

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

LECTURES ON RUSSIAN LITERATURE. Ivan Panin. The Knickerbocker Press. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson and Company.

It should be stated at once that the author of these six lectures is a staunch adherent of the literary tenets proclaimed a few years ago by Mr. Howells. The lectures were evidently prepared with a view to exalting Russian literature at the expense of all previous and popular schools, and the peculiarities of the author's English, crude and unfinished as it frequently is, hardly prepare us for accepting his dicta upon Wordsworth and Dickens and George Eliot, all of whom are, in his opinion, vastly inferior to the four Russians, Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenev, and Tolstoi. It is extraordinary that there can be such differences in criticism, but each age has owned its fanatics. Why comparisons and parallels must always be instituted when a writer undertakes to exalt a certain individual or a particular school is and must ever remain a mystery. Wordsworth is "tame and commonplace"; Dickens, "demoralizing"; George Eliot must fill her story with "descriptions that do not describe, and reflections that do not reflect." Only Turgenev files and files. "And for modesty, too," says Ivan Panin, "the literatures of England and Russia furnish instructive comparison. Russia has no autobiographies of note. Men there were too busy with their art to have much time left to think of themselves." The error here is in bracketing together the literature of England and Russia at all. Even half a dozen swallows do not make a summer. Further on Ivan Panin says, "Homer often nods in the 'Iliad,' but in 'Taras Bulba' Gogol never nods." Many other instances might be cited to prove that the book is hardly more than a national panegyric, though there is no doubt of the author's disinterestedness, and he is possessed of a certain brilliancy and elasticity of style.

IN THE TIME OF THE CHERRY VIEWING. An Episode in Japan. Margaret Peale. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson and Company.

This is a daintily bound and most readable little book, half story, half notes of travel, quite appropriate for the holiday season. Japan will soon have little or nothing left of it wherewith to solace the *blasé* traveller, for it enters already as an amusing and graphic factor into a number of every-day books.

THE NEW PANDORA. A Drama. By Harriet H. Robinson. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson and Company.

If any reputation the author of this valuable contribution to American poetry has already gained has not reached us, it must be considered our misfortune, inasmuch as the scholarly attributes and smoothness of the work and its purity of motive render it very important and interesting reading indeed. Dramatic poems in blank verse are things, as a rule, to be carefully avoided, but "The New Pandora" forms almost a startling exception to the rule. The beauty of the old Greek myth revives in the hands of the careful worker who paints with equal skill the rough men of the woods and streams, Ingomars, satyrs, brutes, and the pure and celestial spirit of Pandora "mated to a clown." The subject is a difficult one, but the author has succeeded in a consistent manner, freed from extravagances or blunders, in calling up images of beauty and nobility from the caverns and shores of mighty Greece, and embodying them in a drama of genuine literary importance and value. American literature is the richer for Mrs. Robinson's thoughtful effort, which, it will readily be seen, is a drama simply in plan, and not intended for public performance.

CATALOGUE OF THE BOOKS IN THE CIRCULATING LIBRARY. Toronto: Central Public Library.

We heartily welcome this neat, exact, and in every way creditable companion catalogue to that of the Reference Library noticed in our issue of the 14th June, and what we then wrote can be applied with even greater emphasis to the present volume. It might be well if more of the ever increasing number of readers whose time is saved, whose tempers are sweetened, and whose interests are so admirably conserved by its concise and comprehensive pages, were to reflect upon the tireless industry, the technical ability, and the minute and methodical accuracy which those helpful pages so well exemplify in their 50,000 clear, succinct, and accurate entries. A noticeable feature is the explanatory treatment of pseudonyms and anonymous publications. The preface, division, subdivision, treatment in detail and mechanical execution of the work are such as will gladden the heart of the most exacting bibliophile. We cannot close our reference without commending the wisdom of the Board of Management in adding to their very efficient staff Mr. T. Arnold Haultain, M.A., whose name appears in this catalogue as second assistant librarian. Mr. Haultain is one of our valued contributors, has already made his mark in Canadian literature, and is eminently qualified for the position which he so efficiently fills.

KEYS TO THE WORD, OR, HELP TO BIBLE STUDY. By A. T. Pierson, D.D. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph and Company; Toronto: John Young.

A new and cheaper edition of Dr. Pierson's valuable little work. By the use of an appropriate keyword, suggested

by the scope of the contents, or some special inherent peculiarity, each book in the sacred canon is indexed so as to be readily and intelligently recalled to memory. In addition to the system outlined, the pithy and scholarly notes will be found very interesting and useful.

