

THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

What is Doing in the Literary World.

The voracious chronicler of the New York Evening Sun turns his eagle eye upon authors and publishers, with the following entertaining result:

Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich is engaged on a new novel. This is refreshing news in these days when most writers are more or less engaged on old novels.

Max O'Rell's *Impressions of America* are selling so well that the great romancer will probably return to this country next year for a new batch.

The poems of Minster Phelps have not yet been published in book form, but he is said to contemplate getting up a large paper illustrated edition of "Essex Junction" to send to his dear friend, the Queen.

The report that Queen Victoria ordered the Laureate to write a comic valentine for her to send to the Emperor William is denied by close friends of the poet.

Admiral Luce is said to be busily engaged on a Haytian war paper for a St. Domingo magazine.

Mr. Edison has just perfected an electrical contrivance that will reject poems. It is likely to be of great assistance to editors.

The rumor that Mr. Andrew Lang can write an essay with each hand while dictating a poem with his mouth is not founded on fact.

It is reported on Park Row that to get a great call on other metropolitan journals Col. Shepard is going to have the whole of the New Testament cabled over from London and printed in next Saturday night's *Mail and Express*.

The *Century's* new dictionary is progressing rapidly. Much regret is expressed that the company should have gone to press without the word chump. An appendix will have to be published in connection with the work.

It is interesting to know that one of the causes of the unpleasantness between Queen Victoria and the Emperor William is that the leaves of William's copy of his grandmother's book have never been cut, though he has had the book nearly five years.

An Unfamiliar Classic.

Somebody in England who wrote something which nobody would publish, partly for a joke, partly for revenge, took the trouble to copy Milton's *Sampson Agonistes*, gave it the title of *Like a Giant Refreshed*, and sent it the rounds as an original poem. It was sent to publisher after publisher, and not once was it recognized. Publisher No. 1 said the market was flooded with sensational stories, and that he must decline to publish it, although a work of considerable promise. No. 2, in declining, said the poem was clever, but its reflections trite, and the meaning here and there obscure; it might be improved by revision. No. 3 said it was bright and clever, and that he would publish it if the author would take half the risk. No. 4 said he would publish the poem, but at the entire risk and cost of the author. No. 5 said the work was not without merit, but he had so many important books coming out that he had no room for anything not of the first class. Then the magazines were tried. One editor said the poem was suggested by Rider Haggard's works! Poor Milton! The general opinion of the various editors was that the poem was too long, and the gentleman who was sending *Sampson* about, came to the conclusion that in some magazines you could get in anything if it was short enough. It seems almost incredible that this famous sacred drama should be unknown by these publishers and editors, but as many of their letters have been printed, we are forced to believe that such is the case.—*Carter Troop, M. A., in the Trinity University Review.*

A Good Issue of a Good Series.

The latest volume in Ticknor's Paper series is *A Woman of Honor*, by H. C. Bunner, the editor of *Puck*, and author of *Midge, The Story of a New-York House*, etc. The dialogue is crisp and sparkling, as might be expected. Some of the sketches are evidently portraits of well-known Americans, delicately and brightly outlined, and well-drawn types of New York character are handled with great skill, while the plot is unusual as well as intricate. The great success of the preceding novel of this series, *The Desmond Hundred*, which has been regarded in many quarters as an able answer to *Robert Elsmere*, has given rise to an unexpected demand for its predecessors and those that will follow it, and Mr. Bunner's brilliant and vivacious story is sure of a high degree of success. It is for sale by Alfred Morrissey. Price, 50 cents.

Notes and Announcements.

Amelie Rives-Chandler is said to be putting the finishing touches on a novel the scene of which is laid in Russia.

Robert Louis Stevenson is writing a tale of adventure in the South seas, and it will appear serially in England this year.

An English literary paper says that the story is going the rounds that Mr. Alfred Austin is to be the next laureate, if he should survive Tennyson.

Henry James will contribute to the *March Scribner* "An Animated Conversation" on international topics between Americans and Englishmen who meet in a London hotel. The paper is in dialogue form.

The author of that powerful but unpleasant novel, *The Silence of Dean Maitland*, and of *The Reproach of Annesley*, now running in *Murray's Magazine*, is a lady. "Maxwell Gray" is a *nom de plume*, the lady's real name being Uttiel. She is a hopeless invalid—the only child of a physician practising in the Isle of Wight. Lord Tennyson is said to be a strong admirer of her genius.

