PROGRESS, SATURDAY, MAY

Two Important Books.

I. Prof. Alexander's volume \* is a very important addition to the body of what is known as Browning literature, and must take rank at once with the half dozen handbooks which no student of Browning can dispense with. In our young Canadian literature it takes a yet more prominent place. Though lacking the exquisite delicacy and poetic flavor of Mr. Dawson's Study of the Princess, it must, I think, be at once acknowledged as the weightiest thing Canada has so far produced in the department of literary criticism. Dr. like order, while the romance and fascina-Alexander's criticisms, to speak generally, tion of the story are not impaired. The are sound, careful and temperate. His book is accompanied by abundant and adepages are free from that tendency to erratic and "wild-cat" theorizing by which so many dilettante critics of our day strive to gain at least a notoriety. Prof. Alexander cannot be regarded as a victim of the Browning fad, in any sense. He loves Browning both well and wisely, keeping his eyes open to his defects, and making no wildly extravagant claims in regard to him. The aim of Dr. Alexander's work is not to persuade men that Browning is the supreme genius of our race since Shakspeare, but to help us to an appreciation of what I think posterity will regard as a selfevident fact, viz., that Browning is one of the three or four master poets of the age, although, at first view, "confessedly difficult and repellant." Such careful exposition and unexaggerated admiration as we find in this hand-book can hardly fail of their purpose. The analysis of Sordello is an admirable piece of work, in which even the accomplished Browningite may well find help and suggestion. For my own part, I felt, on reading it, that had I only been thus assisted on my first encounter with that inscrutable poem, I had been saved much confusion and vexation of spirit. I would speak with special commendation, too, of the chapters on "Browning's Philosophy" and "Browning's Theory of Art."

The chief defect of the work is a negative one, which I would fain see remedied in a later edition; though the point is one on which Prof. Alexander may join issue with me. There is a side of Browning's genius which Prof. Alexander has seemed to ignore; and the reader of Browning who fails to perceive that side overlooks one of Browning's securest titles to immortality. I refer to such strange and admirable lyric power as we find in "Abt Vogler," "In a Gondola," "Never the Time and the Place," "Love Among the Ruins," "A Toccata of Galuppi's," and half a score of poems besides, whose swing and music are hardly surpassed by the most dithyrambic of our poets. Who sees not these qualities sees not the whole of Browning's greatness, and sees not that side of Browning which secures him the perpetual adoration of poets. It is perhaps to Browning's subtle mastery of anapæstic rhythms that we owe much of the splendor of Swinburne, who has studied Browning closely. Browning, in fact, can be as captivating as any of his fellows; and that lyric power of his, all too seldom exercised, cannot be overlooked. Dr. Alexander has been so engrossed with the psychological and analytic Browning that he has paid, I think, too little heed to the Browning who sings:

O Lyric Love, half angel and half bird, And all a wonder and a wild desire.

There are two other points to which I would take exception, though they are so small that I may be thought hypercritical. To say "Homer would not write a great epic, were he alive now; nor Shakspeare, great dramas," is to state what may be true, with certain qualifications. But it sounds rash to dogmatize on so sweeping a universal. I would with great diffidence suggest to Dr. Alexander a little enlargement upon his idea, as a safeguard against misapprehension. I would make the same suggestion in regard to a parenthetical remark on page 109. Dr. Alexander says: "When Homer (did such a person ever exist) wrote the Iliad," etc. It seems to viol, is gone; and Paul Hamilton Hayne, the imme that there is nothing gained by the parenthesis. The idea it contains is surely worth a paragraph, if it is to be brought honey from Hymettus. Of the more eminent singforward at all in this connection. To merely throw out the query, and leave it, is likely to cause mystification and unpleasant doubt in the minds of younger readers. But enough of fault-finding. It is seldom a book of this sort leaves so little room for censure. That it will be found useful even in the most advanced Browning societies may reasonably be inferred, in view of the fact that a prominent Browning authority recently confessed to me that he had never read beyond the 2nd part of The Ring and the Book, and that the Browning society of a great American city recently urged upon its members that, in preparation for much, Mr. Sharp, concerning some of our recent Mary Burk and Winnie Harper, and the recitations a Browning evening, they should read at least the introduction and part I. of that poem. Yet The Ring and the Book is Browning's magnum opus.

