

of the incongruous, although he is not the equal of Stevenson or Austen, Mr. Haggard is still easily among the first.

In "Cleopatra," however, there is not a single glimpse of humour. Imagination reigns supreme, with a good deal of Egyptian lore scattered broadcast. We read the quite serious dedication and the still more serious preface with a feeling of having been deceived—taken in, so to speak. The author's mother, who is evidently an Egyptologist, and to whom the work is dedicated, is probably more than half responsible for her son's choice of a subject which is of necessity a theme calling for those splendours of expression that are met with so frequently in Mr. Haggard's best work. Indeed the style of "Cleopatra" is so erotic, so overlaid, weighed down with the florid hyperbole of the Orient that a glance at its pages suggests a mixture of Ouida and George Ebers. Yet when it comes to the dramatic, and situations are needed, the author rises to the occasion. The affair of the huge bat, "white with unrecorded ages, and whose measure was the measure of a hawk," and the whole scene in which the mighty treasure of emeralds was found inside the mummy, are alike characterized by a boldness of conception in the best vein of the writer. There are thirty striking illustrations in the Canadian edition, originally supplied by R. Caton Woodville and M. Greiffenhausen.

#### LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

POPE'S "Essay on Man," with corrections in the poet's own handwriting, was lately sold in London for \$160.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. have now ready "Natural Religion," the Gifford lectures delivered at Glasgow, 1888, by F. Max Müller, M.A.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE is said to have undertaken the biography of James Freeman Clarke; the book is not to be expected for two years.

"ROUND the World with the Poets," selected and arranged by Mary Cate Smith and Sarah C. Winn, is announced by C. H. Kilborn of Boston.

AT Paris Russia exhibits little, and of this the case of P. Jurgenson is the best. Russian literature is a possibility of the distant future, of which we have but a dim promise.

ITALY has only eleven exhibits at Paris, of which those of Ferdinand Ongania, of Venice, Jules Ricordi et Cie., of Milan, and Edouard Sonzogno, of Milan, are the more important.

A VOLUME of the poems of Mr. Frederic Tennyson, eldest brother of the poet laureate, is among the reprints in contemplation in London. They have become difficult to procure.

MACMILLAN & CO. will publish in September a revised edition of Bryce's "American Commonwealth." It is said that ten thousand copies of this work have been sold in the United States.

GREECE is represented at the Paris Exposition by thirty-six exhibits, of which Anesti Constantinides, of Athens, who has done much for modern Greek literature, stands foremost.

A NEW volume of poems by Victor Hugo, soon to make its appearance in Paris, contains two dramas, "Amy Robsart," which was acted at the Odéon, and "Les Jumeaux," which was left unfinished.

IN the Swiss department of the Paris Exhibition there are twenty-one exhibitors, of whom D. Lebet, of Lausanne, and Orell Fussli et Cie., of Zurich, are the chief. Nothing specially attractive presents itself in this department.

THE Rev. Samuel Longfellow is re-casting his biography of the poet. The volume of reminiscences and anecdotes which appeared as a sequel to the two volumes of the biography will probably be incorporated in these, the "Life" then appearing in three volumes.

LITTLE, BROWN AND CO. have in preparation "A Book About Florida," by Margaret Deland, author of "John Ward, Preacher," to be issued in an octavo volume, illustrated with numerous coloured plates, etchings, and vignettes in text, from designs by Louis K. Harlow, bound in decorated cloth.

It seems that the day for fleshly novels has already gone by. The demand for the work of the Dainties and the Gertrude Athe.tons and other disciples of the fleshly school has practically ceased in leading bookstores, and people are asking for healthier literature. The reaction was bound to come, but it has come somewhat sooner than was expected.

GEORGE H. ELLIS, of Boston, will publish ere long "Problems in American Society," by Joseph Henry Crooker, author of "Jesus Brought Back." Its six chapters are "The Student in American Life," "Scientific Charity," "The Root of the Temperance Problem," "The Political Conscience," "Moral and Religious Instruction in the Public Schools," and "The Religious Destitution of Villages."

