

LITERARY ODDS AND ENDS.

It is time the cause of Canadian literature was upheld against that of Australian, at least as far as poetry is concerned. We have, it must be conceded, no novelist, unless Miss Duncan's "American Girl in London" is regarded as a novel; but a critical comparison of Australian poetry with ours can leave no doubt in the mind of a reasonable observer that Canada deserves double the meed of praise which is now given to Australia.

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To anyone who will read Adam Lindsay Gordon, Halloran, Horne, Shepard, indeed any Australian, and then will compare them with Bliss Carman, Roberts, Isabella Valancy Crawford, there can be no question as to whom the supremacy properly belongs. Kendall is the only Australian who can approach to Bliss Carman in felicity of expression, and even his work falls far below such poems as "Death in April" and the "Red Swan." If Mr. James Payn and other critics would search Canadian literature as they search Australian for the blossom of genius in the colonies, their opinions might undergo a change.—*Halifax Critic*.

Of American levity and American joylessness, the writer of the clever paper in the May number of the *Atlantic Monthly* called "A Plea for Seriousness," says:—

"I beg my readers not to suppose that I would arraign humour or any element which gladdens and brightens existence. Seriousness and light-heartedness are not at war; there is no merit in austerity; on the contrary, more harm can be done by solemn triviality and ascetic futility than by arrant tomfoolery. But after all we are a joyless people. There are two types of American face on which the comic illustrated papers have fastened as representative: one is sharp, careworn, anxious; the other is heavy, coarse, and stupid or cunning. Neither of them shows a gleam of the mirthfulness which twinkles in the Irishman's eye, or broadens the smile of John Bull, or sparkles from head to foot in the lively Frenchman or Italian. There is a modern fashion of loud and constant laughter in our society, as if noise were necessary to attest the pleasure of the occasion, but it vouches as little for our enjoyment as the cannon and shooting-crackers on the Fourth of July do for our patriotism. The absence of animal spirits among our well-to-do young people is in striking contrast to the exuberance of that quality in their contemporaries in most European countries.

A struggle against the foaming tumult of the lowest rapid of the famous Nepigon River, a well-fought battle with a big game trout, and a final triumph, are described, as only an enthusiastic fisherman can describe them, by Ed. W. Sandys, in "A Bout with a Kingfish," in *Outing* for May. The handsome frontispiece, by Watson, shows the hardy fishermen at work.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.—The numbers of *The Living Age* for May 14th and 21st contain On the Dissipation of Energy, and Mr. Meredith in his

Poems, *Fortnightly*; A Royal Governess, the Duchesse de Goutant, Winter Shifts, Italian Poets of Ty-day, and the Nitrate Fields of Chili, *Blackwood*; How the Egyptian Monuments were read, *Cornhill*; The Charterhouse of Tyrol, *Good Words*; Patchwork in Black and White, *National*; Sir Henry Wotton, Gentleman and Schoolmaster, *Gentleman's*; Humor, and "Thermidor," and Labusiere, *Temple Bar*; St. Francis of Assisi, *Revue des Deux Mondes*; History in a Stable Loft, *Leisure Hour*; Wild Fowl in Sanctuary, *Spectator*; Agra, *Queen*; with "The Strange Story of Beethoven Koffsky," "The Scarlet Hunter," "Shameen," and Poetry. Littell & Co., Boston, are the publishers.

Now we can stand on the very threshold over which Priam and Hector walked. We can see the jewels that may have adorned Helen or Adromache. We can see and handle the very double cap of Nestor, and can recognize the inlaid work of the shield of Achilles, and can walk in the halls of Agamemnon. Thus the old Homeric heroes become real men as those of our time, and we can understand their political and commercial relations with other old peoples before quite as shadowy. Recent discoveries in Egypt take us still further back. We now find that the "Hanebu," who invaded Egypt in the days of the Hebrew patriarchs, were prehistoric Greeks, already civilized, and probably possessing letters ages before the date of the Trojan war. So it is with the Bible history, when we see the contemporary pictures of the Egyptian slaves toiling at their bricks, or when we stand in the presence of the mummy of Rameses II. and know that we look on the face of the Pharaoh who enslaved the Hebrews and from whose presence Moses fled. Such discoveries give reality to history, and similar discoveries are daily carrying us back to old events, and to nations of whom there was no history whatever, and are making them like our daily friends and companions. A notable case is that of the children of Cheth, known to us only incidentally by a few members of the nation who came in contact with the early Hebrews. Suddenly we found that these people were the great and formidable Kheta or Khatti, who contended on equal terms with the Egyptians and Assyrians for the empire of Western Asia; and when we began to look for their remains, there appeared one after another, stone monuments, seats and engraved objects, recording their form and their greatness, till the tables have quite been turned, and there is danger that we may attach too much importance to their agency in times of which we have scarcely any written history. Thus, just as the quarry and the mine reveal to us the fossil remains of animals and plants great in their time, but long since passed away, so do the spade and pick of the excavator constantly turn up for us the bones and the works of a fossil and prehistoric humanity.—From "PREHISTORIC TIMES IN EGYPT AND PALESTINE," by SIR WILLIAM DAWSON, in *NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* for June.