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Literary Notes.

The Royal College for Women, to be built at Montreal by the munificence of Sir Donald Smith, it is stated will cost \$2,000,000; and Mr. Bruce Price, of New York, is to be the architect.

The Macmillan Company is about to publish a book which will attract every one who has noticed the curious individuality which crowds at times assume. It is easy to see that the assemblage of individuals for action introduces new psychological characteristics apart from the racial characteristics, so that a company or corporate board will pass measures which no individual member would care to be responsible for. The author of "The Crowd: A study of the popular mind," Gustave Le Bon, claims that one of the chief characteristics of the present age is this substitution of the action of crowds, companies, congresses, conventions for the activity of individuals. His arguments are always interesting, though his conclusions are sometimes unexpected, as where he deprecates any attempt to control or check this trend toward concerted action, while admitting the correctness of the popular notions as to the mental and moral inferiority of crowds to which we have referred. It is an unusual book and valuable as a psychological study.

One of Thomas Bailey Aldrich's most charming poems appears in *The Critic* of June 27th—a tribute "To Hafiz," the Persian poet and lover of the rose. While Mr. Aldrich was correcting the proof of this little gem, Harvard was honouring him with the degree of Master of Arts. President Eliot characterizing him as "man-of-letters, essayist, story-teller, poet, at home in a wide field of imagination." In the same paper, Mr. W. I. Fletcher, Librarian of Amherst College and ex-President of the American Library Association, criticises the loss of influence of the Librarian of the Boston Public Library and the growth in power of the President of the Board of Trustees, which led, he asserts, to the erection of an inadequate building at twice the cost originally proposed. "Under its new management, however [that of Mr. Herbert Putnam], the library seems to be immediately resuming its traditional wise and liberal policy." Gen. Francis A. Walker is likely, it appears, soon to become a trustee and president of the Board. *The Critic* of July 4th will contain a letter from Mr. Thomas Hardy.

Mr. Arthur Waugh writes to *The Critic* from London:—I believe that Mr. Ernest Rhys, whose admirable romance, "The Fiddler of Carne," has been universally praised by the press, will shortly put forth (or is at any rate contemplating the issue of) a volume of "Welsh Ballads," which, since they have his heart of hearts, should prove of uncommon charm. I will even add that I have seen one or two of them in manuscript, and am unfeignedly convinced of the fineness of their quality and of the manfulness of their spirit. By the bye, who does not wish that there were a little more of that same manfulness in the verse of the younger generation! Mr. Leonard Smithers, who seems to have set himself up as the patron of unwholesome literature, has just published a volume of verse by Mr. Ernest Dowson, which is gruesomely characteristic of the youthful talent gone rancid. Four years ago we all thought Mr. Dowson to be among the most promising of the newer bards. What a thousand pities that he should have declined upon a sort of bastard-classicism, united to the anæmic muse of the degenerate Gaul! Here is a feeble imitation of all that is worse in Catullus, without his charm, marred by the addition of the familiar graces of the boulevard. And underneath it all there is still a stratum of talent, a sense of melody; and a real felicity of phrase. I would have all these youths condemned to a course of the war-passages in "Maud," Mr. Henley's "Song of the Sword," Mr. Kipling's "English Flag," and Mr. Austin Dobson's "Ballad of the Armada"—for modern influence; with a background of Drayton and Percy for perspective. It would do them a world of good in the present, and might ever bear its harvest in the future.

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