M. TERQUEM, who has charge of the interests of the American publishers at the Paris Exposition, writes that *The Century* has taken a Diploma of Honour in the department of publications. This is more than an ordinary compliment, for the reason that only seven of these diplomas were awarded; four stayed in France, one went to Belgium, one to England and one to America. *The Century* Co. received also a gold medal; so too did J. B. Lippincott Co. of Philadelphia.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS will publish shortly "Great Words from Great Americans," a neatly gotten up little book giving the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, Washington's and Lincoln's Inaugural and Farewell Addresses, etc.; "Seven Thousand Words Often Mispronounced," by William H. P. Phylle; and a new "Knickerbocker Nugget" devoted to "Tales by Heinrich Zschöke," translated by Parke Godwin and William P. Prentiss.

SIR CHARLES DILKE is engaged upon a work entitled "Problems of Greater Britain," covering in some respects the same ground of "Greater Britain." It will not be, however, a record of travel, but a study of comparative politics and a complete survey of the Empire. Special attention will be paid to the question of Indian frontier defence, the situation in Canada and South Africa, and the important problems which concern Australia. The book will be published by Macmillan and Co. in January.

It is announced now that John Albert Bright will not take any action for some time to come with regard to the publication of his father's papers, including the voluminous and necessarily most interesting diary. As in the case of Lord Beaconsfield's papers, it is felt that inconveniences might arise if publication were to take place during the lifetime of the Queen or of Mr. Gladstone. Even the life of the late Lord Aberdeen, long since written and printed, will be withheld, it is stated, so long as the Queen is alive.

"CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK," says the *St. James' Gazette*, "was a well-invented pseudonym, and deceived authors and critics on both sides of the Atlantic as to the sex of the author." The writer continues: "To be taken for a man is still apparently regarded as a compliment by the lady writer. That is a mark of subjection which should be outlived in these days of ladies' literary dinners and other demonstrations of fair ladies in revolt. It is what some people are fond of calling a significant fact, that, whereas half the ladies who write assume masculine pseudonyms, we can recall no instance of a man writing under a female name."

THE American artist, Mr. Theodore Wores, whose studies of Japanese life and landscape have recently attracted wide attention in New York and London, has written for the September *Century* a paper on "An American Artist in Japan," for which a number of his oil paintings have been engraved. Mr. Wores describes many Japanese traits of character which might be copied to advantage by nations which are generally considered more highly civilized. "An utter absence of sham," he says, "a perfect freedom from all affectation, constitutes one of their most admirable qualities. They show no false or veneered front to the world, the beauty of their homes lies more in their interior finish than in a showy outside, and the lining of their gowns is often of a more expensive and finer material than the outer stuff."

THE *Dominion Illustrated*, itself occupying a deservedly honourable place in Canadian periodical literature, says: The regret has often been expressed that Canada has hitherto failed to give continued and paying support to the higher class of periodical. This is certainly to be deplored. It is, however, some compensation that the daily press (both French and English) devotes a good deal of space to literary subjects. For some time past this phase of Canadian journalism has been becoming more marked. Nearly all the best city papers and several of the country journals have on their staff of writers literary men who keep the public fairly informed as to what is going on in the world of letters. We have, moreover, at least one good literary journal. If *THE WEEK* were published in the United States or in England, we would probably learn more (in Canada) of its merits. Abroad, it takes deserved rank among the leading expositors of the thought, taste and tendencies of our time, and at home it is prized by those whose favourable judgment is worth having. But it is not rash to say that, were it published in New York, or Boston or London, its circulation would be ten times as great as it is. Meanwhile, it has, we rejoice to know, made good its hold on the affections of a sufficient number of Canadian readers to assure it against premature demise.

#### READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

##### WHAT IS A DRAMA?

I TAKE it for granted, notwithstanding Mr. Howells' recent suggestions, that Shakespeare has given us some very fair models in dramatic fiction, nor do I hesitate to refer to Molière as a playwright of some authority. Take from any play of Shakespeare or Molière the plot and there is left no continuity of interest binding together the brilliant fragments of wit, wisdom, life, and art. Nowhere does mere dilettanteism, or sheer photographic tameness, show more absurdly than behind the footlights. The masquerade of art, by giving precedence to the commonplace over the heroic, is not so observable in a novel as in a play. The reader who has infinite leisure and very low appreciation of the function of art may please himself for a day or two with some so-called novel of commonplace existence, made doubly commonplace by dreary analysis, but the theatre-lover demands vigorous imagination lighting up a strong plot, and he will not be content with mere garden-party stuff. In this the theatre-lover is altogether right. The best art in the novel or the drama is a combination of invention and presentation. First a plot, next its projection, then the breath of human life blown from the lips of genius. The two great novelists of all time, Scott and