II. Among the manuals of history which are now pouring in such profusion from the press, I select for special commendation the little volume † lately put forth by Prof. Emerton, of Harvard. The period of which it treats is one which most historians

\* Introduction to the Poetry of Robert Browning. By Wm. J. Alexander, Ph.D. Boston: Ginn & Co.

† Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages. By Ephraim Emerton, Ph.D. Boston: Ginn & Co.

ton conducts us through it by clear and delightful paths. Those middle ages, which are so enveloped in romance and myth that we find it difficult to regard them as other than the fabric of a fairy tale, were fruitful with the germs of all our modern civilization. One who would comprehend the aims of conflicting nationalities in the present day, and look with some degree of intelligent forecast into the political future, must seek his cues in the bewildering tangle that gathered about the death of the Western Empire. In the work of Prof. Emerton he will find the tangle brought into something quate maps, and the large, clean type and good paper assist the charm of the lucid

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

### Notes and Announcements.

Early in June, Longmans, Green & Co. will issue in New York the first number of The New Review, an English monthly started by Mr. Archibald Grove, a young Oxford man. In the strength of its articles and in the reputation of its contributors it is to rival the Nineteenth Century; while its low price will put it within reach of a far wider public. Three Americans, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Henry George, and Mr. Henry James are among the contributors to the first number.

Dr. Titus Munson Coan's suggestive paper on "Taking Pains in Writing" is the best of many good things in the May number of The Writer. Other excellent articles are, "The Magazine 'Reader'," by Elizabeth Greenleaf, "Shorthand in Newspaper Work," by Fred Irland, and "Typewriting Contests," by Clarence E. Brown. The departments give, in the space of fourteen pages, a hundred hints that every "writer" wants or ought to know. Mr. Hill's bright little magazine is so well established now that it seems hardly likely that any literary worker can remain unaware of its existence. If any such unfortunate there be, Charles and Lady Tupper. he will thank us for urging him to enlighten | Sackville, were in town on Monday, driving a very his ignorance at once.-Boston: William pretty team. H. Hills. Price, \$1 a year, 10 cents a

Gerald Massey, who had some promise as a poet some 40 years ago, but who has since devoted himself to Spiritualism (so called) and the elucidation of Shakespeare's Sonnets, is about to reissue, in two vol umes, a collected edition of his early and late verse. He seeks to commend his wares to the public in a prospectus, wherein he says, in regard to his collection, which is to be called My Lyrical Life: "My poems have never had a publisher to keep them before the public, and the separate volumes have now been out of print for many years. I do not think they are wholly outgrown and superseded, or I should not have reprinted them. Some of my earlier critics prophesied that my books contained immortal verse; but whether they do or not must be ultimately determined by that furnace and crucible of the future which awaits the work of all. I have called them My Lyrical Life because that only includes one half of my literary life." Mr. William Sharp, one of the minor British

singers, and at the same time one of the most confident of critics, contributes to the April number of the National Review a paper on "The Sonnet in America," in which he essays to sum up the merits and defects of living or late American poets. "It is not to be gainsaid," he remarks, "as that acute and able critic, Mr. E. C. Stedman, admits, there is 'a lull in the force and efficiency of American song. Longfellow has ceased his clear and beautiful singing, and Bryant's stately measures seem to belong to an altogether bygone period. Poe, the most exaggeratedly praised and the most exaggeratedly condemned of all modern poets, long since threw away the lute of Israfel on which he played so wildly well. Emerson, potentially the greatest of American poets, rests beside a comrade to whom rhythmic metrical speech was more emphatically denied, his friend Thoreau, who, like him, now slumbers deep in Sleepy Hollow. Bayard Taylor, so beloved, so full of high hope and so pathetically foredoomed to a fame that must grow scantier with advancing years; he, too, is dead, and others of less repute, though of singular promise. Sidney Lanier, the musician whom some caprice of nature thwarted of his birthright, and left him the blind desire to play with words as he would fain have played with notes and chords, giving him the pen instead of the passioned but too impetuous, too regardlessly profuse singer of the South; with others still, whose lips were anointed, in whatsoever measure, with ers, still happy in what one of them calls

This lowly sunlit ball that moves, And gleams for a little while 'twixt dark and dark, One naturally recalls at once the venerable Whittier, whose sweet-briar song, however, is now seldom heard; Oliver Wendell Holmes, at once so quaint and so excellent, from whom the most exigent must no longer demand rivalries of past achievements; James Russell Lowell, vigorous, clear-eyed, clearvoiced, and now in the calm which follows rather than that which precedes high productiveness; Walt Whitman, stricken in years and health, but as serene as of yore, still alert to all the infinite possibilities of his own soul and of mankind in general, still oblivious to the unredeemable commonplaces of his barbaric chant; and Richard Henry Stoddard master of the ode and most spontaneously lyrical of all who lilt 'twixt Athenian Boston and Sunset." Thus singers. For the subject of his paper, "The Sonnet in America," one might say, it one were illnatured, that it need not have occupied more words than the famous chapter on snakes in Ireland, viz.: "There are no sonnets in America."-New York Mail and Express.

