

The peculiar nature of the bi-literal cipher renders it untrustworthy unless the difference between the two fonts is clear in all cases. Since there are five letters in the document for every letter in the hidden message, a change of one of the five letters in the first will completely change the one character in the second. If the first four letters are clearly of the a-font, and the fifth is doubtful, the "decipherer" can begin his supposed hidden message either with A (aaaaa) or with B (aaaab). In other words, if one-fifth of the printed letters are doubtful, virtually every letter in the "concealed statement" can be changed at the decipherer's wish. If one-tenth of the letters are doubtful, the decipherer can arbitrarily change, on an average, every second letter in his deciphered sentence. If one letter among thirty in the text can be assigned to either font at will, the decipherer may be able in his derived statement to change a nonsense combination like *prknce* into such a significant monosyllable as *prince* (I being *abaaa*, and K being *abaab*). Yet our present author admits that in occasional cases the font is doubtful and is decided in the light of the context, and admits that many letters seem doubtful to all eyes except those of a Baconian.

In the second place, the writer's deciphered revelations, unlike the Latin of Bacon's real cipher, exhibit a great latitude in the matter of orthography. This may be in accordance with Elizabethan usage; but it enormously increases the possibility of finding English words as the mere result of chance. If we cannot make our cipher work with one spelling, we can always try another. In a single deciphered message (pp. 31-32) seven words appear in two different forms (sowe, sow; onely, only; penn, pen; be, bee; far, farre; gybe, gibe; Amy, Amie); and nearly thirty more which in modern English would end in *y* close at will with *y*, *ie*, or *ye*. Almost half of the words in the passage would allow of two or more spellings.

In the third place, the author gets around uncounted snags by a most astounding use of apostrophes. *Upo'* for *upon*, *inve'tion* for *invention*, *sla'drous* for *slanderous*, *answeri'g* for *answering*, *writi'gs* for *writings*—such are a few specimens. Then we have repeated abbreviations, such as *F.* or *Fr.* for Francis, *L.* or *Lo.* for Lord, *Qu.* for Queen, which are legitimate linguistically, but which, like the wide freedom of Elizabethan spelling, help one inestimably in making sense where no cipher was intended. We must remember that the apostrophes, periods, and capitals in the above are put in arbitrarily by the decipherer and represent nothing in the original.

Lastly, Bacon would certainly have given us clear and succinct English, not

such grammatical anarchy as the following, which is a fair sample of the revelations throughout the book: "many old poems o' Sp. an' Sh. at a due time shew, mayhap, w'ch MSS. F. hid. But such nere won great praise—look'd, men now say, so faire, a subverti'g surrende' vainly should intrude. More pens did shine I find upon a veritable—," etc. Stripped of the capitals, periods, and abbreviations supplied by the modern Baconian, the first sentence of the above would read: "many old poems osp ansh at a due time shew, mayhap, wchmssf hid."

The tireless industry of so many Baconians has pointed out phenomena which seem to us merely chance combinations ingeniously juggled.

#### ESSAYS EX CATHEDRA.

*The Lawyer in Literature.* By John Marshall Gest. The Boston Book Co. \$2.50 net.

The addresses and essays reprinted in this volume possess interest enough to warrant their reproduction in book form without the voucher of a third person, however distinguished. The Introduction, however, in which Dean Wigmore expresses his good opinion of the author, and discourses learnedly of the advantages to the practicing lawyer of a wide acquaintance with "the literature of the novelists," does the book no harm, and may win for it some readers who might otherwise pass it by. At any rate, we rejoice that neither author nor introducer has called the voucher a "Foreword."

Of course, the law and lawyers of Charles Dickens receive much attention. Judge Gest takes genuine delight in recounting the great novelist's experiences as a law student, and his many thrusts at the legal profession. At the same time, he is careful to call attention to the fact that Dickens was above all a caricaturist; and that his pictures of courts and lawyers are in the main sheer burlesques. He also points out that many of the evils of chancery, which were held up to a nation's scorn in Bleak House, had been abolished by Act of Parliament, before the novel was published. "Dickens, therefore," declares Judge Gest, "did not kill the chancery snake but only jumped on it after it was dead." Sir Walter Scott and Balzac fare much better at the hands of our author than does Dickens. Both, he says, were well-read lawyers and were impartial in their treatment of the profession. They could separate the evil from the good, and could contrast the upright and learned judge and lawyer with the trickster and the incompetent. The methods of Scott and of Dickens are contrasted in the following passage:

There is a vast difference between Dickens's treatment of law and lawyers

and Sir Walter's. Dickens saw nothing good in either, and caricatured both. Scott, on the other hand, was an artist; he knew a thousand times as much about the subject as Dickens, and in his fair-minded manner, endeavored to give a just picture of it. But, naturally, the scamps of the law play a larger part in literature than their betters, for a good, well-behaved lawyer is in sooth a very prosaic individual. But a bad lawyer is such a picturesque villain that he is the stock character of every novelist and playwright.

