

## LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

It is rumoured in London that knighthood will be offered to Mr. Henry Irving, and that the honour will not be declined.

"The Tempest," volume IX. of Horace Howard Furness' "Variorum Edition" of Shakespeare, is now on the Lippincott press.

MISS BALESTIER, who has recently made a matrimonial alliance with Rudyard Kipling, is a niece of John Balestier, a noted New York lawyer.

STAMP collectors should be informed that the Philatelic Society of London have begun the issue of a periodical entitled *The London Philatelist*.

MR. M. D. CONWAY'S "Life of Thomas Paine" heads the list of forthcoming publications by the Messrs. Putnam. It will form two octavo volumes.

AMÉLIE RIVES has written a new drama. It is a tragedy entitled "Athelwold," and will appear in the next number of *Harper's Magazine*. Mary L. Gow has made illustrations for it.

THE manuscript of a small volume of poems left by Lord Lytton is to be edited by his daughter and son-in-law. They will soon be published, with a short preface by Lady Lytton.

MR. RENAN'S fourth volume of the "History of Israel" has grown so much that it will be divided into two parts. Both will appear towards October next, along with a complete index of the four volumes.

THE five-hundred-dollar prize short-story competition instituted by the publishers of *Brains*, the Boston bi-monthly literary periodical, has been won by Mr. Charles Edwards, of Sydney, Australia.

A VOLUME on "Imperial Defence," to be published before the meeting of the Imperial Parliament by Messrs. Macmillan and Company, will come out under the joint authorship of Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Spenser Wilkinson.

MR. GLADSTONE, it is said, intends to write an article upon Marie Bashkirtseff, the author of the famous diary, and, being at Nice, he is credited with having arranged to interview Madame Bashkirtseff, who happens also to be staying at Nice.

A VOLUME on the life and work of Browning, with numerous translations of his poetry into Danish, has been published in Copenhagen by Dr. Jon Stefaunson, who says that Browning will be an important factor of European culture in the coming generation.

THE next volume in the series of "Twelve English Statesmen," immediately following Lord Roseberry's "Pitt," will be "Chatham," by the editor of the series, Mr. John Morley, who has already given us "Walpole." After this will come Professor Beesley's "Queen Elizabeth."

THE fifth volume of the new Cambridge Shakespeare (Macmillan) contains "Henry VI.," "Richard III." and "Henry VIII." In the preface a new note discusses briefly the relation of the quarto and folio of "Richard III.," bringing the subject down to date and giving the authorities.

THE author of "The Recollections of a Country Parson," who is also known to many as A. K. H. B., has written his reminiscences of St. Andrews during the past twenty-five years. The first volume, covering the period from 1865 to 1878, will be published by Messrs. Longmans immediately; and the second is in preparation.

THOMAS CARLYLE'S "Lectures on the History of European Culture and Literature, from the Earliest Times to the Nineteenth Century," now printed for the first time from the Austey manuscript in the library of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, with an introduction and notes by Mr. R. P. Karkaria, have just been published.

MR. A. W. HUTTON, the librarian of the National Liberal Club, will be the first in the field with a life of Cardinal Manning. He has been busy for some time on a monograph for Messrs. Methuen's series of "Leaders of Religion." It is a symptom of the disease of the age, this haste to hear all about a man as quickly as possible after his death.

THE name of the author of the beautiful little romance, "La Neuvaïne de Colette," remained for a long time an impenetrable mystery to the public. The supposition was that a pen so delicately wielded could belong only to a woman. This supposition proved correct, and Madame Jeanne Schultz, who has also written ten other charming books for the young, has decided to cast aside the veil of anonymity, and in future allow her name to be used.

"You may Kiss Me for Twenty-five Cents," the last and worst device of the pretty girls in a certain congregation in Michigan to raise money for desperate church emergencies, is, one may hope," says the *Canadian Churchman*, "the very climax of the absurd condition into which the whole system of dodges in aid of churches has been sinking; and yet it is a logical outcome of the whole business—trifling with religious duties is sure to end in personal degradation."

THE high marks scored by women in the recent Honours examinations held at London University indicate the quality of intellectual work being done by English college women. Of the six B.A.'s who won a "first class" in classics, five were women; of the four rated "first class"

in French and in German, three were women, the "inferior" sex also contributing four out of five post-graduate students bracketed as "first class" in the Art, Theory, and History of Teaching.

