

SOCIETY

(Continued from Page Twelve)

ple begin to edge on toward the north pole.

MEALS FOR A DAY.

- Sunday, October 3.**
BREAKFAST.
 Purple Plums.
 Chicken Hash on Toast.
 Hashed Potatoes. Breakfast Rolls.
 Sliced Tomatoes.
 Cafe au Lait.
 The Journal.
DINNER.
 Vermicelli Soup.
 Baked Duck, with Dressing.
 Whipped Potatoes. Candied Yams.
 Spaghetti, with Tomatoes.
 Creamed Corn.
 French Salad, with Mayonnaise.
 Neopolitan Ice Cream. Fruit Cake.
 Cafe Noir.
LUNCHEON.
 Spanish Omelette. French Toast.
 Fruit Salad. Waters.
 Rice Custards, with Cakes.
 Fruit Punch. Chocolate.

BROWNING CLUB PAPERS ON THE RING AND THE BOOK.

II. Half Rome.
 There is perhaps nothing harder than to determine just how to arbitrate the opposite extremes of opinion on any literary issue. To praise without reservation seems as sentimental and weak as to blame without reservation seems hard-headed and bigoted. Yet any reservation from either extreme seems itself to be evidence of a sort of intellectual timidity. Nevertheless we all admit (as an abstract proposition at least) that strict philo-osophic justice must often stand upon this neutral ground. And we admit this in spite of the fact that the tolerant mind easily runs into indifference and mental feebleness, just as the decisiveness of character often becomes mere bigotry. The zealot is undoubtedly most applauded by the world, and likewise most condemned by it. It is the neutral man who is most despised by both parties as a mere mugwump and campfollower. His native hue of resolution is said to sickened o'er with the pale cast of thought. We are forced then either to be weathercocks and change with every wind, or to be perivicious sign-posts, firm but often false.

This paper will attempt the role of the weathercock. It will acquiesce to certain cold winds of hostility, and then to warmer and partisan breezes. But the flaws in both extremes once remarked, it will at least assume to reach some conclusion, qualified, but definitely on one side or the other. For even a mugwump, if he is good, must finally cast his vote. And here we have the very Ring and the Book itself, as an example. For while the poet presents us, not two sides, but eleven sides of his question, he holds up to our scorn weak neutrality, blind bigotry and irrelevance, in the persons of Tertium Quid, Half Rome and the Fise, for instance; and he leaves us in the end with no doubt of his own opinion and the real truth of the matter.

We should ask ourselves, for this second and the ten succeeding books, these general questions: (1) What more do we know about the plot from this book? (2) Does the additional information conflict with that already gained? (3) What do we know about the character of the speaker? See description of him in Bk. I. (4) What class of seventeenth century Roman what class of humankind are typified by the speaker? (5) What specific moral purpose of the poet's is observable in this book? (6) To what portion of the whole poem's organic structure does this book belong?

In some respects Browning made a bad beginning of his poem in this extended parley of Half Rome. I do not know in what order he composed the parts of The Ring and the Book, but it looks as if his first canto had so encouraged and satisfied him that he ventured upon giving his wordiness longer license. For it is quite noticeable how the cantos rise in length as we proceed through the poem. Book II is 128 lines longer than Book I.

Book III 277 longer. Book IV 222. Book VII from the count, for it is merely an epilogue, we find Book I is the shortest of all, no less than 421 lines shorter than the average, or only 77 per cent. of it.

In his essay on the principles of composition (I think it was) Poe said that no poem should be too long to be read at one sitting. His reason for this was that an exalted state of mind could not possibly be sustained more than half an hour. His reason is obviously a sound one. But The Ring and the Book escape the resulting condemnation in two ways. In the first place, it is really twelve poems; and the effect is no wise lost, heightened, if anything, by the lapse of twenty-four hours or more between the cantos. In the second place, the longest canto would require about an hour and forty minutes to read. While this is a triple the limit set by Poe, these one hundred minutes are not intended to be one hundred minutes of continuous exaltation. Browning continually gives us momentary halts: violent jolts into the commonplace, if you will; they may be; but they serve in the long run to set off his moods of exaltation with a contrast almost intolerable in its power; and Browning was long-winded enough to make a long run; and took enough time to accomplish his extraordinary effects. He proceeds in this manner in every canto, and also in the whole poem as well; for Books I, II, III, IV, VIII, IX and XII are themselves chiefly lower in tone than the others.

