of Boston, U.S.A., to say that he has a book published in London, 1733, the third edition of "Oliver Cromwell's Compact with the Devil for Seven Years on the day on which he gained the battle at Worcester, and on which Day, at the Expiration of the said Term, he afterwards died." This supplementary information will, I think, be of interest.

J. Langfield Ward.

G. C. Moore Smith.

Sheffield University.

ROYAL ARTILLERY (11 S. xii. 421).—In The Times of 13 May, 1867, appears the following announcement:—

"On 10th inst. in London, Philipp Vansittart Onslow, late of Alfrick in the County of Worcester, aged 76";

and in that of 16 Dec., 1854, the following:—

"On 14th inst., Augustus Charles Stapleton Somerset, Esq., youngest son of the late Lieut.-General Lord Robert Henry Somerset, aged 33."

A. H. Maclean.

Notes on Books.

Common Conditions. Edited by Tucker Brooke. "Elizabethan Club Reprints," No. I. (Oxford University Press, 10s. 6d. net.)

With this black-letter reprint of "a newe and pleasant comedie or playe," the Elizabethan Club, representing the scholarship and taste of America, makes a highly promising start in its publishing enterprise. The editor is the Assistant-Professor of English in Yale University, and the work has the imprimatur of his University Press, together with those of Oxford and London. Thus an old English play has received merited attention in a way that proves how thoroughly alive American scholars are to the value of even by-ways in English literature, and how readily their services are recognized and supported here. This evidence of mutual interest and co-operation is pleasant to contemplate, and is a factor of illustrative significance in the grand relationship that constitutes the republic of letters.

Two copies of 'Common Conditions' would appear to have come safely down through the centuries. One, which is in a fragmentary state, is known as the Chatsworth copy from having been in the possession of the ducal house of Devonshire; the other is the version which has at length got a full and definite setting at the Yale University Press. There are references to the play by stage chroniclers and others, from the middle of the seventeenth century onwards, and it would seem that now the one copy and then the other had come under critical observation. Towards the end of the eighteenth century Malone and Steevens had worked at the imperfect quarto, which became the property of the Duke of Devonshire in 1854, and passed to Mr. Huntington of New York in 1814. The other had been known to booksellers and some literary experts in the seventeenth century, and in or about 1690 was added to the Mostyn Hall Library in North Wales. At the sale there in 1907 it was bought by Mr. Bernard Quaritch, and it presently crossed the Atlantic and is now in the Elizabethan Club Library.

In a careful and lucid Introduction Mr. Brooke characterizes the copies, and makes it quite clear that the one from which he has printed is practically complete, and that it is earlier and more accurate in text than the other.

The play fully deserves the minute and careful editing it has now received. Licensed on 26 July, 1576, it is in some ways a superior example of the transitional products that led to the grand dramatic development at the end of the century. Its title is allegorical, being designed to indicate the influences that steadily led human experience in the direction that "Common Conditions" is the name of the Vice, who poses occasionally as Master Affection and as Gravity, while once explicitly saying, "Mediocritie is my name though conditions they mee-call." He is a droll, whimsical, versatile, and altogether interesting figure, in whom, as Mr. Brooke says, the author seeks to read a parable of the common conditions of life. He adds that the rules for which he has supplied a pair of "a doubtfully named Mediocritias aurea." The story is of Oriental origin, "drawne," says the title-page, "out of the most famous historie of Galiarbus Duke of Arabia." The source seems to be unknown, but the drama is elaborated at great length and is obviously unfinished. The close as it stands is tragical, two pairs of lovers being in woeful plight, while the author apologetically announces that time will not admit of more. "He writes only the catastrophe, leaving spectator and reader anxious and disappointed."

The piece is written in the heptameter couplet, which was a fashion at the time, and here and there exhibits poetic insight and vigour of declamation, although there are sad lapses, not only in expression, but also in metre and rhythm. The author, however, could observe, and more than once he makes his distracted lovers draw effectively upon both nature and art when rhetorically expressing their deeper emotions. Certain rough lyrics, incidentally given to tinkers and piratical sea-dogs respectively, are valuable both for their native quality and their historical import. One or two gnomic observations are noteworthy. One speaker gives an early form—perhaps, indeed, it is the earliest in the language—of a dictum that has become proverbial, when he says, "Experience showes faint harted knights winne never fayre ladies." Again, he is credited at a critical moment with the inspiring assurance that "tis good to be merry and wise," which is familiar in a slightly varied form in a fragment of Scottish song. Alliteration is a noticeable feature of the verse, and it is interesting to add that "for why" in the sense of "because"—recently discussed in 'N. & Q.'—frequently occurs throughout the play.