Balzac is described as a "stand-patter" in law and politics, who believed in a constitutional monarchy and an intellectual aristocracy as the only fit law-makers. He derided the *Code Napoléon*, for he deemed it the leveller of all class distinctions. Although his father was a lawyer and he studied law for a time, the dry details of practice were revolting to him, and he declined to follow his father's profession. However, he put his legal knowledge to frequent use in his novels, as Judge Gest takes great pains to establish in his instructive paper on this subject. The author reserves his highest praise for Sir Edward Coke, whom he acclaims not only as a great lawyer, but as a learned classical scholar, and as a writer of rare literary taste. No one can dispute Coke's marvellous mastery of the common law, though the use to which he put his knowledge was not always above criticism. Nevertheless, many readers of this volume will rise from its perusal unconvinced, we feel sure, of Coke's right to a seat among literary immortals. They will readily admit that his "writings abound with quaint, axiomatic, idiomatic, and pithy expressions." But they will not hesitate to question both the literary merit and the legal soundness of some of the quaint sayings selected by Judge Gest—for example, the following about a hogsty as a nuisance: "One ought not to have so delicate a nose that he cannot bear the smell of a hog."

#### . EDWARD THE SEVENTH.

*More About King Edward.* By Edward Legge. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co. \$4 net.

When Edward VII ascended the throne he was so intent upon pleasing in every imaginable way the beautiful woman who had shared his joys and sorrows for nearly half a century that, much to her satisfaction, he placed her in the position of an actual Queen-Regnant instead of a mere Queen-Consort. It was a charming manner of atoning for any *péchés mignons* which he may or may not have perpetrated during their long and happy married life. Queen Alexandra is endowed with such a beautiful, loving, and forgiving character that it took, and still takes, a great deal to ruffle it, and it is conceivable, to employ a homely phrase, that she has had more to put up with since her beloved consort's untimely death than

during his life. This is the opinion of some who are not altogether ignorant of existence within royal palaces.

The above passage, taken almost at random, will serve to suggest the quality of this book. It is a sort of rider to the "King Edward in His True Colours" which was reviewed in the *Nation* about a year ago (April 17, 1913). That was bad enough. It gained a little dignity from its inclusion of extended tributes to the late King by men like M. Poincaré, Comte d'Haussonville, and the scholarly Vámbéry. In itself, as the original work of Mr. Legge, it was an absurd performance. Its chief source was in a pious wrath at the handling of King Edward by Sir Sidney Lee in the Dictionary of National Biography. Sir Sidney did not tell the truth to begin with (cried our champion), and in the second place, if it had been the truth he ought to have been ashamed of telling it. King Edward was not only a dead man, but a dead King, and "the legends woven by the people round their sovereigns ought not to be destroyed."

We supposed that Mr. Legge had, in his own opinion, polished off poor Sir Sidney pretty thoroughly, but he here returns to his bone. We will say bone. He acknowledges that, in spite of his disapproval, the Dictionary which has lent itself to the malicious purposes of the ignorant Lee may still be read—"continue to be patronized by club fossils and dipped into by the privileged persons who pass their lives in the British Museum." But "a museum is a fitting receptacle for it." One of the Lee canards which particularly enrages Mr. Legge is that Edward "was no reader of books," and "could not concentrate his mind upon them." Mr. Legge's refutation of this consists in the statements that the King was proud of his library at Windsor and would have visited it oftener if it had not been a mile away from his apartments; and that he was anxious to make his library at Sandringham "a feature of the house." To a very recent assertion in the *Times* that "it is well known that King Edward was no very devoted student of poetry," counsel for the defence devotes a chapter full of counter-assertions. The King—"Edward the Great" between these covers—"greatly admired and fully appreciated certain classes of verse." Mr. Legge is sure that he must have heard "We Are Seven" in the nursery; and obligingly offers to eat his hat if any one will prove that King Edward "had never read and re-read the 'Idyls,' 'Enoch Arden,' the 'Ode on the Death of Wellington,' 'The Brook,' 'The Princess,' 'Maud,' 'Crossing the Bar,' and many other Tennysonian gems." No doubt some venturesome spirit may be found to undertake the same feat if Mr. Legge can prove that the King *did* anything of the sort. The advocate's sum-

mary of evidence is too good not to quote:

It would be a reflection on his memory and his capacity for enjoying the deathless imagery of the great poets to suppose that he had not a fair acquaintance with the poems of Goldsmith, Cowper, Thomson, Pope, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Burns, Moore, Macaulay, Swinburne, Mrs. Hemans, and a score besides, not forgetting Dibdin, Tom Hood, Longfellow, Kipling, Praed, and Henley.

