

HOME JOURNAL

Life, Literature and Education

IN THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND ART.

The Parks and Galleries committee of Glasgow have declined to permit Whistler's picture, "Carlyle" to come to Toronto Exhibition.

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French Canadians are making a good showing at the Paris salon this year. Suzorcote, Clarence Gagnon and Miss Plimsell are exhibiting paintings while Alfred Laliberte and Henri Herbert are exhibitors of sculpture.

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Reginald de Koven, the musical composer, is suffering from nervous collapse. His home is in New York. He is best known as the composer of the musical comedy "Robin Hood", and by the setting of "perfect music unto noble words" in Kipling's "Recessional".

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George Hill in his Paris studio is engaged upon a monument to be placed in Dominion Square, Montreal. It is to commemorate the Boer war and shows a Strathcona scout just dismounting to examine a trail. While doing so a shell from a hidden battery comes his way making his horse rear with fright.

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Mr. Emerson Hough of Chicago, author of "The Mississippi Bubble", "Heart's Desire", "The Law of the Land" and many short stories, has spent several weeks in western Canada gathering material for a series of magazine articles for a syndicate. He also has a new novel in course of construction.

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Mr. W. Frank Hatheway of St. John, N. B. has published a book of essays on "Canadian Nationality and the Cry of Labor". A sincere desire for bettering the social and commercial conditions in this his own country is the motive of the author in presenting this book to the public. It is an earnest treatment of a difficult subject.

THE VALUE OF PRAISE.

Praise does not make fat pocket-books, nor fill the coal-bin, nor satisfy bodily hunger. Therefore, says the scoffer, it is worse than useless. But, bless your heart, he does not believe what he says, nor does any one else, and as a proof just place a little sweetened truthfulness to his account and watch him glow.

There are two classes of people to whom the word of praise should be given. To the man who does his work with no eye on the clock and with the thought of pay-day in the remote background of his mind, and to the man who doesn't. Encouragement and praise are the due of the former. They are the reward of his willingness as dollars are the reward of his ability, and they should be as promptly paid. In the other man who does nothing to earn it, commendation will often work miracles. And it can be sincere. There is no man but has some good quality that will appear some time or other in his work even amid a general mass of shiftlessness and grudging service. Noticing that one little worthy quality will rouse his ambition to deserve praise along those other lines where now only blame is merited.

No where can the golden rule be more safely and literally followed than in the matter of giving praise. For we all like to receive it, and like it in proportion to the tact and delicacy of its bestowal. A sincere word of praise has sent many a one with a lightened heart and a renewed courage over a stony road.

HOBBIES AND HOBBYISTS.

The hobby—or hobby horse—was the primitive bicycle. Very crude and uncomfortable we would call it in this age of cushioned tires and ball bearings, but its introduction caused as much stir and its riding became as great a craze as a "safety" created. Every one who could become the proud possessor of a hobby horse, and the rest coveted their neighbors' treasures while feigning to see no beauty in them; even as now we who are motor puffed up, and we who walk and dodge the ubiquitous auto say "fiendish invention."

The hobby horse was a made-in-France article and introduced into England by one Baron Von Drais (may he be forgiven!) The machine consisted of two short equal-sized wheels held in iron forks, the rear fork being securely bolted to a stout bar of wood called the "perch"; while the front fork passed through the perch—and was so arranged that it could be turned by a handle so as to steer the machine somewhat after the fashion of the modern bicycle. Upon this remarkable structure men of all ages and classes went careering madly about "Merrie England". Its use seems to have been confined to the male portion of the population, the most advanced advocate of woman's rights not daring, or caring perhaps, to invade man's domain in this direction.

And what dreadful bores those hobbyists must have been. How they must have talked and talked and talked. They argued as to the merits of small or large wheels, of straight or curved forks, of various kinds of steering gear each of which was the very best in its particular user's estimation. And even the ordinary every-day imagination can dwell with joy upon the stories the hobbyists told, such marvelous runs, such smashing of previous records.

So tremendous was the general enthusiasm, that the English language was influenced by it and, although the hobby-horse has been defunct, to these many years, the idea remains hale and hearty in this our day. For when a man, leaving all lesser loves, devotes his time, attention and money to one object only we say, "He rides a hobby" and immediately give him half the highway, or all of it if his model be not patterned like our own.

