

JULY 17th, 1884.]

BOOK NOTICES.

A HISTORY OF FRANCE, FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO 1848. By M. Guizot. Translated by Robert Black. New York: John B. Alden. Vols. II. and III.

At a future period it may be considered advisable to make lengthened reference to Mr. Black's translation of this standard work. For the moment it is of more consequence to draw the attention of the reading public to the extraordinarily low figure at which Mr. Alden is offering the history. Vols. II. and III. contain 480 and 474 pp. respectively of well printed text, each accompanied by over fifty illustrations, the whole bound in tasteful and serviceable covers. Mr. Ruskin once expressed a very decided opinion that the true benefactor of the intelligent public is he who places good literature within the reach of all. By this standard Mr. Alden must be considered at once a good business man and a philanthropist, for at 75 cents a volume Guizot's History of France must be acknowledged ridiculously cheap, and the publisher intimates that the book-buying public are remitting "very large cash orders." He further adds that the remaining five volumes—the work will be completed in eight—are now on the presses in four different printing offices, and will be out in a few days.

LAUDES DOMINI: a selection of Spiritual Songs, ancient and modern. New York: The Century Co., 33 E. 17th street.

The publishers of this beautifully got-up book announce that it is not with the intention of superseding "Spiritual Songs for the Church and the Choir," but rather of supplementing it, that they announce "Laudes Domini." This book will be found, as its name implies, especially rich in hymns of praise to Christ our Lord. It is designed to lead the taste of congregations and choirs toward a higher class of lyrics and music than has hitherto found acceptance in the churches. To this end, a large selection from the great wealth of newer hymns and modern American, English and German choral music has been included with the best of the old and familiar hymns and standard tunes in common use. The book contains nearly 650 musical selections; ninety music composers are represented in its pages, among them Mozart, Mendelssohn, Handel, Spohr, Oberthur, Rossini, and Flotow, Barnby, Chopin, Schumann, Beethoven, and Arthur Sullivan; and it contains the work of one hundred and fifty writers of hymns.

THE HIGH ALPS OF NEW ZEALAND. By William Spotswood Green, M.A. London and New York: Macmillan and Company.

The author, who is a member of the English Alpine Club, first published the account of his trip to the Southern Alps in the *Alpine Journal*, but was well advised in expanding it and giving it to the world in volume form. In his preface he deprecates close criticism, and, anticipating the objection that he claims the ascent of Mount Cook without having set foot on the actual summit, says: "I shall willingly relinquish any such claims to the man who passes the point where we turned." A perusal of the most readable account of his attempt of this difficult ascent will convince the average reader of the justice of this position. Mr. Green writes of his trip to the glaciers of the antipodes in an easy, conversational style that makes his book doubly charming, replete as it is with interesting descriptions of an almost *terra incognita*. Alluding to some of the discomforts of travelling in the bush, with particular reference to the ferocity of the "bull-dog ants," he gives the following amusing theory—not as yet met with in any of Mr. Darwin's works—of the development of the kangaroo:—

"The progenitor of the kangaroo was an animal with hindquarters of ordinary dimensions like other animals, but whenever he sat down a bull-dog ant gave a pinch, causing him to make a bound. The constant recurrence of this unenviable phase of his existence through succeeding generations led, as a natural consequence, to the extraordinary development of the hinder limbs in the present representatives of the race. Be this theory true or false, I know for a fact that one of our party made a jump quite equal to any kangaroo, when, sitting on the beach after a swim, a bull-dog ant gave him a most incisive nip."

STORIES BY AMERICAN AUTHORS. Vol. III. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Toronto: William Briggs.

The third volume of this *chic* little series includes "The Spider's Eye," by Fitzjames O'Brien, "A Story of the Latin Quarter," by Frances Hodgson Burnett, "Two Purse Companions," by George Parsons Lathrop, "Poor Oglá-Moga," by David D. Lloyd, "A Memorable Murder," by Celia Thaxter, and "A Venetian Glass," by Brander Matthews. There is no handier class of light reading, or one more suitable for sea-side and holiday purposes, than the volumes published in this series.

LITERARY GOSSIP.

DODD, MEAD & Co. have issued the first volumes of their new edition of *Pepys's Diary*, and the rest will follow at the rate of two a month.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE for July 12th contains papers from the "Quarterly Review," "Macmillan's Magazine," "Nineteenth Century," "Blackwood's Magazine," "Golden hours," the "Spectator," etc.

COURTLANDT PALMER of New York proceeds in the indulgence of his hobby to establish a weekly paper called "Our Nineteenth Century," as a pendant, or complement, or something of that sort, to his Nineteenth Century club. The paper will aim to keep up a continual symposium on all the burning questions of the day, with doctors of divinity and agnostics in perpetual friendly set-tos across a column rule. What a melancholy paper it will be.

CHOICE LITERATURE for July has articles from the following well known writers: Herbert Spencer, Max Muller, Earl of Lytton, Paul Bert, Principal Dawson, James Fitzjames, Stephen C. Secretan, Henry C. Ewart, W. Mathieu Williams, E. F. G. Law, H. S. Butcher, Grant Allen, etc.

