those familiar to readers of Scottish history; nor were their eyes opened by the startling discoveries made by Mr. William Taylor, at Patna, in 1856-57. Even now they have exhibited the utmost reluctance to believe anything of such a disagreeable nature. A native police officer, himself an orthodox Mussulman, who apprehended a Wahhabee emissary on his way back to the hill, was reprimanded for his excess of zeal. Fortunately an English officer was subsequently able to pounce upon this same emissary, on whose person were found papers of serious if not of alarming import. Upon this scent the Government have let loose their sleuth hounds, with what success remains yet to be seen."

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