

## THE POET'S WORK AND WAGES!

WHAT work are the poets doing?  
Teaching men to live:  
Not like slaves with scourges driven,  
But like men with powers God-given,  
Using them for God and heaven,  
Gaining while they give!

What work are the poets doing?  
Teaching men to think:  
That this life is man's probation,  
Fitting for a nobler station,  
Rising higher in creation,  
Up from Chaos' brink!

What work are the poets doing?  
Teaching men to see:  
God in Nature every hour,  
Beauty in each leaf and flower,  
Wonders wrought by sun and shower,  
Winds, and waves, and sea!

What work are the poets doing?  
Teaching men to love:  
Drawing nearer man to man,  
Doing all the good we can,  
Working out "the golden plan"  
Taught by God above!

What, then, are the poets wages?  
To be lov'd of men:  
More than gold is approbation,  
Praise inspires his emulation,  
Naught he cares for wealth or station,  
Contra—love of men!

Does the poet love his calling?  
Note his answer true:  
"More than Ophir's golden treasures,  
More than earth's alluring pleasures,—  
Love I Music's rhythmic measures?—  
More than life I do!"

Toronto, Can.

JOHN IMRIE.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## "DUNBAR BATTLE."

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Rev. T. De Witt Talmage in an address recently published states that upon one occasion Cromwell's army, at its leader's command, halted in the midst of the pursuit of the enemy to offer thanks for victory by singing the well-known words "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," etc., etc. A critic rejoins by saying that as these lines were not written until long after Cromwell's death the incident so far as Cromwell and his army is concerned is probably a figment of the preacher's imagination. There is, however, a basis of fact for Dr. Talmage's inaccuracy as readers of Carlyle's Cromwell well know. Turn to the "Letters and Speeches," part VI., letter CXXXIX. The scene is Dunbar; time, September 3, 1650. "The Scottish army is shivered to utter ruin; rushes in tumultuous wreck, hither, thither; to B-haven, or in their distraction, even to Dunbar: the chase goes as far as Haddington; led by Hacker. 'The Lord General made a halt,' says Hodgson, 'and sang the Hundred-and-seventeenth Psalm,' till our horse could gather for the chase. Hundred and seventeenth Psalm, at the foot of the Doon Hill; there we uplift it to the tune of Bangor, or some still higher score, and roll it strong and great against the sky:—

"Oh, give ye praise unto the Lord,  
All nations that be;  
Likewise ye people all, accord  
His name to magnify.

"For great to us-ward ever are  
His loving kindnesses;  
His truth endures for evermore;  
The Lord, oh do ye bless!"

"And now to the chase again." "Dunbar Battle," as described by Carlyle, is one of the most realistic pieces of description in English historical composition.

H. T. R.

Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, January 13, 1892.

## BALLADS FROM THE ILIAD.\*

WHEN Lord Macaulay was thirty-five years of age—he was only plain Mr. Macaulay then—he turned anew to the classics and read over nearly the whole corpus of Greek and Latin literature. In doing so he was strongly impressed with the idea that the great majority even of those who study the classics very thoroughly at college never form a true conception of the value of the ancient writers; inasmuch as, when their scholarship is fresh, they lack the experience of life necessary to appreciate them fully, and do not afterwards take them up till late in life

\* "A Daughter of the Gods, Ballads from the First, Second and Third Books of the Iliad." By Joseph Cross. Etchings by Tristram Ellis. London: The Leadenhall Press, E.C.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

when they have to a large extent forgotten the classical languages. The moral he drew was that those who wish to really understand and appreciate the classics should renew their acquaintance with them when experience and reflection have broadened and matured their judgment, and before they have become too rusty in their studies. There is no doubt much truth in this view of the matter, and it is to be hoped that some of our Canadian graduates who have distinguished themselves in the classics will act upon Macaulay's advice, and as a result, perchance, give the world the benefit of their maturer studies in the form of essay, translation, or paraphrase.

