NAPOLI;

OF all the men that ever lived, Napoleon is the one whose character and actions have been the subject of more controversy and discussion than any other. His life and career are a chapter in the annals of history, and his influence on the course of events has been profound. The greatness of his achievements and the extent of his power have made him a figure of intense interest to scholars and students of history. His life has been the subject of countless books and articles, and his legacy continues to be a topic of debate and discussion today. His legacy is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the impact that a single individual can have on the world.
A full list of works of independent value on Napoleon, would comprise at least 200 entries, of from one to twenty volumes each, and even more. We daily form our judgments of men, and consign them to the back seats of the community, on information not amounting to the thousandth part of what is known about Napoleon. About him, then, some Japanese or Brahman might imagine that the final, solid indubitable truth would surely have been reached, and would be much astonished to learn that students are not even agreed as to the main outlines of his character.

Taine, whose characterization of Napoleon is not quite the most unfavorable, represents him as a man who never did anything not calculated. He, alone among the human race, was entirely unsocial. He never wished to confer pleasure, except for some ulterior, cruel purpose of his own. He never had one spark of family affection. He never knew what love was. He could not conceive of an elevated sentiment, and never once, from the day of his birth in Ajaccio, to that of his death on St. Helen's rock, had he ever experienced a feeling which was disinterested, or which contained a disinterested element. Now, Taine is a psychologist, and presumably would not have represented Napoleon as a miraculous violation of every law of mind, without strong proofs.

On the other hand, here comes M. Arthur Lévy, whose views of human nature are said to be drawn from an experience as a successful plumber of Paris. His book is a solid octavo of nearly seven hundred pages, every one bristling with citations from the surest authorities. He presents twenty facts of testimony to every one of Taine's, and from thence as many witnesses. He minutely analyzes Napoleon's conduct under no less than ninety-five distinct aspects, giving chapter and verse, at overwhelming length, under each heading. What, then, is the outcome of this learned plumber's studies? Why, that Napoleon was a plain, middle-class gentleman and citizen ruler, the mainspring of his life a sober sense of duty, a man frugal, upright, warm-hearted and respectable, his one fatal weakness being an excessive tenderness that made him easily overpersuaded and too indulgent toward wrongdoers. Singularly enough, every one of his brothers and sisters is painted in colors of the same tone that Taine uses for Napoleon's own portraitures. Napoleon alone of the family is good and virtuous and quite free from worldly ambition. He would have been as great as he was good but for his unfortunate pliancy. Such is M. Lévy's character of Napoleon.

Readers of Scott, Lanfrey and Taine will suspect us of joking. They will hardly be able to conceive that just *Napoléon entime. Par Arthur Lévy. Paris: 1825.*

this is really the opinion of any sincere student of Napoleon. Yet it is not only maintained, but supported by myriad facts at all points, in which regard to many of which no unbiased mind can resist the evidence. We will just abridge a part of what Lévy says upon a single point. Taine had remarked that nobody was ever comfortable or at his ease in Napoleon's company, whose one idea of conversation was to terrify, plague and torture his interlocutor, unless, indeed, he happened to have some ulterior design. Lévy quotes to the contrary the testimony of the illustrious statesman Chateaubriand, of the dramatist Kotzebue, of the great historian Johann von Müller, of the hostile Hume. Récamier, of the celebrated critic known as Stendhal, of his ministers, Mollien and Canclincourt, of the brave Capitain Guignet, the publicist Metet, of Marshall Marmont, of General Marbot, of Girardin, of the Comte Philippe F. de Séguir, of General Rupp, of the Secretary Méjanes, of the *femme de chambre* Mill. Avrilin, of the major domo de Bausset, of Prince Metternich, of the page Ste. Croix, of Arnault, the perpetual secretary of the Academy, of the learned statesman, Miot de Mélito, of his secretary Fleury de Chaboulin, of his old friend the Duchesse d'Abrantes, of the republican Larrevellière de Léapeux, of the director Gohier, of the son of the adroit Rodeter, of the uncompromising Thibaudieu, of General Savary, of Colonel Sir Nivé Campbell, of the Bourbon General Peyruse, of Sir Frederick Maitland—all of whom speak in the strongest terms of the sweetness, amiability and agreeableness of his conversation. After reading these emphatic testimonies of men who saw him daily, it certainly does seem a little exaggerated to assert, as Taine does, that he always seemed upon the point of flying at his interlocutor's throat.