Cool and refreshing drinks at the "National," 22 Charlotte street.

STICK TO YOUR FLANNELS. Stick to your flannels, Tom, Till the end of May : Don't take them off, my boy, And catch pneumonia.

Stick to your flannels, Tom, However glows the sun, Or you will be an angel, Tom, Before the spring is done.

TRURO, N. S.

May 15 .- Mrs. John Robbins, wife of the popular pastor of the First Presbyterian church, returned home, on Friday, from Toronto, where she has been

hall, are enjoying a visit to friends in Boston and

Mr. T. S. Patillo, so long and well-known in connection with D. H. Smith & Co., purposes, ere long, opening a business of his own, in the store lately occupied by John McCullogh. We wish Mr. Patillo

Messrs. Wm. Birrill, O. C. Cummings, W. D. Dimock and H. Blair enjoyed a most lucrative fishing excursion, for a few days, last week.

on Monday for England, via New York. Dr. W. F. McNutt, formerly of this town, who now holds a professorship of medicine in the California University, and is vice-president of the Medical society of the same state, was a candidate in the

Frances Ambrose, arrived here from California, last Thursday. She has been visiting her son, Mr. H. C. Ambrose, district superintendent S. P. R. R. Mr. George B. Layton, whose new business interests in New Glasgow will oblige him now to make his home there, has sold his home on Queen street, to Mr. John Chisholm, of Antigonish, who, in retiring from business, has decided to come to Truro

Mr. and Mrs. James Pitblado and family, as intimated, left on Wednesday, to the regret of many friends, for Los Angelos, Cal., where their future

Rehearsals for the minstrel show, the proceeds of which are to assist the C. and A. club, are being

Much regret is felt among the superior and subretirement of Miss Miller, whose work among those who came under her immediate care was so success

PROGRESS is for sale in Amherst at G. G. Bird's

Miss Evie Bent was suddenly called to Halifax

Rev. Cecil and Mrs. Wiggins, of Sackville, were in town on Monday paying visits.

Mr. Edward Sutcliffe, of Halifax, was here this week visiting his relatives. Senator and Mrs. Dickey entertained a select

party at dinner one evening last week. At a small party given lately some of our late arrivals were present, and showed their want of gallantry by allowing the young ladies to go home without an escort. The hostess is quite indignant at

Among them I met Col. Stewart and Col. Clerke, of Halifax, the popular collector of customs at Sackville, Mr. W. C. Milner, and Judge Townshend, who was attending a heavy land sale belonging to

[PROGRESS is for sale in Calais by Gillis Bros.] May 15 .- A lovely masquerade party matronized by Mrs. Downes was given in Eaton hall on Tuesday evening by a number of the little folk of Calais. The hall was prettily trimmed with flags and flowers. Dancing was enjoyed until 12 o'clock. There were a number of pretty girls present, but Miss McGregor of St. John deserves special mention. The guests were Misses Helen McNichol, Mabel Murchie, Nettie Murchie, Graham, Alice Boardman, Clara Jordan, Fannie Lowell, Helen Newton, Alice Waite and Mattie Nichols, and Masters Charles Black, George Eaton, Lee Porter, John Nichols, Fred Mc Nichol, Guy Murchie and Harry Graham, The costumes were very pretty and original. Cake and ice cream were served throughout the evening. Miss Mina Downes left Calais on Friday for Boston. She is the guest of her aunt, Mrs. F. Emerson, No. 64 Huntington avenue.

Mr. George F. Townsend left for his home in Minneapolis, Monday morning, much to the regret of his many friends in Calais. Mr. Townsend is a son of Dr. Townsend of this city and was obliged to come east on account of ill health. As the climate of the St. Croix valley restores all invalids, Mr.

