

the immense army of the Turks which was besieging Vienna—a "turning point in history, the final great Eastern invasion which has thundered at that gate of Europe." The one hundred and seventeenth was sung by Cromwell and his army after the victory of Dunbar, September 3, 1650, as described so graphically by Carlyle. The one hundred and eighteenth was sung by the Huguenots on bended knee at Coutras. Seeing their attitude, some courtiers in gay dress cried, "Behold, the cowards are already begging for mercy!" "No!" cried an officer who knew their way, "you may expect a stern fight from the men who sing psalms and pray." After their victory they sang the one hundred and twenty-fourth, a psalm memorable in Scottish history, and known as "Durie's Psalm." John Durie had been expelled from his pulpit and from Edinburgh for boldly criticising some of the high-handed acts of King James VI. So great was the popular indignation that the sentence had to be reversed; and James Melville tells the story in his quaint Scotch: "Within a few days after the petition of the nobility, John Durie gat leave to go haim to his ain flock of Edinburgh; at whose returning there was a great concours of the haill town, wha met him at the Nether Bow; and going up the street with baird heads and loud voices sang to the praise of God, and testifying of great joy and consolation, the one hundred and twenty-fourth psalm. 'Now Israel may say, and that trewly,' till heaven and earth resoundit. This noise, when the Duke of Lennox, being in the town, heard, and ludging in the Hiegate, looked out and saw, he raved his beard for anger and hasted him off the town." This psalm is still sung in Scottish churches, and to the same stirring martial air that in those days made heaven and earth resound.—*Spectator*.

PHILIP G. HAMERTON ON FICTION.

In a communication to the *British Weekly*, Philip Gilbert Hamerton, speaking of the books that have influenced him, says: My pleasure in fiction is limited to a very few authors. Scott I know intimately, but there is not any novelist whom I appreciate so heartily, except Thackeray, whose masterpieces I have read over and over again; indeed, I never tire of them. I have read Balzac's principal novels as a study, but should never take them up for pleasure, and George Eliot's books have also been a study for me, sometimes rather an arduous one. I find it hard work to read Dickens, and, in fact, have a very limited acquaintance with his novels, some of which I have begun but laid aside. I dislike his literary method, which seems to proceed by repetitions of little peculiarities, and by describing traits and oddities of character rather than complete characters. I admire George Sand for a facility that was never careless, but have a very limited acquaintance with French fiction generally. The *Spectator* once made a very clumsy shot by assuming for me a familiarity with French novels, because I have an intimate knowledge of the language, but, in fact, I have read them little, and should never have read even Daudet, if George Eliot had not made me ashamed of my ignorance by speaking very favourably of a book of his then unknown to me. French literature of other kinds has had a very favourable influence upon me by correcting to some extent the natural English preference of energy and abundance to exactness. The best French authors have so far inherited the classical spirit that they value precision in the use of language more than the appearance of force. This is especially true of the best French critical literature, which is unrivalled in its desire for not merely rude truth, but delicately accurate truth, so far as the writer can attain to it. No Englishman ever acquires a perfect sympathy with French poetry, and my enjoyment of it has been very partial—a mere selection of pieces that I read repeatedly. The French classical drama of Racine and Corneille appears to me a very elevated form of art, like some kinds of painting and sculpture. I did not appreciate it until I knew the difference between art and nature in other forms of human production.

The list of books in this letter is very meagre, the difficulty being that I cannot trace influences from much of my reading. I have sometimes wondered whether Italian literature had had any influence upon me, without being able to answer the question satisfactorily. Shakespeare has not influenced me in any perceptible way, and the only plays of his that I occasionally re-read are the great tragedies. But, as I said at the beginning of this letter, there are influences which we cannot trace. There are also very powerful influences from comparatively humble sources. An essay on "La Délicatesse dans l'Art," by M. Constant Martha, has been a very precious book to me, and so has a small treatise called "Théorie de l'Invention," by M. Paul Souriau. Even an extract from an anonymous newspaper article may sometimes be of importance. The following, from an old number of the *Saturday Review*, has been of great value to me, practically and intellectually:

"It is the slovenliness of men and women which for the most part makes their lives so unsatisfactory. They do not sit at the loom with keen eye and deft finger; but they work listlessly and without a sedulous care to piece together as they best may broken threads. We are apt to give up work too soon, to suppose that a single breakage has ruined the cloth. The men who get on in the world are not daunted by one nor a thousand breakages."

HE ASKED A FAVOUR.