I have lately been reading with very great pleasure a little volume bearing the title of "A Daughter of the Gods," and consisting of ballads from the first, second and third books of the Iliad, which gives a new idea of what may be done to bring home a knowledge of, and taste for, Homer to young children. The author is Mr. Joseph Cross, a brother, as I understand, of the late Right Honourable J. K. Cross, Under-Secretary of State for India in one of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinets, and a brother also of Mr. Thomas Cross, of Ottawa, whose name is not unknown to readers of THE WEEK. The book "was written," we are told in the preface, "for the pleasure and amusement of a little child," and is therefore presumably the product of that period of the writer's life when Macaulay's requirement of a blending of accurate scholarship with enlarged experience would be most fully met. However this may be, I do not hesitate to say that the result before us is truly admirable. Mr. Cross has not pretended to translate Homer in any exact sense; he has simply selected such passages as serve to carry on the main narrative, and rendered them into English ballad verse of a very flowing and musical kind. He has not thought it necessary even to preserve the exact sequence of the original. For example, in the first book of the Iliad, Achilles makes an address to his mother Thetis, and the latter replies. Mr. Cross divides the address of Achilles into two portions, and places that of Thetis between the two. He also makes Thetis ask Achilles what petition he wishes her to present to Jove; whereas Achilles, in the original, without any asking, tells her what he wants. Such changes as these, however, in no way interfere with the substantial fidelity of Mr. Cross' version, considered as an Englishing of the Homeric narrative. He gives us the facts, he gives us the passions of the actors and speakers; he gives us much of the poetic setting of the original. His chief departure from the tone of the original is in the rapidity that characterizes his version. The Homeric hexameter is capable of infinite force and movement; but it is never exactly in a hurry; whereas, not only the metre Mr. Cross has adapted, but his own condensation of the narrative suggest a certain haste to conclude—to say the thing and have done with it. To represent Homer fully we must make due allowance for his *longueurs* and the admiration of primitive peoples for words as words. Mr. Cross quotes the opinion of Lord Beaconsfield that ballad metre is the one best suited for the translation of Homer, and that Walter Scott was the man of all best qualified to give us a perfect version. Lord Beaconsfield's opinion is entitled to respect, but not to more respect, to say the least, than Matthew Arnold's; and he, as we all know, gave his voice for the hexameter as used by the poet (Clough—a quotation from whom serves as epigraph to Mr. Cross' little book—in his "Boothie of Tober-na-Vuolich." It must not be forgotten, however, that Mr. Cross made his version or paraphrase for a little child, and if the question were asked: how can Homer best be represented to a child? I for one would answer, unhesitatingly: in just such ballad metre as we have in this beautiful little book. This is truly Homer for children, and it comes as a boon to many a father who would wish to give to his child a true idea of the things Homer wrote about, of the poetic quality of his work and of the tone and character of ancient Greek thought. I almost feel like saying that no cultivated household should be without this book; but perhaps so sweeping an assertion might provoke contradiction. Certain it is that any father who thinks it worth while to give his child an early introduction to the ideas of Homer and to the tale of Troy has now a better opportunity than ever before.

It is only fair to give a few examples of the extreme felicity of Mr. Cross' verse. We may quote almost at random. Take the scene already referred to between Achilles and Thetis:—

Meanwhile Achilles went aside  
And gazing idly o'er the sea,  
With streaming eyes and outstretched hands,  
Prayed to his mother earnestly.  
"Oh mother, hear thy hapless son!  
Since doomed to early death am I,  
'Twere meet Olympian Jove had crowned  
With honour my brief destiny;  
But now shame and dishonour fill  
My tale of days so few and ill."

His goddess-mother heard him where she sat,  
Within the Sea-God's hall beneath the wave:  
And lightly rising, like a misty cloud,  
She left her dim translucent ocean cave:  
And to Achilles' side she swiftly came,  
And gently touched him, calling him by name.

"Alas, my child, that thou wert born,"  
Her sad voice murmured full of woe,  
"So soon to die, and doomed to griefs  
Beyond the lot of man below!  
Would that 'twere thine far from the fray,  
Beside the ships unharmed to stay!  
But since that may not be,  
To high Olympus will I haste,  
And lowly, at Jove's knees abased,  
Pray him to pity thee."

