

or alive?" and, according to the agreement, he pilfers Chaucer or Tennyson, as the case may be. He always puts his name forward. Good men have done jobs of this description, but have done them anonymously; but not so the literary packman. He is eager for notoriety, and thinks he can get it by opening a show, and sticking his name on the bills. He claims the merit of being a host where he is, in fact, only the footman or the valet who announces that dinner is on the table, or that Mr. Shakspeare or Mr. Carlyle is about to enter the room.

This kind of upholstering business is not confined to books. Of late we have had the same operation performed upon novels in fitting them for the stage. The amount of honest literary work in these preparations, which of right belongs to the adapter, might, as Bob Sawyer reported of his emoluments from his professional practice, be put under a gooseberry-leaf, and covered with a wine-glass. The adapter simply cuts and hacks at the romance until it is of the proper proportions to fill the gorgeous coffin made for it, at his request, by the stage carpenter and the management. He is pitiless in his improvements for the delectation of the Philistines whose humble creature he is. He takes no trouble to dwell upon the artistic centre and motive of the story which he mutilates, but he is careful to preserve the title of the unfortunate narrative converted by him into a series of spectacular scenes, with real pump-water tumbling in the background, and a genuine old cab-horse acting as a charger to the applause of a pit.

To return to books. At first sight it might appear to be impossible for a novelist to be a literary packman or packwoman. But publishers and critics know better. There are authors by the dozen, and authoresses, who can sit down and construct a story entirely from recollections or out of actual plagiarisms. We had instances of detection and mutual recrimination not so long since. Critics, whose weariful business it is to pronounce on the decrepid fictions brought to them for judgment, alone have any idea of the extent to which downright dishonesty in this respect is daily practised. And then, asks the reader, "Why don't you expose the criminal, nail up the vermin to the barn door, as a caution to others?" Because there is nothing so difficult to prove absolutely as a charge of the kind, and the author or authoress is certain to meet it by a vigorous denial. The similarity was the result of a coincidence. The book from which the scene is supposed to be taken was never read or heard of by the defendant. Two persons often think the same thing at the same time; and all critics are prejudiced fools who are paid for finding out flaws and faults. In short, a critic who hints plagiarism against an author does so at a tremendous risk to peace of mind; and, unless he fully substantiate his case, his point has only the effect of puffing a book that, even if original, is certainly dull. And so the packmen and novelists remain unmolested. Some do their work so badly that no one will have it; but others can polish, brighten, and display their wares in such a manner that they find a steady, if not an extensive, sale amongst publishers for their MSS.

It may not be quite fair to include the ordinary run of magazine contributors amongst our literary packmen. Their padding, as it has been termed, is generally unpretentious, and does not claim to be better than it is. There is a description of periodical Cheap Jack for whom we confess we have a partiality, if not a regard. We know, as we take him with us for an idle quarter of an hour into a club library, that in the course of as many revolving minutes he will flourish, and gabble, and brag, hold up scraps of foreign languages, swear, indeed indulge in the antics of a buffoon with every notion he can catch, figure before us in the end comically hoping that people who do not appreciate his performance will be hung; and all we can feel concerning him is that the dog is diverting and

infinitely more amusing than the lugubriously amatory poet who has preceded him, or the instalment of the lumpish romance which we have been invited to swallow before we came to the poet. In fact, we have a toleration for magazine literary packmen, and we believe that they are in their right places in the shilling numbers. It would be impossible for these speculations to prosper without them. But when it comes to bulky volumes, the *raison d'être* of the literary packman ought to be questioned. There is another species of bookmonger allied to the literary pedlar or packman, who might be termed the literary jackal; but the jackal has certain distinctive characteristics which may be worth calling attention to in a separate paper.—(*London Globe*.)

POETRY.

IN YOSEMITE VALLEY.

By JOAQUIN MILLER.

Sound ! sound ! sound !
Oh, colossal walls, as crowned
In one eternal thunder !
Sound ! sound ! sound !
Oh, ye oceans overhead,
While we walk, subdued in wonder.
In the ferns and grasses under
And beside the swift Merced !

Fret ! fret ! fret !
Oh, ye sounding banners, set
On the giant granite castles
In the clouds and in the snow !
But the foe he comes not yet—
We are loyal, valiant vassals,
And we kiss the trailing tassels
Of the banners far below.

Surge ! surge ! surge !
From the white Sierra's verge,
To the very valley blossom.
Surge ! surge ! surge !
Yet the song-bird builds a home,
And the mossy branches cross them,
And the tasselled tree-tops toss them,
In the clouds of falling foam.

Sweep ! sweep ! sweep !
Oh, ye heaven-born and deep,
In one dread, unbroken chorus !
We may wonder or may weep—
We may wait on God before us ;
We may shout or lift a hand—
We may bow down and deplore us,
But may never understand.

Beat ! beat ! beat !
We advance, but would retreat
From this restless, broken breast
Of the earth in a convulsion.
We would rest, but dare not rest,
For a spirit of expulsion
From this paradise below
Is upon us, and we go.

OFFICIAL NOTICES.



Ministry of Public Instruction.

ERECTIIONS OF SCHOOL MUNICIPALITIES.

Quebec, 19th September 1872.

His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor in Council has been pleased, under date of the 11st instant, to erect the following School Municipalities :