"My lads," said a captain when reading his orders to his crew on the quarter-deck to take command of a ship, "there is one law that I am determined to make, and I shall insist upon its being kept. Indeed, it is a favour which I ask of you, and which, as a British officer, I expect to be granted by a crew of British seamen. What say you, my lads; are you willing to grant your captain one favour?" "Ay, ay!" cried all hands; let us know what it is, sir." "Well, my lads," said the captain, "it is this: that you must allow me to swear the first oath on the ship. No man on board must swear an oath before I do. I am determined to have the privilege of swearing first on board. What say you, my

sons; will you grant me this favour?" The men started, and stood for a moment quite at a loss what to say. "They were taken," says one, "all aback." "They were brought up," said another, "all standing." The captain reiterated. "Now, my fine fellows, what do you say—am I to have the privilege of swearing the first oath on board?" The appeal seemed so reasonable, and the manner of the captain so kind and prepossessing, that a general burst from the ship's company announced, "Ay, ay, sir!" with their accustomed three cheers. The effect was good, and swearing was almost wholly abolished on the ship.

EUROPEAN NAMES.

Sweden and Norway were anciently called Scandinavia, which the modern antiquarians think means a country and woods that have been burned or destroyed. The appellation, Sweden, is derived from Sittuna or Svitheod; the native term Norway, or the northern way, explaining itself. Prussia, from Peuzal, a Slavonic race; but some writers supposed it took its name from Russia and the Slavonic syllable "po," which means adjacent or near. Denmark means the marches, territories or boundaries of the Danes. Russia is the ancient Sarmatia, which has been subsequently named Muscovy. It derives its present name from Russi, a Slavonic tribe, who founded the Russian monarchy. The original inhabitants used to paint their bodies in order to appear more terrible in battle. They generally lived in the mountains, and their chariots were their only habitations. Spain, the ancient Iberia, from Iberius; or Hispania, from the Phœnician Spaniga, which signifies abounding with rabbits—whence animals are very numerous in that country—hence Spain. France, from the Franks, a people of Germany who conquered that country. Its ancient name was Celta, Gaul or Gallia Barachatta, the latter signifying striped breeches, which were worn by the natives. Switzerland, the ancient Helvetia, was so named by the Austrians, who called the inhabitants of these mountainous countries Schweitzers. Italy received its present name from a renowned prince called Italus. It was called Hesperia, from its western locality.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

FLYING CLOUDS.

On an autumn day, as I looked on high,
A large mass of dark clouds o'erspread the sky.

They were flying clouds, and in quick pursuit,
O'er the broad expanse, they did swiftly shoot.

Though fast they flew, the sun between,
As I chanced to look could be plainly seen.

Then gladly I marked how the clouds, each one,
Grew brighter far as they neared the sun.

Yes, all their blackness had vanished away,
As the dark recedes from the light of day.

Is thy sky o'ercast with clouds of care?
Unto Christ, the Sun, draw thou near in prayer.

Blyth.

J. A. M.

MARIE ANTOINETTE.

Marie Antoinette was in no way a woman fitted for the affairs of State. She was simply a woman. That was her charm and her misfortune. There was no trace in her of the genius of her mother, Maria Theresa. She was simply a young Viennese princess. Fond of pleasure and sympathetic, she was too proud of her rank and birth and too disdainful of the opinions of the world to sacrifice to them even a trifling caprice. Frivolous, but little educated, and never reading, difficult to advise and impatient of schooling, which bored her, she judged of policies by persons, and of persons by the opinion of coteries. With little judgment she had plenty of courage, but her valour was apt to dissipate itself in anger or tears. Her heart, nevertheless, was noble, and honour was with her a passion. When the dignity of the Crown seemed compromised or lowered—when it was outraged amid provocation and insult, she hardened herself against attack, and one could then recognize in her the daughter of Maria Theresa.—*Europe and the French Revolution—Albert Sorel*.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY, the Liberal-Unionist candidate for Bridport, declared in regard to disestablishment that Mr. Gladstone had put the matter on the right footing when he said the majority of the Scottish people should settle the question.

THE editor of the *Free Church Monthly* says: Now that Sir Henry Moncreiff has gone, there is no one who has such a store of ecclesiastical anecdotes at command as Dr. Burns of Kirkliston, and it would be a thousand pities not to seek to preserve the best of these.

DR. GUNNING, of Brazil, who placed the tablet in memory of Jenny Geddes in St. Giles's, was present at the graduation ceremonial in Edinburgh University and received the honorary degree of LL.D. He began his career as dux of the parish school of Ruthwell, in Dumfriesshire, and graduated with high honours at Edinburgh. He enjoys the intimate friendship of the Emperor of Brazil, who is himself a man of scientific attainments.

REV. HENRY WALLACE, professor of Christian ethics in the Assembly's College, Belfast, died on 25th ult. Born at Newtownards, in 1801, his collegiate education was principally received in the old institution in Belfast. He was ordained minister of Holywood in 1826, and subsequently laboured at Cork and also at Londonderry. In 1867 he was elected to the professorship which he held till last Assembly. Mr. Wallace was offered and declined the degree of D.D. from Princeton and also by the theological faculty of which he was himself a member.

