

## Literary Notes.

**BESIDE THE BONNIE BRIER BUSH.** By Ian MacLaren. Hodder & Stoughton. Toronto. The Fleming H. Revell Co. Price \$1.25.

DR. ROBERTSON NICOL, the versatile and learned editor of the *British Weekly* and of a number of other equally able and interesting periodicals, can boast of having discovered, and brought to light, in the pages of his publications, not a few whose names now adorn the records of the republic of letters. Among them will rank high the author of the book above cited. Ian MacLaren's sketches of Drumtochty were the most eagerly sought for of the contributions which appeared in the *British Weekly*, not even excepting the able theological or philosophical article which is to be invariably found for the benefit of preachers on the famous first page. The sketches are pictures of homely Scottish character, probably the neatest of the kind that have ever seen the light of printer's type. To say that they are admirable is too general a remark, and to go into detail would be to encroach on forbidden space, besides, they have had so wide a circulation in their serial form, that popular approval has already been stamped upon them. But a word or two about Ian MacLaren will be fitting. The man behind the nom de plume is Rev. John Watson, the talented and successful minister of Sefton Park church, Liverpool. On both sides of his family he is of Highland blood, and after having completed his theological course he became assistant for a year at Barclay Free Church, Edinburgh. Then he "settled" at Logie Elmhurst, where his uncle had been parish minister at the Disruption. Here, in as pretty a spot as there is in Scotland, combining the grandeur of Highland scenery with some of the softer traits of the Lowlands, he laid the scene of the Drumtochty sketches with which his name will live in literature. This is what Mr. Watson himself says of the place:—"The scenery of Drumtochty is the same as that of Logie Elmhurst, but somewhat enlarged, as was necessary for the purpose of such a series. No real person, living or dead, has been introduced into the volume. My aim has been to depict characters which are true to life, but every one of them has been idealized beyond possibility of identification. In some cases my picture of what might have been is almost the contrary of what is. Neither have I attempted to exhaust all the characters or all the churches. It is the easiest thing in the world to overweight a story with detail, and so to lose the artistic perfection of the whole."

**THE CENTURY CYCLOPEDIA OF NAMES.** A pronouncing and etymological dictionary of names in geography, biography, mythology, history, ethnology, art, archaeology, fiction, etc. Edited by Benjamin E. Smith, M.A. New York: Century Co., Toronto: McAlinsh & Kilgour.

This is a work of colossal proportions. Like every great work undertaken by the Century Company, it is admirably done, and up to date. The scope is fairly set forth in the title page, but only the student, the literary worker can fully appreciate its real merit as a work of reference. It is the best help a writer or reader can have on his table. On almost every conceivable topic there are numberless books, but there is only one dictionary of proper names and that is the one just published and now under notice. Such a book has been a felt want for years and now that the attempt has been made to supply the want it is satisfactory to find that such exhaustiveness and excellence has been attained to. An example of its use may be given here. In reading Scribner's Magazine the other day, a short article by Brander Matthews was notable for the number of proper names it contained. The article was interesting and readable, but how much of its full import would be lost to the general reader without some such help as a dictionary of proper names may be learned from the following partial list culled from Mr. Matthews' article:—

City of Destruction, Fortunato Islands, Diedrich Knickerbocker, Wandering Jew, Flying Dutchman, Hernani, Natty Bumppo, Maude Muller, No Man's Land, Xanadu, Bermoothes, Robinson Crusoe, Lilliput, Weissnichtwo, Styx, Acheron, Bohemia, Forest of Arden, Arcady, Fountain of Youth, Lethe, Don Sancho Panza, Don Quixote, Pegasus, Augean Stable, Sleeping Beauty, Happy Valley, John Ruelster, Phoenix, Sphinx, Utopia, Lemuel Gulliver, Dædalus, Ultima Thule, New Amsterdam, Rip Van Winkle, Ahasuerus, Hawthorne, Long Tom Coffin, Hester Prynne, Hosea Bigelow, Lyonesse, Alph, New Atlantis, Broddingnag, Ulysses, Charon, Elysian Fields, Pluto, Alsatia, Una, El Dorado, Hesperides, Barataria, Rozinante, Ghent Aix, Apollo, Parnassus, Delectable Mountains, Rasselas, Pope Joan, Herodotus, Chimaera, Laputa, Procrustes, Cyrano de Bergerac.

Every one of these names is concisely dealt with in the *Cyclopedia*, in a manner superior, for reference purposes, to that of any other book. The wants of the general reader are especially met.