Half Rome could have said his say, as reported by the poet, in an hour. Is this so long as to lose all naturalness? We allow many privileges to our poets, as it is. Their persons speak blank verse, and they leave the room with a jingle of rhymes. But for how many minutes shall we permit them to talk uninterrupted? The answer we receive from this book is fifteen minutes. Half Rome seems to be interrupted thirteen times; at lines 1, 2, 152, 190, 341, 322, 598, 616, 989, 1206, 1252, 1364 and 1378. The greatest uninterpreted stretch is 373 lines; the smallest 1 line; the average 114 lines. Tennyson's Maud is only 108 lines shorter than Half Rome; the speaker is never interrupted; and the poem, sometimes charming, but never lowers its exalted tone. Maud is indeed a strain on the feelings, and, I think, for this reason: that Tennyson wrought his poem part by part, while Browning observed and reconstructed his as a whole. For this is the great fact we must never lose sight of while we read Browning—that everything he puts into a poem is intended to perform only a contributory service, to enhance, illustrate or prove the principal object, never to serve for that the same ornamental and isolated beauty. To forget this is to misread him wilfully. To conclude this great subject hastily but with some show of definiteness, I would incline to hold that the structural theory of The Ring and the Book is admirable; that the arrangement of speakers is beyond criticism, and indeed of far deeper moral significance than is usually suspected—but of this another time; and that in general the poet is able alternately to rouse and quiet our feelings with a mastery rivaling Othello itself; but that he should have done all this in something like two-thirds to one-half of the space.

But what is the grand general import of this second book? Artistically, it is the real introduction to the poem, wherein the plot-motive having already been given us, we first hear the spirit-motive of the piece. Out of the mist of centuries, out of the mass of men then living, emerges the first voice to be heard distinctly above the confusing clamor in which the drama began. Dramatically, the characters begin to hold the stage, the prologue over now, and the curtain up. Morally, its import is terrible. We already know the tragedy of this true story of Italian life—the double dealing, wounded vanities and ruined lives—and the blood bespattered walls of the country villa. Will this first main canto, then, be tragic and terrible? On the contrary, the one species of horror we find is exactly that one species for which we are not prepared. We find Half Rome's narrative untrue, egotistical, vain, petty, like a desert, unrelieved and hideous. There is thrust upon our moral perceptions the same indescribable sensation of futility and exile which the poem of Childs Roland conveyed to us by means of merely physical images. We begin to feel at once the most mournful and desolate of all sentiments. This shallow, paltry, prejudiced man, juggling of things he does not understand—of people he does not understand! This book speaks immediately without reserve the poem's great central message. We see how a small mistake, an innocent deception, may grow the curse of those who practiced it; may grow the double curse of these and others sucked into its depths. We see the true man and woman, loyal to their ideals, compromised by their miserable fortunes, already put in judgment before the bar of course or vapid worldlings. And these worldlings assuming to pronounce judgment without the authority of any law, human or divine! A fitting first scene for the poem; since the poem is the great English epic of misunderstanding; in which Pompilia and the Priest are assailed by Prejudice—by the prejudice of hostile social order, by the prejudice of astigmatic hypocritical friendship, by the prejudice of indifference, of egotism, of unlucky circumstances. Half Rome's horrible moral inapprehensiveness is a piece of the most ghastly and accurate realism. But out of this and because of this realism, towers all the higher the lofty idealism into which the poem rises before the end. And if for the moment we are not permitted to see the ultimate vindication of right, and that sublime moral victory which Pompilia and the Priest in the midst as terrible as truth, it is because the poet has resolved, Virgil-like, to lead us first through the ugliness, injustice and moral squalor of the inferno of this world.



Our Autumn Showing

is a noteworthy exhibit. The styles are of such picturesque beauty of detail as to guarantee becomingness to every woman, whether she may elect to wear a large, medium or small shape. We are showing a wonderful range of styles and invite you to call.

PEERLESS MILLINERY CO.
 108 E. INTENDENCIA. PHONE 667
 FERGUSON BUILDING.

