



Life, Literature and Education.

"The first class of readers may be compared to an hour-glass, their reading being as the sand; it runs in and out and leaves not a vestige behind. A second class resembles a sponge, which imbibes everything, and returns it in nearly the same state, only a little dirtier. A third class is like a jelly bag, which allows all that is pure to pass away, and retains only the refuse and dregs. The fourth class may be compared to the slave of Golconda, who, casting aside all that is worthless, preserves only the pure gems."—[Coleridge.

In which class do the readers of the above paragraph place themselves, individually?

The Reading of Books.

Often one hears a farmer remark, "I have no time for reading." Excuse for this there may be during the long summer days when there is work to be done from early morning until the last of the daylight, and often aching bones and the lassitude that comes of physical weariness. At the same time, it is a query if the farmer, as well as most other men, improves all the moments which he might easily spend in reading. It is a good thing to remember that "a change is as good as a rest," or, as one might put it, "a change is a species of rest." There are moments at noon, at night, and on Sundays, which most of us can find without much hunting, and which we might well spend, to our pleasure and profit, in reading.

It is not necessary to devour great numbers of books in order to be a cultured man, and yet some reading is absolutely necessary. The farmer who reads is very easily told, in both manner and speech, from the one who never reads. The great thing necessary, when time is of necessity limited, is that one read wisely. This does not mean that all need apply themselves to one class of books; the kind that appeals to you may not, in all probability, appeal to me, but there may be the nugget of gold in your selection as well as in mine. As Henry Van Dyke has said, "Doubtless there are treasures to be found in all regions of literature—not a solitary pot of gold hidden in a single field, and a terrible chance that we may not happen to buy the right lot—but veins of rich ore running through all the rocks and placers in all the gravel-beds." At the same time, in order to be sure of the gold, one must see to it that one applies one's self only to the best of the class in which he is interested. Because you like novels, there is no reason why you should read Bertha M. Clay, and cast aside David Copperfield or Vanity Fair. Read the best of that which interests you, and branch out into other lines as you go. The more particular you are, the more finely-developed will your taste be-

come, so that, by and by, you will be as ready to take poison into your mouth as to waste time on trashy literature.

You may not, possibly, agree with all that you read, even in the works of good authors, but that is no necessity; even good books are not to be bolted like pills. If a book makes you think, whether to agree or disagree, then that book is likely proving of use to you. Torpidity of mind is a thing that should be dreaded as the plague, for the thought is the life. In so far as we cease to think, to weigh, to consider things, we cease to live.

Again, if you have but little time, read standards in preference to the "latest thing out." The chances are that the book whose title flares across the bookstore windows and newspaper headlines in blare of heavy type and fierce capitals, is but an ephemeron that will be dead before the year is out. Don't bother with it unless you find it recommended by those whose judgment is worth listening to. You have no time to waste on ephemera, and you may take it in very truth that "a book that is not worth reading twice is not worth reading once." Read then, and re-read; so, only, may you assimilate, and get the full pleasure from, and grasp of those wonderful creations which have been described as "the precious life-blood of master spirits, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

Violating the Oath.

Judicial authorities, particularly in Western Canada, are becoming more and more alarmed at the frequency with which witnesses in the courts perjure themselves. The crime of perjury seems to be held in the same estimation by a large number of the population as any sharp practice of business, many of our American immigrants considering its seriousness only in proportion to the punishment it merits in their native States, which, in some instances, is nothing more than a black mark against their names. This is one of the difficulties with which the Canadian judiciary and politicians have to grapple. The stability and integrity of the nation depends upon the observance of her laws and the maintenance of the inviolacy of the oath. With the spread of the doctrine of materialism, and the very general prevalence of atheism, the sacredness and significance of the oath is being ignored, so that it is becoming more and more incumbent that some other method be employed to impress people with its importance. The past twenty-five years have seen the world awake to its most strenuous existence, and it is most probable that the bustle of business activity has been responsible for the neglect of parents to teach their children many things to fit them to live among others, a more sacred regard for absolute truthfulness and the honor of their word, and particularly of the meaning of the oath. In case any of our readers have not at hand a definition of the term "oath," we give here, in the words of a noted authority: "A religious asseration by which we renounce the mercy or imprecate the vengeance of Heaven if we speak not the truth."