MR. A. S. CODY, an American, writes to the editor of the *Times* saying that "the mass of England's nineteenth century literature will be dead and buried within two centuries, unless we Americans rescue it from the mass of vagueness and verbiage in which it already languishes." To this the *Literary World* says: "If by literature Mr. Cody means printed books, he may take it for granted that he need not wait for two centuries to witness the death and burial of 'the mass of England's nineteenth century literature'; it is already dead and decently buried, and we earnestly beg of him to let it rest in peace. But the gems that survive will need no artificial sustenance on either side of the broad Atlantic."

THE irrepressible Mr. Walter Blackburn Harte has a two-columned article in the last number of the *London Literary World* headed "A Literary Mecca," the main object of which is to point out why there is no field in Canada for aspiring young writers, and why these aspiring young writers go, or should go, to the United States rather than to London. "In the first place," he says, "in Canada it is impossible to find a publisher willing to assume the risk of publishing a book; and if the author defray the cost of production it is ridiculous to look for a public in Canada which will buy his book sufficiently to reimburse him. There is no public in Canada for good literature. The people there only care for wheat, railroads and politics. In the second place, there is no chance of existence for a Canadian monthly magazine." . . . "In regard to the de-Canadianizing of Canadians in the States," he declares, "I quite deny that there is any essential difference between Canadians and Americans to begin with. The people of Toronto and the people of New York are absolutely identified in all their aims, ideas, speech, and customs. The Canadian distinct type is yet to be evolved, if it is a possible evolution." . . . "The average Canadian male reads nothing but market reports and politics." . . . "There is a growing feeling in Canada among the young men that Canada must soon belong, economically and politically, to this continent of North America, and they have little filial feeling for a people and a Government three thousand miles away, which do not pretend to be in the least interested in them." Our readers must make their own comments.

THE death of Mr. T. B. Phillips Stewart last week made a gap in the ranks of young Canadian poets. Although for some years he had published nothing, the little volume of poems brought out in 1887 by Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench and Company had not been forgotten, and there were many who looked forward to his again tending the homely slighted shepherd's trade. For this little volume of less than a hundred pages contained unmistakable evidences of true poetic taste and talent. There were faults of course, for the author was but twenty-three when the book appeared, and doubtless many of the pieces were composed at a still earlier age. Yet the faults were few, and were such as age and experience would have easily winnowed. The poetical character of the conceptions was undoubted, and generally the expression of these in metre was very beautiful. The fragment "Morn" is one proof of this:—

Aurora fair  
From love's soft couch in beauty rises up  
With Titon's kisses blushing sweet, and o'er  
The restless sea stole silver smiles . . .

Nor was he too young, or perhaps it would be truer to say that such was the strength of his poetical temperament, that young as he was he had already given evidence of an originality and uniqueness in habits of thought rarely met with. Chiefly this was to be seen in a certain gentle melancholy, a softened gloom, which, because perfectly sincere and spontaneous, lent to his productions a strange charm. This peculiarity runs through the greater part of his work, notably in the opening poem of his book, "Lines to My Mother." We shall be very curious to know whether Mr. Stewart has left any manuscript poems, and we hope his executors will not allow anything to lie unpublished that might add to his nascent fame. We reprint on another page his sonnet on Keats.

WHAT is the world? What but a spacious burial field unvalled? The very turf on which we tread once lived.—*Blair*.

IT may safely be said that "The North American Life Assurance Company" has earned for itself a very high place in the esteem of the insuring public of Canada. Its business methods, the high character, public prominence, and acknowledged ability of its officers and board are duly appreciated, the president's name being a household word to Canadians, the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, and the vice-president, Mr. J. L. Blaikie, having a long established reputation as one of the most capable and conservative business men of Toronto. The manager, Mr. William McCabe, and the secretary, Mr. L. Goldman, being also two of the most energetic and efficient insurance officials in Canada. The methods of this company, its investments, its popular and progressive policy, together with the character of its management, all account for the excellent and most satisfactory report published in our columns.

## READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

"DAVID GRIEVE."