WE have been reminded that the name of the writer of the Reply to the Speech of the Hon. Edward Blake against the Orange Incorporation Bill, is not James Allen, but J. Antisell Allen. We take this opportunity of once more calling attention to his pamphlet, which cannot fail to gratify the members of the Order in whose defence it is written.

MESSRS. JAMES R. OSGOOD & Co. are favouring the rising tide of summer travel to Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, etc., by issuing a new revised edition of their admirable and encyclopedic "Maritime Provinces" Guide; and also by publishing a naive and entertaining illustrated volume, "Over the Border," recording the recent summer voyage of an American party to the land of Evangeline, Annapolis, Clare, the Basin of Minas, and other Acadian localities.

WILLIAM H. HAYNE, a son of the well-known Southern poet, Paul Hayne, contributes to the August *St. Nicholas* a poem on "The Grasshopper." Blanche Willis Howard, author of "Guenn," and "One Summer," has a short story of child-life in Germany. Joel Benton will contribute a poem entitled "The Curious House," for which Mrs. Celia Thaxter has prepared an illustration. Helen Campbell will have a short story for girls, under the title of "The S. F. B. P."

REV. DR. WARD of the New York Independent heads an exploring expedition to the region of Babylon in the fall. Rev. J. T. Clarke and Dr. J. R. S. Sterrett, who were members of the Assos digging party, are going with Dr. Ward, and Miss Catherine L. Wolfe, who takes great pleasure in spending her wealth wisely, pays the expenses of the explorations. The special purpose is to look out for historic traces for the 2,000 years previous to 1,000 B. C., the importance of which will be at once perceived.

MR. JOHN B. ALDEN has just issued the first number of a venture styled *The Book Worm*, whose vocation, the publisher boldly avows is, by offering tempting morsels from the wisdom, wit and eloquence of fifty centuries, to induce the reading public to purchase the works from which the appetising excerpts are made. "Gaul under Roman Dominion"—ch. v., "Guizot's History of France"—is the subject treated in the first (July) number. There is little doubt but *The Book Worm* will succeed in its mission.

EXTRACT from a letter from Compté de Paris to Porter & Coates, dated, Chateau D'Eu, Seine Inferieure, 14-6-84: "The numerous political duties which have devolved upon me leave me but very little leisure. I am devoting every hour I can spare to the prosecution of my great work on the American War. The correction of the proof-sheets of volume seventh is progressing favourably, but this volume will not be published without the following one, of which only less than a third is yet written. As for the "History of my Grandfather" which I am supposed to write, it would be a task much above my power to undertake."

THE story of the romantic life of General Sam. Houston, who was in turn United States Senator, Cherokee chief, general in the army, and first president of the Texan republic, will be told in the August CENTURY by Alexander Hynds. The Midsummer CENTURY will contain another illustrated short story of Bohemian artistic life in New York. Novelles by Henry James and Professor Boyesen are to begin, and Prof. Isaac L. Rice, of Columbia College, under the title of "Work for a Constitutional Convention," will give reasons why a weak Government must become oppressive, and suggests the particular measures to be taken to make the American Government responsible.

THE *Century's* series of papers on "Recent Architecture in America" will reach in the midsummer number the topic of "Commercial Buildings." The aim of the series is to exhibit some from many examples of the present tendency toward a more beautiful class of buildings. The writer strongly insists upon practical utility as the first requisite of commercial architecture. The series will next deal with city houses and country houses, the illustrations of which are said to be very rich and numerous. The same number will contain "A Glance at British Wild Flowers," by John Burroughs and Alfred Parsons, the artist. It will be one of the most decorative articles in illustration and most charming in text that has ever appeared in the *Century*.

THE DOGGEREL EPITAPH UPON SHAKESPEARE'S TOMBSTONE, which has much worried the Shakespeareans and the anti-Shakespeareans has a small bit of light thrown upon it by a letter discovered in the Bodleian library by a London searcher, Mr. Macray. This letter was written by William Hall, a Queen's-college, man who took his B.A. in 1694 and his M.A. three years later; he was an antiquary, and his correspondent was Edward Thwaites, a noted Anglo-Saxon scholar. Being at Stratford in December, 1694, as it appears, he quoted the epitaph as we have it but without copying the antique and barbarous spelling, and added these interesting sentences:—

The little learning these verses contain would be a very strong argument of the want of it in the author did they not carry something in them which stands in need of a comment. There is in this church a place which they call the bone-house, a repository for all bones they dig up, which are so many that they would load a great many waggons. The poet being willing to preserve his bones unmoved, lays a curse upon him that moves them, and having to do with clerks and sextons, for the most part a very ignorant sort of people, he descends to the very meanest of their capacities, and disrobes himself of that art which none of his contemporaries wore in greater perfection. Nor has the design mist of its effect, for, lest they should not only draw this curse upon themselves, but also entail it upon their posterity, they have laid him full seventeen feet deep—deep enough to secure him.