British and Foreign.

ABOUT 300 Free Church congregations are still without missionary associations.

A SECOND edition has been called for of Rev. John Lowe's valuable work, "Medical Missions."

THE Belgian Government have passed a bill for the punishment of inebriety and faults connected with it.

It is proposed that a United Temperance Sunday should be observed by all the Nonconformist Churches of England.

COUNTESS OLGA PONTATINE, recently an attendant on the Empress of Russia, has gone to Japan as a missionary of the Greek Church.

PROF. J. G. MACGREGOR, of Dalhousie College, Halifax, has arrived in Edinburgh to superintend the issue of a work on natural philosophy.

REV. W. LAMBIE NELSON, D.D., the oldest Presbyterian minister in Queensland, is dead; he had reached his eighty-fourth year. He was long minister at Toowoomba.

MR. REITH, pastor of the Free College Church, Glasgow, has been on a yachting excursion to Norway with Sir William Collins, who is an elder of his congregation.

THE heritors have decided to demolish the old parish church of Moffat, which will be vacated a few months hence. Some desired to convert it into a public hall.

THE value of spirits and beer consumed in Ireland during 1877, the year before the Sunday Closing Act, was twelve millions, while in 1885 it was ten and a half millions.

MR. LEITCH, of Helensburgh, has resumed pulpit work after a somewhat prolonged illness, during which his duties were discharged by a ministerial friend from Canada.

DR. SOMERVILLE, ex-Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly, has been preaching at Grantown. His son, Rev. J. E. Somerville, also gave a discourse specially addressed to young men.

MR. E. C. BERTRAND, the author of "Grandfather's Clock," died in the University hospital lately. Thousands of pounds were made by the sale of his songs; but its author got only a few shillings for it.

AT Würzburg preparations have already begun for the celebration in 1889 of the introduction of Christianity in Franconia by St. Kilian of Scotland, who is supposed to have suffered martyrdom in 689.

LARBERT Church has been reopened after renovations costing upwards of \$8,500, and the erection of an organ. The collection at the opening services, with the proceeds of a musical recital, amounted to \$650.

CHRISTIAN work continues to extend throughout the great English railway systems. A large portion of it is maintained by the railway employes themselves; but they are greatly helped by Christian ladies.

NEARLY all the Presbyterian ministers of Sydney signed a memorial to the Governor of New South Wales, praying that an amnesty should be granted to deserving and short-sentenced prisoners in celebration of the Royal Jubilee.

A RECENT visitor to the great cathedral at Florence notes the fact that not a single sentence from the Bible is to be found sculptured on its walls, and adds that perhaps not a single copy of the sacred Scriptures could be found within the building.

THE value of medical missions and the probability of their great extension may be estimated by the fact that forty young men have this year been in correspondence with the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society with the view of adopting the profession.

THE temperance people of Liverpool are uniting with special heartiness in the testimonials about to be presented to Archdeacon Bardsley, bishop-elect of Sodor and Man, as he is not only a lifelong teetotaler, but the son of the first teetotal Anglican clergyman.

DR. VARTAN, after years of waiting, has been informed by the Council of State at Constantinople that the hospital which he had begun to build at Nazareth must be abandoned. He is permitted, however, to continue his practice at Nazareth, and he does not despair of yet obtaining a local habitation there.

DR. JOHNSTON, of Belfast, suggests that during the absence of Rev. Mr. Whigham from Ballinasloe on business connected with the governorship of the Sustentation Fund, his pulpit should be supplied by each of the thirty-six Presbyteries of the Church sending one of their best ministers in regular succession.

SOME of the ignorant natives of India regard the postal institution as absolutely miraculous, and in certain places the letter-boxes are worshipped. A native will take off his shoes on approaching the wonderful box, go through his devotions before putting in the letter, and on retiring will leave a little propitiatory money offering.

MR. J. CAMPBELL WHITE, of Overton, has offered \$5,000 to aid the extension of evangelistic work by the Free Church in India, its educational missions having prepared the ground for a vigorous effort to gather in results. Principal Miller, of Madras, has offered \$3,500 if the Church sends a missionary to the Conjevaram district.

EDINBURGH Presbytery has been discussing the subject of preparatory services before the Lord's supper now that the fast days are abolished. Some pleaded for uniformity; others thought that each kirk session should be left free to fix its preparatory services at the time most suitable for the particular congregation. It was agreed by a majority to take no action.

MANY of the Episcopal congregations in Tasmania are stoutly protesting against the action of the Synod in recognizing the semi-Romish innovation of sisterhoods. Mr. Gardard, a venerable clergyman, denounces anything that could be construed into a vow; and Mr. Milne, an influential layman, declared that if any of the clergy thought it their mission to force sisterhoods on the laity they had better leave the colony.