THE *North American Review* is amply fulfilling the promises made by the new management. A high standard was set in the November number, but the December number, which has just come to hand, does not fall below it, and the announcements for the future show that no one who means to keep abreast of the times can afford to neglect this sterling publication. In the December issue the discussion of the subject of "Divorce," which was begun in November by Cardinal Gibbons, Bishop Potter, and Colonel Ingersoll, is continued by Mr. Gladstone, Justice Bradley, of the United States Supreme Court, and Senator Dolph, of Oregon. Mr. Andrew Carnegie, whose article on "Wealth" in the June number of the *Review* was the last article accepted by the late Mr. Rice, returns to that subject, writing this time on "The Best Fields for Philanthropy." Colonel Ingersoll contributes Part I. of his answer to the question, "Why Am I an Agnostic?" which is written in his customary brilliant style. George Westinghouse, Jr., of the Westinghouse Electric Company, furnishes "A Reply to Mr. Edison," wherein he contends that the alternating current is safer than the continuous current used by the Edison Company in electric lighting, and that wires can be put underground with entire safety. The Hon. Roger Q. Mills outlines the "Republican Tactics in the House," and gives his reasons for believing that the rules ought not to be altered. Karl Blind says "A Good Word for Jews," and Walter Damrosch, in "German Opera and Every-day Life," describes and explains the extraordinary popularity of Wagner's operas in this country. Marion Harland writes earnestly on "The Incapacity of Business Women." Lord Wolseley brings to a conclusion his series entitled "An English View of the Civil War," paying a joint tribute to the genius of Lincoln and Lee as the two commanding figures which that period produced; and there are several other important papers. Altogether the number reflects a portion of the best thought of the age.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

A NEW volume of poems by Robert Browning, no fewer than thirty, will be published this month by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., under the title, "Asolando: Fancies and Facts."

"PORTRAITS OF FRIENDS," by Principal Shairp, will shortly be issued from the Riverside Press. It contains essays on Thomas Erskine, Bishop Cotton, Arthur Hugh Clough, Norman Macleod, and others.

WITH the January number, *Scribner's Magazine* will have two important serials in progress, illustrated by artists of unusual merit—"In the Valley," illustrated by Howard Pyle, and "Expiation," by A. B. Frost.

MESSRS. MACMILLAN AND COMPANY have nearly ready a new book by Louis Carroll, author of "Alice in Wonderland," etc. It will be illustrated by Mr. Harry Furniss, who will be indeed fortunate if he repeats the successes of Mr. Tenniel in the earlier books.

THE third volume of the new edition of Mr. Hughes's novels will contain "The Scouring of the White Horse" and a Christmas story entitled "The Ashen Faggot," which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, as long ago as January, 1862, but has never been reprinted.

MR. MARTIN TUPPER was born as long ago as 1816, in London. His father was a physician, descended from an ancient family, partly of German, partly of Guernsey, origin. He was educated at the Charterhouse and at Christ Church, Oxford, where he took the degrees of B.A., M.A., and D.C.L. A barrister by profession, he never engaged in practice; but, himself an educated man, took to a sort of literature which, it is safe to say, few educated men have had the patience to read. Mr. Tupper did some creditable magazine work; but he long outlived his popular vogue, and his death now can hardly be said to remove an active force from the world.

W. C. BROWNELL, the author of "French Traits," in an article on "The French Exposition," in the January *Scribner's*, points out three disadvantages against which, as compared with the French, the United States shall be compelled to struggle if it undertakes an exhibition in 1892. They are: (1) that it possesses no site which can be compared for fitness with that which Paris possesses; (2) that it has no competent organization directed by a long and splendid tradition of æsthetic dignity and taste to create and control the exhibition of 1892; (3) the absence of any body of engineers, architects, sculptors, and decorators at all commensurate in numbers and æsthetic tradition.

PROF. GOLDWIN SMITH will kindly furnish a contribution towards THE WEEK for December 27th. A paper entitled "A Heroine of New France" from Blanche Macdonell is being eagerly looked forward to by lovers of the old régime. Mr. Lampman's sonnet, "Among the Orchards," is a carefully constructed piece of verse, strongly onomatopoeic in character. Miss Agnes Maule Machar will write on "Higher Education," and some very curious translations will appear, being made by a Canadian lady, new to the world of letters, from the yarns of an old Indian chief. Louis Lloyd, Prof. Clark, of Trinity

College, Mr. G. Mercer Adam, Prof. MacMechan and Mrs. J. W. F. Harrison will also contribute papers and poems upon subjects of vital interest.