Yet ere before the throne I stand,  
Tell me what boon thou dost demand."

"Pray him to aid the Trojan host  
To drive the Greeks back to the sea!  
Pray that Atrides haughty self  
May flee before his enemy!  
Pray that the host in bitter grief  
May reap the folly of their chief!  
Pray that the king may learn too late  
That his own pride has been his fate:  
And, routed by his foes, may rue  
He gave not honour where 'twas due."

Or take the following stanzas from the Third Book:—

Soon as the hosts confronted stood,  
Before the van false Paris strode,  
Breathing defiance high;  
A leopard's skin his shoulders wore,  
In either hand a spear he bore,  
His good sword at his thigh;  
With bow on back forth did he stand,  
And dared the bravest of the band  
To meet him singly, hand to hand.

Then Menelans joyed as joys  
A lion in his pride,  
When goat or antlered stag he views  
Upon the mountain side,  
Nor recks of hunter nor of hounds,  
But on his prey exulting bounds.

So Menelans from his car  
Bounded to meet the foe;  
Deeming his hour was come to lay  
The foul betrayer low.

False Paris, trembling, started back,  
As starts in woodland brake  
The hunter when beneath his feet  
Glitters the deadly snake.

With quaking knees and ashy cheek  
Back to the ranks he drew,  
While from great Hector's scornful lips  
Fierce words, like arrows, flew.

It will hardly be denied that these are spirited lines; and although, as above stated, they do not profess to be a translation of the Iliad, it will be found on examination that they faithfully render, as far as they go, the substance and general quality of the poem. Mr. Cross may be sincerely congratulated on his success in a meritorious attempt. Typographically the book is all that could be desired, and makes a very harmonious setting for the graceful verses of the author. W. D. LESCEUR.

## ART NOTES.

A LARGE number of sketches and studies have been sent in for the Ontario Society's Exhibition, which opens on Saturday. Not only are our most original and well-known artists well represented, but engravers, designers, architects; many of them, members of the art league, have contributed some excellent work, and the large gallery will be well filled with work having the charm of art which is direct from nature. The original sketches of some of D. Fowler's delightful water-colours and of the North-West and Rocky Mountain pictures of Verner, Mower Martin and M. Matthews; good figure work by Reid, Foster, Hahn and Sherwood; clever pen and ink sketches by Manly, Howard, Thompson and many others; landscape and flower studies by Gagen and H. Martin are among the interesting contributions already sent in, and we may look forward to perhaps the most instructive exhibition as well as one of the most enjoyable the Society has yet provided for us; while the fact that no charge will be made for admission shows that a real effort is being made to serve in a useful way the citizens of Toronto.

## MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

## THE GRAND.

"THE Danger Signal" at the Grand serves to bring out the good and inferior qualities of Miss Morrison as an actress, the former happily predominating. It may be called a railroad drama, a real engine under a full head of steam being brought on in one act and a realistic railway smash-up in another. A few clever situations give a desirable tone to an ordinary production in dramas. The Company is fair and the scenery good. Monday, January 25, the drama "Blue Jeans" is to hold the boards at this theatre. It is a domestic drama with some thrilling situations.

## THE ACADEMY.

MARIE FROHMAN has every opportunity to exhibit her versatility as an actress in "The Witch," and she studiously avails herself of it. The scene is laid in New England early in the century, and the movement of the play develops hate, fidelity, deceit, love and treachery, to an amazing degree, but Miss Frohman proved herself quite equal to the occasion and won the plaudits of a large and enthusiastic audience by her clever impersonations. The stage snow was too plentiful, having been turned on in the third act, it intruded itself upon the parlour scene in the fourth act, those present naturally believing the parlour ceiling to have been removed. The Company is a capital one, and the scenery good.

## THE PAVILION.

PADEREWSKI, the eminent Polish pianist, who is to give one of his unequalled recitals in the Pavilion on Friday, February 12th, has already made a record in America without precedent for both its artistic and financial success. The leading critics all unite in an unstinted tribute of praise, placing this modern pianistic Goliath on the same plane as Rubenstein, and endowed with even more originality of style and finished expression in his