Mr. John L. Thomas spent Sunday with his friends in St. John. Mr. Thomas has won many friends

luring his stay in Calais. The host of Calais friends of Mr. John Hayden, of Tacoma will regret to learn that he is confined to the

# SHEDIAC.

[Progress is for sale in Shediac at H. Stewart's

May 15 .- The concert given by the grammar and primary schools came off last Thursday night in Tait's hall. It was in every way a success and reflected great credit on all those who took part. The Misses Jennie Webster and Winnie Harper did their parts well as organists. Among the pieces worthy of notice were the duet given by Miss Nellie Harfrom the primary department. But the principal feature of the evening was the novel and interesting Broom Drill, in which sixteen of the young ladies from the high school took part, under the leadership of Capt. Mabel Morrison.

Mrs. H. S. Bell, of Moncton, spent a few days here

# have hopelessly befogged, but Prof. Emer- SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

[FOR ADDITIONAL SOCIETY NEWS SEE FIFTH AND EIGHTH PAGES.]

visiting friends. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Hallett, of the I. C. R. dining

Rev. J. E. Goucher, the much-esteemed pastor of the Baptist church, left on Wednesday of last week, for Boston, where he goes to attend the May meetings. On his return, he will visit his son, Rev. W. C. Goucher, whose pastorate is in St. Stephen.

every success in his venture.

Mr. C. E. Bently, of J. F. Blanchard & Co., left

last contest for governor of California.

Mrs. M. H. Ambrose, accompanied by Miss

ordinate staff of teachers in the model schools at the

### AMHERST, N. S.

May 15 .- Mrs. Clerke sailed for England in the last steamer from Rimouski, in company with Sir Mrs. Fawcett and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Ryan, of

Mrs. Mariner McLeod has returned home, her sister being much better. Mrs. George left on Monday for a visit to Boston

his week, her sister, Mrs. McNutt, being ill.

Rev. Mr. Polehampton and family from England, are settling here. I am informed that Mr. Pole-

hampton is to assist Rev. Mr. Harris in the work of the Episcopal church in this town and vicinity. Mrs. Botsford has returned from the states and is t present with her daughter, Mrs. Dr. Bliss.

Miss .Flossie, daughter of Dr. A. S. Townshend, of Parrsboro, is visiting her uncle, Mr. J. Medley

A number of strangers were in town on Tuesday. the estate of his late father-in-law, Judge Kinnear.

# CALAIS, MAINE.

Townsend returned a well man. Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Clapp have gone to Kansas City to visit their daughter, Mrs. Beauchamp Ander-

house with rheumatism.

Among the strangers in town last week, I noticed Messrs. A. Rogers and W. Edmunds, of Montreal. Messrs. Tennant, Fitch and Given, of Moneton, spent Sunday in town.

Miss Mabel Smith left yesterday on a trip to Boston and New York. Miss Maggie Evans is home in Sackville on a visit Rev. Mr. Watson, of Riverside, occupied the Presbyterian pulpit last Sunday. The present pastor, Mr. Baird, is winning for himself hosts of friends.

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# SYDNEY WARD.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., Feb. 12, 1889. WE, the undersigned Residents and Voters of Sydney Ward, in the City of St. John, N. B., would nominate WM. LEWIS, Esq., of said Ward, to represent us in the Common Council as Alderman, and pledge ourselves to do all in our power to secure his election. Signed by 85 electors.

# To the Electors of Sydney Ward.

CENTLEMEN: In compliance with your requisi tion, asking me to allow myself to be put in nomination as a candidate for ALDERMAN at the approaching election, I beg to say that, although the matter is not of my seeking, I am entirely in your hands, and will accept with pleasure your flattering nomination. A glance at the names on your requisition convinces me that you intend to carry the election, and I am content to leave the result in your hands, assuring you that if elected my best efforts in the future, as in the past, will always be put forward in the interest of this city, and Sydney Ward in particular.

I have the honor to be,

Yours, etc., WILLIAM LEWIS.

To the Electors of Wellington Ward

THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE having postponed the holding of the civic elections for the present year until after the consummation of the present year until after the consummation of the union of the cities of Saint John and Portland, we desire to sincerely thank those of the Electorate who have expressed their confidence in us and so generously proffered us their support.

At the election of representatives to the Civic Board of the new city we will be candidates for the office of

# ALDERMEN,

and solicit your suffrages at such election. We are, Ladies and Gentlemen,

St. John, N. B., 29th March, 1889.

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