MISS BERNICE BERRY RETURNS TO HER HOME IN SELMA.
 Miss Bernice Berry, who has been the very attractive guest of her brother, Mr. A. D. Berry, on East Cervantes street, left Tuesday for her home

Ready for the Snappy Autumn Days Are These Smart Street Costumes of Ours

There are dozens and scores of delightful surprises among our street Suits and general utility costumes. They're not the ordinary frocks shown in the ordinary shop, and we think (and it's a think based on substantial evidence) that we have the very best in this line to be had. We're leaving all this, however, to the woman who wants a good-looking Fall dress ready to put on. Here's some special emphasis talk, however, on the subject of **Suits for now:**

VERY SPECIAL is our line of medium priced Suits, with a price range, in fact, to suit almost any pocketbook. These Suits come in serges and mercerized materials, some semi-fitted, others 7-8 fits, and the varying styles as accentuated by lines. They are in the fine, satisfactory, practical shades, good for general utility wear, and they range at

\$12.50, \$15, \$17.50, \$18, \$20, \$22.50



Coming in long, sweeping, graceful lines is a line of Suits which have unusually good style and appearance in the popular Moyenne effects.

The coats are semi-fitting, have stylish effects in pockets, tailoring, etc., and in all colors, in a fine grade of serge, and are remarkably satisfactory.

They are like the accompanying cut, and range in pricings from

\$25.00 TO \$45.00

THE THREE-PIECE MISSES' SUITS are also a dainty bit of apparel for the school girl. With the long, good-looking Coat removed you have a beautiful Jumper Suit, piped and button trimmed, and ready for general wear. They look exceptionally good to everyone, are in good serges, in the practical colors, and are in sizes from 8 to 17 years. **\$8.75 to \$25.00**

A Short Talk on Sweaters.
 Sweaters and Knit garments for out-door wear are to be extremely good, this year. They're to be used for golfing, automobiling—most anywhere out of doors—in fact, when the weather's snappy and fine.
 We've anticipated the wishes of lots of people we know who'll be wanting these taking things, and we're showing the finest collection, really.
 The short sweaters, for instance, come in all the staple colors. Some are fancy woven, some plain; some have high necks, some the V-shape. Many have the strap effects so popular in golf models, with pockets and buttons, and so on.
 Then there's the long ones, reaching away down to the hips, warm and cozy and fine for coolish sort of automobile rides at this time of year, and later, or maybe a chance trip on the water.
 These are the extreme late ideas, coming in red, black and white, and good for general utility wear.
 The short, jaunty styles vary in price from **\$1 to \$5**
 The very long, cozy kind come at **\$5, \$6 and \$10**

AND THOSE CO-ED SUITS! And Those Three-Piece Misses' Suits! Those dashing little Co-Ed Suits, popular and suitable from the ages of 8 to 17 years, may be found in our ready-to-wear department—a bit of information for mothers who want to fit the girls up prettily and jauntily for school. They are in navy blue and black, with braid trimmings in striking combinations. The waists come sweater effects with a roll at the bottom, and the emblems and buttons and general trappings make the outfit just naturally stunning. They are in fine serges and come **\$12.50 and \$15**

ONE OF THE PRETTIEST MODELS we are enthusing about this year is a stunning afternoon or calling Suit of wide wail serge, touched with just the right touch of Bengaline trimmings, with self-toned buttons, clever self-trimmings in finely tailored straps, and the whole in the very latest cut of the season. They have the decidedly new backs, in the button and strap effects, and are beautifully lined with a soft silk serge that's delightful! (See cut.) They are in the leading tones and are priced at



\$47.50

A Word About Fownes Gloves.
 We love to talk about Fownes Gloves, because they're so thoroughly satisfactory.
 When people buy and buy and buy a certain glove and still come back for more, it's up to us to be enthusiastic over the aforesaid glove.
 The Fownes Glove is just that sort of glove.
 It's world-wide reputation as a fine fitting, durable sort makes it solid on the glove counters, and the way it suits and continues to please the most fastidious buyers places it in high favor generally with the public.
 Our line of these particular gloves is now delightfully complete. They come, of course, in short kids in the popular shades, and the soft, pretty, shimmering finish for which they're known, makes them liked by clever dressers.
 We've also the popular suede numbers in gray and in black, which are so necessary with some of the Suits.
 The dressed kids are **\$1, \$1.50 and \$2.25**
 The suedes are **\$1.50**

Watson, Parker & Reese Company

Everything to Wear.

WATCH OUR WINDOWS.

MAIL ORDERS SOLICITED.

(Continued on Page Fifteen)