THE *Spectator* of November 23rd has the following note upon a poem by Bliss Carman, published in the *Universal Review*: We are tempted to assert that the very life-blood of poetry is simplicity, upon reading Mr. Bliss Carman's "Cordyon: an Elegy in Memory of Matthew Arnold." There is in every stanza of this poem an elaborate straining after effect, which leaves nothing but a confused impression on the mind. "No picture," says Mr. Quilter in the essay from which we have already quoted, "that is painted only for the sake of exhibiting the artist's skill can be really attractive;" and the remark holds good of a poem. A lament, more distinguished for cleverness than pathos, lines of but half-intelligent meaning, and pictures of Nature, which the reader strives in vain to bring before the mind's eye, are the distinguishing features of this eccentric poem.

THE editors of *Nature* (London), on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the magazine, take occasion to review the progress of science during that period of years. In the physical sciences, the development of the atomic theory and the establishment of a connection between the theories of electricity and light have been the main achievements; in chemistry, the proclamation of the periodic law of the elements and the development of organic chemistry; in astronomy, the development of the spectroscopic, the use of photography, and the extension of the nebular hypothesis; in biology, the firm establishment of the Darwinian doctrine, the development of the study of bacteria, and, later, the effort to determine the position of the Lamarckian principle, have been the main features. In botany, the key-note has been the study of protoplasm and cell-life; in geology the greatest advance has been in the application of the microscope and the study of rock structure.

THE *Spectator* says of "The Quiet Life," a volume just out, and edited by Austin Dobson: Mr. Austin Dobson's verses are new, and they seem to us to catch the spirit of the poems which they introduce to us, while they preserve a certain note characteristic of their own time. The poet of these latter days realizes the sweetness of the "quiet life," and describes it with a zest that is perfectly genuine. He has his visions—

Of Spring that breaks with all her leaves,
Of birds that build in thatch and eaves,
Of woodlands where the thrush calls,
Of girls that gather cowslip balls,
Of kine that low and lambs that cry,
Of wains that jolt and rumble by,
Of brooks that sing by braunly ways,
Of sunburnt folk that stand and gaze,
Of all the dreams with which men cheat
The stony sermons of the street.

But he is like Horace's usurer, who, charmed with his own imaginings of the delights of a country life, "omnem redegit Idibus pecuniam," but alas! "querit Kalendis ponere." So our poet dismisses us with a doubt:

Let the dream pass, the fancy fade!
We clutch a shape, and hold a shade.
Is Peace so peaceful? Nay—who knows?
There are volcanoes under snows.

WE regret to announce the death of Mr. William Allingham, which occurred on Monday, at Eldon House, Lyndhurst Road, Hampstead, aged sixty-one. He was born at Ballyshannon, in Donegal, in 1828, of English descent, though his family had been settled in that place for some generations. He early displayed a taste for literature, and contributed to the *Athenæum*, *Household Words*, and other journals. In the first number of *Household Words*, his poem on "The Wayside Well" appeared, and in 1850 he published his first volume of poems. His "Second Day and Night Songs" was issued several years later, and in an enlarged form, with illustrations by Rossetti and Millais. In 1864 first appeared in book form "Laurence Bloomfield on Rich and Poor Ireland," a narrative poem of nearly 5,000 lines. In 1874 he became editor of *Fraser's Magazine*, and contributed to it many prose articles. Three years later he issued his "Songs, Poems, and Ballads," which contained revised versions of many former pieces then first collected, and in 1888, his "Irish Songs and Poems," with nine airs harmonized for voice and pianoforte. He also wrote and published two plays, *Ashby Manor* and *Evil May Day*. Mr. Allingham had a large circle of literary friends, among whom he was able to number the Poet Laureate and Mr. Carlyle. He married in 1874, Miss Ellen Patterson, the well-known water-colour artist. The remains of Mr. Allingham will be cremated at Woking.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *British Medical Journal* writes:—It may not be as widely known as it deserves to be that twenty grains of salicylic acid, given in liq. ammon. acet. three or four times a day, will so far control a common cold that the aching of the brow, eyelids, etc., and during movements of the eye, will cease in a few hours, while the sneezing and running from the nose will also abate, and will disappear in a few days, and, more fortunately still, the cold will pass off, and not finish up, as is customary, with a cough. It may be that it is only in persons tainted with rheumatism where we find a chill followed by such a train of troubles, and certain it is that different persons suffer in different ways after a chill. But for a very great number of people of fair health who are liable to take a common cold, it is highly desirable to avoid a cough, and the salicylic acid treatment places this in our power.