"Comments on Canada," by Charles Dudley Warner, accompanied by a striking portrait of the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, appears in *Harper's Magazine* for March, just published. The article describes the topography, climate, system of government of the Dominion and of the provinces, and the political issues; and the author gives his views on the Canadian

sentiment towards England, on the French Canadian element, on retaliation and commercial reciprocity, annexation and independence, and the future of the Dominion. Mr. Warner is an accurate and sympathetic observer, and his opinions will doubtless command the attention which they deserve. This number also contains beautifully illustrated articles on the Institute of France; Vienna; Norway and its people; William Chase, painter, etc.

The D. Lathrop company have in press a book entitled *Vagabond Tales* which contains a collection of Prof. Boyesen's latest stories. Some of the stories in this collection have already been translated into French, German and Spanish.

John Delay, of New York, announces a new series of translations from the French, Spanish, Danish, etc., to be entitled *Gleanings from Foreign Authors*. Only the best works of contemporary writers will be included. The first number contains: *A Love Match*, by Ludovic Halevy, and *King Aepi*, by Victor Cherbuliez.

Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's marriage gave her international copyright. She is an Englishwoman born, and being married to an American citizen, she is able to secure the copyright of her books in both the United States and in England. This gives her a great advantage over authors who are British subjects, and who are consequently unable to obtain a copyright in the states.—*Court Journal.*

A curious little book of sketches will shortly be brought out, under the joint editorship of Mrs. Mona Caird and Mr. Oscar Wilde. A friend of the latter amused himself, at the time the "Is Marriage a Failure?" question was raging, by making imaginary sketches of the writers of the published letters; this now forms an amusing collection, and a few of Mr. Wilde's choicest epigrams will add to its piquancy.

Mrs. Oliphant is preparing a sketch of Laurence Oliphant, which will include a notice of his first wife, who was in great measure instrumental in his conversion to the peculiar doctrines of the Lake Erie apostle, Harris. The paper will contain also an account of his Haifa undertaking, which Mrs. Rosamond Dale Oliphant will carry on with the assistance of two Glasgow professors who have embraced the same views.

Whoever had the making up of the pages of Mrs. Herring's delightful article on Gerome, in the February *Century*, was certainly possessed of a spirit of diablerie when he inserted a half column cut of a monkey from the painting of "La Pyrrhique," accompanying the following letter press: "This picture which hangs on the wall of the Salon, under the title of 'The Dream,' represents a poet reclining on the sands by the sea."

The *Saturday Review* writes entertainingly of the decay of political caricature, and ascribes it to the lessening influence of the individual. In the palmy days of English political caricature Lord Palmerston in the public mind stood for John Bull. Later, but in the same way, Disraeli was conservatism personified. The same change has been remarked in this country. And in proportion to this lessening of personal influence caricature has lost its genial character and mounted a sting.

It may not be generally known that some of the most successful, as well as some of the most excellent books published by American authors are written by what might be called western people, that is by people who were born at least as far west as Ohio or Illinois. Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have just issued a classified catalogue of their books by western authors whose works are published by them who reside in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio, or some other western state.

There is no stronger proof of the great change that has swept over mankind than the sight of a nation which used to chuckle over *Tom Jones* now absorbing countless editions of *Robert Elsmere*. What is droll-er still is that the people who read *Robert Elsmere* would think it wrong to enjoy *Tom Jones*, and that the people who enjoyed *Tom Jones* would have thought it wrong to read *Robert Elsmere*; and that the people who, wishing to be on the safe side of virtue, think it wrong to read either, are scorned greatly as lacking true moral discrimination.—*Ages Replier in the Atlantic Monthly for February.*

Mr. W. S. Lilly's "The Foundation of Ethics," the first of the series of papers written by him, has excited lively comment, both at Princeton and Yale. Mr. Lilly is a graduate of the London university, and is now a leading psychologist, with leanings toward the school of Prof. Bain, and opposed to that of Spencer, whose views this first article was directed against. The four papers to follow in the *Forum* will be more popular in character, and will treat respectively of the "Ethics of Journalism," "Art," "Advocacy" and "Politics."

