NEW FICTION.

"Dracula." By Bram Stoker. London: Constable. 1897.

WE had thought that vampires were extinct, but Mr. Bram Stoker has set himself to prove to us the contrary. Or rather he has recreated them with considerable ingenuity and a distinct gift for story-writing of the blood-curdling order. Count Dracula is a vampire of the most exalted kind, for he has lived his life in death for many centuries in his castle in the Carpathians. But Mr. Bram Stoker was not content with the small honour he could have gained by leaving him in an out-of-the-way corner of Europe. That would have been merely to revert to the Mrs. Radcliffe style of fiction. So Count Dracula is brought to London, and Jonathan Harker, a quite ordinary every-day solicitor, has a very bad time with him indeed, both in the Carpathians and in England. The vampire Count is hunted down with all the paraphernalia of modern science, combined with the charms and exorcisms of an earlier age, and there is a tremendously exciting pursuit before he is finally cornered. Then his throat is cut, his heart pierced, and his body crumbles into dust. We ourselves confess to a sigh of relief when we knew that so dangerous and literally blood-thirsty a person had ceased to exist, and that Mina Harker was no longer in danger of becoming a vampire like her friend Lucy. Mr. Bram Stoker cannot boast of any elegance of style, but at least he is plain and straightforward, and tells his story without any of the vulgar claptrap and magniloquent balderdash with which some writers of this class of fiction disfigure their books. Moreover he has been at the pains to get up very carefully all that can be gathered of vampire lore, and has made his book a complete treatise on the habits and customs of these strange beasts. There are many readers who like to sup full of horrors and to feel their flesh creep, and "Dracula" is undoubtedly the book for their money. Nervous persons, young children and sufferers from delirium tremens, will do well not to look within its covers.

"An African Millionaire." By Grant Allen. London: Grant Richards. 1897.

This is not a "Hill Top Novel." It is simply a collection of magazine stories of the Sherlock Holmes type. Nevertheless it is also a book with a purpose, for it is written to enlist our sympathies with a swindler and to persuade us that millionaires are fools and fair game for the quick-witted. Sir Charles Van Drift is the African millionaire, and is a type with which the Drury Lane autumn drama has made us familiar. That is to say, he is a bit of an ass and a good deal of a rogue. The swindler, Colonel Clay, is really Paul Finglemore, the brother of the millionaire's broker, and by clever disguises and ingenious tricks he bleeds Sir Charles of large sums. It is a pity Mr. Grant Allen has not drawn him more clearly. He is only a shadow who flits across the pages, and his insubstantiality is a hindrance to our full belief in his cleverness. It is to be admitted, however, that we do feel sorry for him when at last he is nabbed, and we are glad that Sir Charles Van Drift and his rascal of a brother-in-law and private secretary, Seymour Wentworth, have a bad quarter of an hour in the witness-box under his cross-examination. Mr. Grant Allen has undoubted talents as a story-teller, and as this is one of the books he writes merely to bring grist to his mill, it is much better than those he writes with a lofty social purpose. Accepting the *dramatis personæ* of "An African Millionaire" as the conventional type of a Socialist novelist's characterization, the book may be recommended as a very readable series of stories of a kind that are tremendously popular with the readers of the sixpenny illustrated magazines.

"In Russet Mantle Clad." By George Morley. London: Skeffington. 1897.

The advertisement tells us that Mr. Morley has endeavoured to do for Warwickshire what Thomas Hardy has done for Wessex and Richard Jefferies for Wiltshire. It is Mr. Morley's misfortune that he has scarcely the qualifications of either of these two for his task, even though he be, as he comprehensively boasts, "a native who knows every mead, stream, hill, cottage, farmhouse, manor, lane and hedge-row of the ground traversed." In such a book as he has attempted to write, literary skill and a gift of style are essentials, and they are clearly not possessed by a writer who talks of sheep "chewing the happy cud of a bright summer day," who calls them "ovines" four times in the course of a page and a half, and who compares a sparrow-hawk, poised for its descent, to a sky sign. The book is expensively produced, and has some good process reproductions of photographs of Warwickshire scenery.

LITERARY NOTES.

THE last few days at Sotheby's will become historical in the annals of book sales, not alone for the unique value of the Ashburnham collection, but for the new records in prices established. Thus on Monday the total reached £9,788, the highest by some two thousand pounds ever realized in a single day's sale of books. That rare volumes may be a good investment as well as a luxury is proved by the fact that this sum shows a profit of £3,000 on the original prices paid by the late Earl. Mr. Quaritch again vindicated his position as our greatest bibliophile by securing the lion's share of the treasures. It is impossible in the space of a paragraph to touch upon even the more notable works disposed of. On the opening day the chief honours must rest with the *Editio Princeps* of Aristotle's "Opera Varia," printed at Venice by Andreæ de Asula on vellum, in 1483, which fell to Mr. Quaritch for £800. The following day was remarkable for a record price given for a printed book. This was the £360 paid for the unique edition of "A Treatyse on Fysshynge with an Angle," from Dame Juliana Barnes's "Boke of Hawkynge," printed by Wynkyn de Worde, probably in 1532. It contains only sixteen leaves, with cuts, and in 1826 was purchased by Messrs. Longman for nineteen guineas. Monday was the great Bible day, upon which such intense interest has been centred. The first item was the extremely scarce Biblia Pauperum, probable date 1430, which fell for £1,050. Then came the Gutenberg Bible, which is the first printed edition of the Scriptures and the premier book printed from metal type. This superbly ornamental copy was bought by Lord Ashburnham in 1873 at the Perkins sale for £3,400, a figure beaten on Monday by six hundred pounds, thus making another record. A vellum copy of the second edition of the Latin Bible, printed by Furst and Schoiffher, and the first to bear a date, 1462, realized £1,500. The concluding days of the sale will be noticed in next week's issue.

Messrs. Putnam's Sons' new publications include a fully illustrated volume on "The Ayrshire Homes and Haunts of Burns," by H. C. Shelley; and "Religions of Primitive People," by Mr. Daniel Brinton, being the second series of American Lectures on the History of Religions.

The fourth and last volume of the "Life of Dr. Pusey," by Dr. Henry Parry Liddon, is in course of preparation by Messrs. Longmans.

"Possessed of Devils" is the title which Mrs. H. E. Gorst has chosen for her new novel. The author, a daughter-in-law of Sir John Gorst, has secured the good offices of Mr. Macqueen to publish her volume.

Messrs. Putnam's Sons will shortly issue a translation of M. Georges Pellisier's "Literary Movement in France during the Nineteenth Century," "The Life of Abby Hopper Gibbons," a Quaker biography by Sarah Hopper Emerson, and a volume of verse by Mr. Ellis Stevens entitled "The Romance of Arenfels, and other Tales of the Rhine."

The latest addition to Messrs. Bell & Son's series of "Royal Navy Handbooks" is a volume on "Naval Gunnery," by Captain H. Garbett, in which the author deals technically and historically with the fighting equipment of a man-of-war.

Messrs. Virtue & Co. are issuing a new edition of