"We anticipate," says the *London Times*, "a few obvious criticisms upon 'David Grieve.' Some readers will say that they could well have spared pages of extracts from his spiritual diary—and undoubtedly the novel is unusually long. Others will dwell upon the resemblances between Mrs. Humphrey Ward's first and second novels. A few, more discerning, will think that the course of the story would have been clearer, its effect sharper and more durable, had it been less cumbered with reflections and meditations, full of tender beauty though they often are. No reader with any insight can help recognizing that our literature has been enriched by a book which attempts, not altogether in vain, much—which takes us to some of the heights, and sounds some of the depths, of passion. What the outcome of it all is we do not care now to speculate—perhaps the saying of Sophocles, 'Follow the traditions and ways of thy neighbours'; perhaps the story is a proof of the 'slavery and chain of temperament,' to quote a phrase which is somewhere let fall in these volumes; perhaps the attesting of some truth deeper, sterner and much less acceptable. What measure of durable fame awaits 'David Grieve' we do not know—*habent sua fata libelli*. But the story is, we cannot doubt, better told; the writer knows more of her art than when she achieved, in 'Robert Elsmere,' a rarely-equalled success."

DOCTORED VIOLINS.

"WHAT about 'doctored' violins?" a well-known authority was asked recently.

"'Doctored' violins?" he said, reflectively. "Well, there's a good deal in it; more perhaps than is generally known. Many an owner of a violin who fondly believes himself to be the possessor of a 'Strad,' an Amati, a Bergonzi or a Guarneri, if the truth were known, hugs a delusion. His pet instrument, if its record were investigated, would prove to be the workmanship of some of the clever imitators of the old masters, who flourish in Mirecourt, in France."

"Are such imitations common?"

"I will answer that by telling you what I know of an old dealer in violins, long since dead, and whom I will call Franz Echrain. He was well known to the trade—and to the profession, too, for that matter—as a ceaseless buyer of fiddles. He bought and sold everything that bore the shape of a fiddle, from a double bass to a dancing master's kit. To him the callow youths resorted when they first began to scrape. He would set up for £1, and carry them up afterwards step by step to £10 or £20, and to ten times that amount if they were rich enough and green enough to continue the process. He was a genuine humbug at bottom, an everlasting copyist and maker of dead masters, Italian, French and German. He sold more Amatis in his day than the master himself ever made during his career. He knew the secret of the old varnish. He had hidden stores of old wood and worm-eaten sounding-boards of defunct harpsichords and reserves of close-grained pine hoarded for ages. He had a miniature printing press and a font of the lean-faced, long-forgotten type, and a stock of the old ribbed paper torn from the fly-leaves of antique folios. Of course he had always on hand a collection of the most wonderful instruments at the most wonderful prices for the professional man or the connoisseur."

"Have modern makers ever reached the skill of the old makers?"

"Undoubtedly. I know an amateur musician, and a wonderfully skilful workman he is. Give him an old master and he will reproduce its form, its proportions and its thickness with such absolute certainty that no difference can be detected by the nicest mechanical test, by sight, or even by touch."

"The old Cremona masters came to the front in 1550, and for two centuries, beginning with Amati and ending with Bergonzi, produced those famous instruments which sell as high as £1,000. Modern violin-playing really dates from the invention of Francis Lourte of the improved violin bow. The splendour of our playing, the grand and beautiful phrasing of Paganini, his brilliant staccato and long-sweeping legato are the direct consequence of the Lourte bow in the latter part of the last century."—*Spare Moments*.

THERE are two ways in which one can hear animals converse. One is by listening to them when they are not aware of your presence, the other is by winning their entire love and confidence. Very tame hens often show a desire to talk to you, and it is usually possible to understand them. Once a Leghorn met me at the door fairly screaming with excitement. I understood, from the cackle that ended each sentence, that she had been disturbed on her nest, and did not wonder at her new powers of speech when I found the nest occupied by a cat and three young kittens. When chickens first begin to move in the egg, just before hatching, the mother sings to them a low, crooning song, very sweet, and never heard at any other time. A friend told me that her canary startled her one day by a new call. It was plainly: "Come here, quick!" She hurried to the cage to find a large cat close by looking at the bird.—*Woman's Voice Magazine*.