But the question arises, How is it possible for such contrary characterizations as those of Taine and Lévy to coexist? The answer is not difficult. On the one hand, there were in Napoleon, as the penetrating eye of Metternich clearly saw, two men, the man of home and domesticity, whom nature made, and the man of France and of ambition, who was self-created. The same thing may be said of every person who has intricate projects to carry out; we see it every day. Now, M. Lévy, as his title-page announces, onlyBusies himself with one of these two characters; and by picking out of several hundred volumes all that illustrates one side of the man, while ignoring the other, he makes a picture on the whole ridiculously false, all the in separate features true to life.

The cultured scholar, Taine falls into no crude form of self-deception. But, like most Napoleonographers, he
For the general outline of Napoleon's character Taine relies most on the memoirs of Chapital, of Mme. de Staël, and of Mme de Remusat—the three most perceptive and subtle of all the libels on the most wonderful man of modern times. Taine had seen the "Souvenirs" of Chapital in manuscript; and since Chapital was a man of extraordinary intelligence and force, and on his every page professes worship of Napoleon's greatness, Taine was naturally inclined to accept his account, especially as it well suits Taine's politics. Besides, every writer is inclined to overestimate his own wit, his exclusive mine of information. This year, however, the book has been thought in print, and we can now study it to better advantage, if not better, than Taine was able to do. The extreme and bitter falsity of its general estimate of Napoleon's social character is demonstrable beyond dispute. The reason for this is also manifest. Chapital was a genial, emotional, whole-souled man. In 1844 he was the Emperor of the Minister of the Interior. He was intimately allied with and deeply interested in Mlle. Bourgoin, of the Comédie-Française. Napoleon, no doubt, finding his conduct scarcely becoming to his office, then prepared one of those theatrical coupes, one of those little experiments in moral vivisection to which he was given. It was this: one night, as he and his ministers were working in his cabinet, a lackey came to announce the arrival of Mlle. Bourgoin. Napoleon sent word that she was to wait. Chapital rose, gathered up his papers, and briskly left the room. The same night he wrote his letter of resignation. The impression concerning Napoleon which that moment was imprinted upon Chapital's soul was one that the reflections of years could only deepen. We must not expect in the "Recollections" of this man to find the cold light of reason.

Mme. de Staël was figuring as a political intriguer—in which quality Napoleon held women to be equally fatal to friendship and to foes. Are her statements about Napoleon to be trusted implicitly?

As for Mme. de Remusat, there can be no doubt that she calculated upon great influence with Bonaparte, to say the least; but she found herself wholly disappointed. She made some mischief afterward by her too active sympathies with Josephine in all disputes with Napoleon, and her account has certainly a malicious coloring.

So much for Taine's three-stand-by.

Among the many books for the young that have recently poured in upon us we find room to mention The White Conquerors, by Kirk Munroe (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, $1.50), which is a stirring story of Mexico under Montezuma at the time of the Spanish conquest. Mr. Munroe is at his best in this book. Woody Thane's Pilgrimage, and Other Stories, by J. T. Trowbridge, (Boston, Lee & Shepard, $1.25); a volume containing eleven short stories by a writer who for many years has delighted the boys of America with his wholesome and interesting works—Comte Trepelon, by Jo and Meg (Boston, Roberts Brothers, $1.50), in which are collected six little plays from the manuscripts of the Mlle. sisters. The pieces are somewhat bright and catchy, and have in them the spirit of "Little Women."—Paul Jones, by Molly Elliott Seawell (New York, D. Appleton & Co.): a very entertaining book for boys, the story based upon the exploits of the great naval hero, Paul Jones, and written with excellent simplicity.—Guert Zen Eyck (Boston, D. Lathrop Company, $1.50), a stirring story of early times in our country's history, when Indian fighting was a reality. The book is illustrated.—The Boys of Greenway Court, by Hazilah Butterworth (New York, D. Appleton & Co., $1.50), a tale of the early days of Washington, superbly illustrated. It is a fine, strong romance, which we would recommend to every American boy. To read it is to have a charming experience.—The Princess Marguerite, by John D. Barry (New York, George M. Allen & Co.); an engaging yet sad story, splendidly illustrated and beautifully printed.—More English Fairy Tales, collected and edited by Joseph Jacobs, illustrated by John D. Batman (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, $1.75), is a book of fairy stories excellently made up. The illustrations, the paper, the print, the binding, everything in charming taste. The Chronicles of Fairfield, by Fergus Hume (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, $1.50), is another book of fairy tales, with fantastic pictures and clear, open print.—Ruskin's Stone Stairs. A Tale of the Maharattas, by Captain Claude Bray (New York, Frederick Warne & Co., $1.25), a tale of India in the eighteenth century. It is based upon historical facts more