Hugo, like the two great dramatists, Shakespeare and Molière, did not view fiction as mere photography. They understood that the frame-work, the bony skeleton of a story, must be the plot, that its organs must be the active characters whose functions were to develop the interest, and that its vitality must lie in the presentation of some form of reasonable heroism, or some form of extraordinary human experience. This experience might be that of a past age, or it might be a reflex of contemporary civilization; but the creation must not fail to have a stamp above the commonplace. Nor must this stamp be merely in the style; it must sink into the plot and identify the very fibre of the story; it must mark the characters evolved; it must give force and authority to the life presented, and by its own heat weld itself to the lives of the theatre audience, from the orchestra seats to the bootblack gallery. Art is nothing worth having if it is not an appeal of life to life, and the drama is nothing valuable if it is not the simplest and directest of all vehicles for this appeal. But what is life without the stimulus of a plot, without the intrigue of ambition, devoid of the sweet and the bitter trials of true love, shorn of the badges of heroism and denied the precious glamour of romance? What a dry, tasteless, material thing the drama would be, built on the analytico-commonplace plan! Perhaps it is the most natural thing in the world that the realists cannot see how modern, or rather recent, realism has degraded the drama to its present condition. When the hero and the heroine were abolished, or were degraded to mere kettle-drum and picnic characters, it was the death-knell of all high dramatic fascination in plays, but it satisfied the little realists—nay, it delighted them—and now they demand that the plot, so dear to all the great dramatists, from Æschylus to Bulwer, shall be abandoned. If the ambitious young playwright would know what a genuine drama is, and upon what rules success in his profession must depend, let him turn from the realists and consult his Shakespeare and his Molière, not for imitation, but for sympathy, direction and encouragement.—*Maurice Thompson in America.*

##### AUSTRALIAN POLITICS.

It has been said that Australian politics are the politics of great questions and little men. Like most generalisations this is hardly accurate. Sir Henry Parkes, of New South Wales, and Sir John Macdonald, of Canada, are men of equal calibre to many who have made for themselves names in English history. Mr. Gillies, Premier of Victoria, has a parliamentary skill and experience which would fit him to lead in any deliberative assembly; while Sir Samuel Griffith, of Queensland, has a genius for practical legislation which has made the statute-book of his colony a model. Among many younger men, the names of Mr. Deakin of Victoria, Mr. Barton of New South Wales, Mr. Sabre Mackenzie of New Zealand, and Mr. Inglis Clark of Tasmania, would all, if there were any unity of sentiment between Australia and England, be known to every one who takes an interest in public affairs. Nor is the standard of Australian Legislatures generally low. It is a mistake to suppose that the majority of members are either disorderly or corrupt. Personal corruption is, I believe, entirely unknown. Such improper influencing of votes as does occur takes the form (not altogether unknown in the case of dockyard-towns in England) of pleasing the member by spending public money in his constituency. Members may also occasionally use their position to obtain early information of projected public works; but those who act in this way are much fewer than the too suspicious public is ready to believe, while their conduct has rarely, if ever, any reference to their votes. Upon the whole, our Parliaments are a fair reflex of Australian life; and if they are not better, the fault does not lie with the constituencies. These, in the absence of some disturbing local feeling, will as a rule choose the best man that offers himself; and they prefer an educated man to one who is uneducated. . . . The appearance of the Nationalist party in Australian politics will not be without benefit to England, if it serves as a wholesome warning against injudicious and fantastic schemes of union. Organic questions ought not to be raised except in cases of necessity; and the doctrinaires and busybodies who force them before the prosaic and peace-loving voter in Australia are doing more harm to the cause of union than they can be aware of. No doubt the motive of such persons is good, and it is therefore perhaps ungenerous to criticize their conduct harshly. Let them confine their efforts to making Australia and other Colonies known to Englishmen and they will be rendering a real public service. The way to consolidate the scattered dominions of the Queen is to diffuse information, so that the importance of every part may be universally appreciated. It cannot be expected that Englishmen should follow Colonial affairs with close interest, but they might know more about them than they do. They ought to recognize that Australian politics are worthy of attention, not only because of their bearing upon English interests, but because of their intrinsic political importance.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*

##### A MAMMOTH GLOBE.

THE terrestrial globe of the Paris Exposition is a mammoth affair. Though its size is only a millionth part of that of the earth, it is forty-two feet in diameter, and over one hundred and thirty feet in circumference. On it the configuration of the different continents, oceans, coun-