Evan Roberts.

A few months ago the world had never heard of Evan Roberts, now one of the most striking personalities of the times. He is a tall, gracefully built, musical, thoughtful-looking young man of twenty-six years, the son of a Welsh miner of sturdy character, both his parents being characterized by religious simplicity and zeal. Though a nominal Christian, it was not until the aggressive work of an "Endeavor Society" reached his village that the inspiration came to him, after prolonged "communion with the Unseen," to "speak to the people" of his village, which he did. This was last November. Since then the fiery cross of revival has spread to some 40,000, turning lives of sin and selfishness to lives of righteousness and self-sacrifice. As to the fruits, long-standing debts have been paid, the saloons and music-halls have closed for want of patronage, it is quite common for magistrates to receive white gloves, there being no criminal cases to try at the courts, and the Bible Society was at times unable to supply the demand for copies of "The Word of Life." The revival spirit has spread to England, though Evan Roberts has declined "invitations" to speak outside of his native Wales. Humble and self-effacing, he is one of those who, seeing visions and dreaming dreams, has become one of the greatest spiritual influences in Great Britain.



Bliss Carman.

A very few lines of poetry are usually sufficient for the revelation of the master-touch. The eminent prose writer may write lines, pages even, which are essentially commonplace, but the true poet—who added to that sixth sense for grasping the beauty and essence of things which in its fulness seems to belong most of all to the poet, has also the gift of being able to express his thought in words beautiful, melodious beyond the power of ordinary speech—must, of necessity, show his

power in almost every line. The works of few of our poets, perhaps, reveal the presence of this master-touch more strongly than those of Bliss Carman. Music of language, delicacy of description, originality of thought and expression, are all there. He knows just what to tell and what to eliminate, and he never overloads with that wealth of detail which sometimes renders the writings, even of some of the masters, rather tedious reading. An impressionist among the poets, he dashes in a stroke here, a stroke there. The interspaces he leaves for the imagination of the reader to fill—but the picture is complete.

Bliss Carman was born at the beautiful city of Fredericton, N. B., in April, 1861, and was educated at the University of New Brunswick, taking the B. A. degree and the Alumni gold medal in 1881, and the M. A. degree in 1884. Afterward he spent some time in private study, and reading at Edinburgh and Harvard. Since then his life has been given up to literary work; in truth, it would seem that literature runs in the blood of his race, for he is a cousin of the brilliant Roberts family, of which Charles G. D. is the most widely-known member. Mr. Carman has been associated in editorial work with the New York Independent, the Cosmopolitan, and the Atlantic Monthly, but his name will live in the collections of poems and valuable prose works which he has given to the public. Among the best known of these are, "Low Tide on Grand Pre," "A Book of Lyrics," "A Sea-mark," "Behind the Arras," "A Book of the Unseen," "More Songs from Vagabondia," "By the Aurelian Wall, and Other Elegies," "Friendship of Art," and "Kinship of Nature." He has also assayed an ambitious piece of poetical work in reproducing the lost poems of Sappho, the "queen of song" of Lesbos, who loved and wrote about six centuries before Christ. Mr. Carman has collected the few fragments of her poems which have survived, and has built upon them a superstructure such as he conceives her elaborated work might have been. As Chas. G. D. Roberts, in his introduction to the volume, says: "Perhaps the most perilous and the most alluring venture in the whole field of poetry is that which Mr. Carman has undertaken in attempting to give in English verse those lost poems of Sappho, of which fragments have survived. . . . It is as if a sculptor of to-day were to set himself, with reverence and trained craftsmanship, and studious familiarity with the spirit, technique and atmosphere of his subject, to restore some statues of Polyclitus or Praxiteles, of which he had but a broken arm, a foot, a knee, a finger, upon which to build." . . . Mr. Carman is still carrying on his literary work in New York City.

The following stanzas from "Low Tide on Grand Pre," which in their plaintiveness remind one somewhat of Jean Ingelow's beautiful "Divided," may serve as some indication of Bliss Carman's style of writing:

"Was it a year, or lives ago,
We took the grasses in our hands,
And caught the summer flying low
Over the waving meadow lands,
And held it there between our hands?"