The rapid increase and great power of the Nationalist clubs, now organizing all over the United States, is a notable proof of the electric growth of the new industrial revolution, peaceful, but powerful and far-reaching. The text-book and inspiration of this important movement, Edward Bellamy's wonderful prophetic romance, *Looking Backward*—published by Ticknor & Co.—is now selling at the astonishing rate of 1,000 copies and upwards a week. The fact that this book is going out among the people in such amazing numbers, affords an index of the growth of the Nationalist clubs which use it in their active propaganda.

If you want a situation, I want 20 cents in a "Progress" want.

MUSIC, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

From all accounts, it seems that the poverty attending the tragedy of Ilma di Murska's death was mainly occasioned by her deep and apparently unrequited affection for her daughter. Both her and her daughter's remains have been cremated, and on the urn that contains the ashes of the Hungarian *prima donna assoluta* is the inscription, "Here lie the ashes of a nightingale."

In the Ronconi controversy, still going on in the *American Musician*, in which, I need not say again, his theory (if such it can be called) is being made game of by the leading musicians of the states, one correspondent from Illinois finishes his letter with a delicious paragraph. It is as follows:

It is to be hoped that the signor may evade the flies, when summer comes; otherwise he may be lost in the flesh and his spirit be compelled to sit on the wet end of a cloud, and play a harp while he sings high bass.

James Payn in his "Note Book," in the *Illustrated London News*, speaking of the new cantata of *Pickwick*, words by F. C. Burnand, says: "As to the music by Mr. Solomon (I presume he means E. Solomon) I am told it is 'delicious,' but I have not heard it nor would my opinion upon it be worth the twopence (so freely offered for opinion by the late Duke of Wellington) if I had. I have however, (surreptitiously and improperly it may be) . . . obtained a sight of the libretto and the songs are charming." He then gives four verses of Mrs. Bardell's song, "My Next, My Next," a capital parody of "My Queen," and also three verses of Sam Weller's song, "The Happy Valet."

Speaking of the Listemann company at a recent concert, the *Boston Times*, after lavish praise of Herr Listemann and his work, says:

The serenade for strings and flute brought Mr. Ronconi's abilities to the front, and his tone was clear and pure throughout; especially did he do creditable work in the nocturno movement. How he managed to do himself justice was a wonder, for he had a painful wound in his "active" hand, which would have incapacitated a man of less self-possession.

I have seldom read a programme with better selections throughout than that arranged for the K. of P. concert, last Tuesday evening. I much regret not having been present, but illness has confined me to the house for the week, which accounts for my not being able to say anything about it.

I shall be glad, for one, to see Mr. Gubb back as organist of Trinity church, and so, it seems, would a large number of the congregation and choir. A petition with such an object has been circulated and largely signed, I believe. What effect this will have on the rector and powers that be, who can say?

Those who go to hear *The Yeomen of the Guard*, expecting that, from a musical standpoint, it will please in the same manner that *Pinafore*, *Jolanthe*, or *Mikado* pleased, will be sadly disappointed. It is not an opera of ditties and popular airs.

It is, nevertheless, full of music which the lover of good music will enjoy and appreciate. Sir Arthur Sullivan has soared above the realms of comic opera composition, and, if he falls short of the style belonging to grand opera, he is, in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, nearer to it than to that style to which he has accustomed us in the past.

So says the critic of the *Boston Times*. FELIX.

TALK OF THE THEATRE.

A man-milliner who has had an extensive theatrical connection has been telling the New York *Sun* that the ladies of the stage aren't all peaches and cream. He insinuates that they are hard to please and that when any dispute arises over an account the fair patron is very well satisfied to have the case taken into court. She goes there in the character of a wronged woman. The jury-men, who don't know she is loaded, are altogether swayed by her smiles and her tears and the plaintiff's verdict is a very light one. Serves him right. He ought to know that with professional people emotion has a cash value and sentiment is never displayed gratis.

Mrs. Langtry and Mrs. Potter have been competing in the legitimate drama in New York, this week. That suggests a cripple's dance.

Den Thompson's *Old Homestead* and Mrs. Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* are becoming fixtures in Gotham. Strangers in the city are sure to see them, and people who have seen them once go again as naturally as they go to church. Both plays are full of human nature at its best and they preach very powerful sermons—sugar coated ones.

I notice that Charles H. Hoyt, of *Rag Baby* fame, is preparing to spring another alleged comedy on the public. It will be safer for him to do it now than to wait till fly-time.

From St. Louis comes the intelligence that another great theatrical partnership has been formed. W. J. Florence and Joseph Jefferson, the two comedians, will

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