## Notes

John W. Luce & Company include in their April list of announcements: "A Hand Book of Brieux's Plays," by P. V. Thomas; "Katya," by M. de Jessen; "Letters from La-Bas," by Rachel Howard.

"A Free Hand," by Helen C. Roberts, and "The Sheep Track," by Nesta H. Webster, are among the novels announced by Duttons for publication this month.

Longmans, Green & Company will publish shortly "Flight without Formulae," by Commander Duchêne, translated from the French of John H. Ledebor.

"The Influence of the Bible upon Civilization," by Ernest von Dobschutz, and "Life Histories of African Game Animals," by Theodore Roosevelt, will be published by Scribners this month.

Houghton Mifflin Company announces for publication on April 11: "Confederate Portraits," by Gamaliel Bradford; "Elizabeth and Mary Stuart," by Frank A. Mumby; "A Life of Tolstoy," by Edward Garnett.

THE *National Geographic Magazine* for March opens with an account of village life in Palestine, by John D. Whiting. Its peculiar merit lies in the light which it throws on the life of the people of Old Testament times. Many of the manners and customs which prevailed there then are still unchanged. How to attract birds to the vicinity of the house is graphically described by Mr. Frederick H. Kenward, with many interesting illustrations showing proper nesting sites. Mr. William J. Showalter tells what the "patient man of the microscope" has wrought in humanity's behalf in overcoming the tropical diseases.

NEW matter in "Bradshaw's Through Routes to the Chief Cities, Bathing and Health Resorts of the World" (London: Blacklock) includes mention of the latest archaeological discoveries in Egypt of interest to tourists, details of the political and economic changes in South Africa, following the formation of the Union, and of the progress of the Cape to Cairo railway. Considerable space is given to the railway expansion of the last few years. The present edition is as remarkable as its predecessors for the multitude and the accuracy of its items, and the work is still without a rival as a single volume for the round-the-world traveller.

ESSAYS, Letters, and Addresses on Physical and Social Vision" is the sub-title of Helen Keller's little book, "Out of the Dark" (Doubleday, Page), which contains hitherto uncollected magazine articles and addresses. These range from personal topics, such as "Christmas in the Dark," to so impersonal a theme as "The Message of Swedenborg." If Miss Keller is occasionally tempted to take up subjects a bit beyond her, she but falls into a common trap for writers, although one regrets the oracular tone that now and then creeps into her utterances.

AT the age of seventy-seven, I begin to make some memoranda and state some recollections of dates & facts concerning myself, for my own more ready reference & for the information of my family." So begins, under date "1821, Jan. 6," the autobiography of Thomas Jefferson, destined to extend only to the year 1790. A reissue of this fragment (Putnam) contains the introduction prepared by the late Paul Leicester Ford for the Federal Edition of Jefferson's works and Ford's notes, a table of the chief events in Jefferson's life, and an engraving of Stuart's portrait, painted in 1805.

AN interesting chapter in the history of Boston is to be found in the Bostonian Society Publications, Vol. X. It is an account by Mr. Fitz-Henry Smith, jr., of the coming of the French fleets under Count D'Estaing and the Marquis de Vaudreuil to Boston during the Revolution, and the work done by the Frenchmen in the construction of fortifications at Hull and in the harbor. The despotic government of our ancestors is shown by Mr. F. E. Bradbury in his account of the laws and courts of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1634, for instance, "John Lee was whipped and fined forty pounds for saying that the Governor was but a lawyer's clerk, and what understanding had he more than himself. . . . Roger Scott was whipped for sleeping in church." Laws were also enacted relative to the style of women's hats and the width of the female sleeve. In 1646 it was enacted that "a stubborn or rebellious son, of sufficient years and understanding, viz., sixteen . . . shall be put to death." As authority for this legislation, they relied on the Mosaic laws.

THE third volume of Mr. P. S. Allen's "Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami" (Oxford University Press) includes the letters from July, 1517, to June, 1519, all of which, with a few exceptions, were written by or to Erasmus at Louvain during one of his quieter periods. "Totus, hoc est cum bibliotheca" (how beautiful the phrase!), he writes to George Halewin, one of his English friends, in August of 1517, "Louanium commigravi. Cum theologis altissima pax atque adeo necessitudo." The peace, however, was not quite perfect, and, indeed, Erasmus would scarcely have known how to adapt himself to so unwonted a state. His dear friend, James Faber, for one, had drawn him into an *odiosa disputatio*, in the course of which he had written to Faber himself, calling Christ to abandon him if he did not equally hate both the necessity of quar-