The important subjects include names of persons, persons of note, ancient and modern, divinities and mythological names, pseudonyms, characters in legend, fiction, poetry, and the drama, epithets and nicknames, names of dynasties, Roman families, etc., etc.; races and tribes of all countries, ancient and modern; modern geographical names; ancient names of places, rivers, etc., when important; names of imaginary places (in mythology, legend, poetry, etc.); popular names and epithets of places; names of notable streets, squares, parks, pleasure grounds; historical events; wars, battles, sieges, plots, treaties, conventions, concordats, leagues, councils, alliances, crusades, congresses, diets, parliaments, riots, rebellions, etc.; works of art; buildings and other structures; institutions; ancient schools of philosophy and art, political parties, libraries, universities, colleges and academies, notable clubs, orders of knighthood, etc.; books, including classical and other ancient works and a limited number of modern works,—novels, plays, operas, etc., and names of books of the Bible. Particular attention has been given to the Elizabethan dramatists and to English literature; stars and constellations, planets, asteroids, comets, etc.; noted animals and vessels.

Messrs. McAlinsh & Kilgour, Toronto, control the Ontario trade.

**MY LATTICE, and other poems.** By Frederick George Scott. Toronto: William Briggs. Montreal: C. W. Coates. Halifax: S. F. Huestis.

This little book will be made welcome in the cultured homes of the Dominion and beyond, and will stand on its merits a comparison with the freshest and best of recent poetry. An extended notice we cannot here give, but to lovers of the elegant in verse and beautiful in thought this little volume will prove delightful reading. The following specimen has been selected for its brevity and beauty.

VAN ELSSEN.

God spake three times and saved Van Elsen's soul;

He spake by sickness first and made him whole;

Van Elsen heard him not,  
Or soon forgot.

God spake to him by wealth, the world out-poured

Its treasures at his feet, and called him Lord;

Van Elsen's heart grew fat  
And proud thereof.

God spake the third time when the great world smiled,

And in the sunshine slew his little child;

Van Elsen like a tree  
Fell hopelessly.

Then in the darkness came a voice which said;

"As thy heart bleedeth, so my heart hath bled.

As I have need of thee,  
Thou needest me."

That night Van Elsen kissed the baby feet,  
And, kneeling by the narrow winding sheet,  
Praised Him with fervent breath  
Who conquered death.

**THE NEW WOMANHOOD; A Solution of the Woman Question** By James C. Fernald. Introduction by Marion Harland. 12mo, cloth, 369 pp., \$1.25. New York, London, Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

This not a controversial book, and all the more valuable that it is not. It is indeed a book before which controversy, in the interest of necessity, grows silent. The author's chief concern is not with the activities into which woman *may* enter, but with those into which she *must* enter; an attempt, as he says in his preface, "to establish certain general principles on which all will agree, to show how matters of practical interest are necessarily connected with those original facts of human nature, and to set clear above the surge of conflict some of those precious things which none of the combatants on either side would willingly let die." The first thing that strikes the reader is the evident enthusiasm with which Marion Harland, in his introduction, speaks of this "remarkable book;" but he will find that the author's own glowing enthusiasm in his theme, the saving common sense which never for an instant deserts him, and the almost inspired insight into the sanctities as well as the perplexities of woman's life, justify the strongest words which Marion Harland uses.

**THE TRIAL AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST; A devotional history of Our Lord's Passion.** By James Stalker, M.A., D.D. Hodder & Stoughton. Toronto: The Fleming H. Revell Co. Price \$1.50.

This is one of Dr. Stalker's best books. His *Life of Christ*, and *Life of St. Paul* give the reader of his books a foretaste of what is so admirably done here. The subject is of peculiar interest and in Dr. Stalker's hands receives fresh, attractive, and exhaustive treatment. The style is simple and direct. The narrative begins at the point where Jesus is taken, and proceeds with graphic power and detail through the various stages of the trial, the death scene, and burial. It does not deal with the resurrection. The character painting is vivid, strong in colour and individuality, and impressive. As set forth in the title, it is a devotional history of our Lord's Passion and the devotional interest is excited and maintained throughout. It ought to be widely read.

Fra Paolo Sarpi.

THE *Times* (London), under the heading "Mr. Gladstone on Fra Paolo Sarpi" publishes the following holograph letter which Mr. Gladstone sent to the Rev. Dr. Alexander Robertson, D.D., Venice, immediately on receiving a copy of the 2nd edition of his work on "Fra Paolo Sarpi, the greatest of the Venetians":—

"HAWARDEN CASTLE, Chester, Nov. 16, 1894.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Accept my best thanks for your very interesting work on Father Paul, which reached me to-day, and which I have at once commenced. I have a very strong sympathy with men of his way of thinking. It pleases me particularly to be reminded of Gibbon's weighty eulogy upon his history. Ever since I read it, I think over forty years ago, I have borne my feeble testimony by declaring that it came nearer to Thucydides than any historical work I have ever read. It pleases me much also to learn that a Sarpi literature has appeared lately at Venice. If you were so good as to send me the titles of any of the works at all worthy of their subject I would