"It is our hobby" we say with a sort of apologetic pride when we have been caught expiating warmly on the superior merits of something, and its superior interest to all other things. But there is no need to apologize for our interest, though at times we need a pardon for trying to fit someone else to the saddle of our hobby. To have a hobby and to ride it well is to really live. The day's work is that by which we earn a living, and the hobby that by which we make earning the living worth while doing.

It is a splendid thing to have a hobby and there should be no difficulty in choosing one to suit us from the thousands in stock; and a recommendation from someone who has tried it goes with every one. The bibliomaniac—the genuine book-lover sings,

"A jolly goode booke whereon to looke

Is better to me than golde."

The lover of pictures, of laces, of tapestries, of coins, and of potteries will as readily sing the glories of his craft, and will go cheerfully to any trouble to grapple to his soul some object precious in his sight.

But most of us can not afford to mount such costly hobbies as these and have very little time to devote to going up and down on the earth seeking what we may acquire to lend an interest to our daily lives. But close at hand,

passing the very doors is the broad, broad highway of nature with room for an army of hobbies. The knowledge of the birds, the trees, the flowers, grasses and seeds, the rocks and the soil, rain, dew, frost and sunshine—in fact the lore of the sky above, the earth beneath and the waters under the earth, make the very largest and most comprehensive field, one in which there are chances for every one, where one can "gang his ain gait" without fear of being outstripped and made to suffer loss by some more strenuous hobbyist.

A LIGHT IN THE WORLD.

The commercial spirit is so much in evidence in this age that the pessimist almost persuades us that no other spirit is abroad. It is refreshing then to have our faith in the existence of heroism and unselfishness revived by an occasional example.

The announcement of the death of William Bompas, Bishop of the diocese of Selkirk has just been made. There have been few more quietly-lived lives of heroic, self-sacrifice. For thirty years, from 1874 to 1904, he lived among the Indians of the Klondike region, returning then to civilization only because it was absolutely necessary, and going back to his diocese the moment the matters were settled that brought him back to his kind. During those thirty years of willing service, he worked with and taught the people of his choice. He healed their sick, fed their hungry, and was ready to help and advise in any emergency. He learned their language, and to some extent, lived as they did. And after thirty years of service he laid down his life among them and now rests in his quiet grave in the land and among the people for whom he gave himself.

THE EFFECT OF HIGH LICENSE IN THE U. S.

Far more radical action was taken by the last Ohio legislature on the liquor saloon tax question than the city government of Chicago adopted at the same time; for in Chicago the license tax was raised from \$500 to \$1,000, while in Ohio it has been increased from \$350 to \$1,000. The Chicago advance took effect some weeks ago, and has resulted in a reduction of about one-third in the number of saloons. The Ohio advance took effect last week, and over 600 saloon-keepers in Cleveland have already notified the authorities that they will go out of business. But some 1,600 saloons remain to pay \$1,000 each and the consequence is that the revenue from the liquor traffic will be greatly increased in spite of the large reduction in number of saloons. But both in Chicago and Ohio the full effect of the change of tax on the number of saloons cannot be known now. Many will take out the licenses at the new rate and fail in the expectation of success under the increased charges. It is to be noted that in Cleveland, as in Chicago, the saloons being driven out of business by the high tax are mostly located in the outlying and residential sections, which is as it should be.—*Springfield Republican*.

A CANADIAN SINGER.

Alexander Muir, whose death occurred in Toronto a few weeks ago, was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland in 1834, coming to Canada in infancy. His father was a school teacher and his son's first instructor. The boy's education was completed at Queen's University. He taught in several Ontario towns and went to Toronto in 1880 as principal of one of the schools, which position he held until his death.

While his influence on the children whom he taught was always of the highest character, he is better known to this generation through his music. There is no spot in Canada settled by Canadians where "The Maple Leaf Forever" has not been heartily sung; and Alexander Muir gave us that song, both music and words. Other patriotic songs we owe to him also—"Canada", "Canada Forever", "Canada, Land of the Maple".