

a great literary year; but while the new-comers increased the figures they did not add to the list of important publications or those of permanent value. Their efforts, in many cases experimental, frequently did not go beyond the first book. In the majority of cases they indorsed insignificant works, which, while no doubt stimulating manufacture largely, only swelled the deep ranks of the failures. The flood of worthless books which scarcely live beyond the week of publication and which grows larger every year never ceases to excite the wonder of the disinterested observer. That they continue to find publishers with sufficient courage and capital to breathe into them their little flame of life is a most perplexing mystery. When we speak of "worthless books" we must not be understood as referring to the issues of the cheap libraries. Many of these are poor enough, but the majority represent novels which have proved their right to live. We would say here that we recorded less of the numbers of the cheap libraries during 1888 than any previous year, both because several of the better class of libraries had gone out of existence and those that remained sent out fewer books than formerly. Our remark refers chiefly to the classifications of fiction, religion—we regret to say, poetry, and the thousand and one "souvenirs," "books which are no books," which assumed every colour, shape, and size known to the ingenious during the past holiday season. Distracting as they are to the bibliographer, appearing as they often do without title, author, or place of birth, they are more distracting, we should judge, to the booksellers, the handling of them often taking time better bestowed on pushing more important publications. The time can not be far distant when publishers will realize the policy, if not the necessity, of concentrating money and labour on fewer publications. The fever of the age seemed to be at blood heat in the book trade last year. The impossibility of reviewer and bookseller giving anything like a fair share of attention to the numerous demands made upon them can not but sap their eagerness and enterprise and react badly all around. The ephemeral nature of even our art books last year was a matter of general comment. We had gone back, not forward, since 1886. Our artists can not be blamed for this. The highest creative faculties fail to respond to the constant clamour for something new. We believe it is not an Arcadian dream we picture in the near future of fewer books and better ones, and more time for those who sell them and read them to become acquainted with something more than their covers.—*Publishers' Weekly*.

WOMEN AS NOVELISTS.

THE attitude of two distinguished men—one a philosopher and divine and the other a scholar and statesman—on the subject of novels dealing with social, philosophic, or religious problems and particularly novels of this character written by women, is interesting. Mr. Gladstone evidently thinks such novels worthy of serious consideration. He dignified Mrs. Ward's "Robert Elsmere" with a magazine article combating its religious conclusions, and he has written another magazine article on the latest novel of Margaret Lee, dealing with the divorce question as his text. Dr. McCosh, ex-president of Princeton College, in a recent newspaper article, referred to the novels of this character and gave his opinion of women as novelists. While he treats the value of the didactic novel flippantly and satirically, he compliments women novel writers and gives excellent reasons for their success in this field of literary endeavour. He remarks: "Of late years our best novels have been written by ladies. I rather think that this will continue. Women have intuitive perceptions of character, keener, more subtle and tender than men have. They can set before us men, women, and children with sentiments, manners and dress more picturesque than we of the coarser sex can. Our novels are now being written with a purpose; not merely to give us a picture, but to promote a cause. It looks as if in the near future the battle of religion and irreligion will be fought in fiction. The war, to a large extent, will be one of amazons, and with amazons. The weapons of warfare will not be represented by swords and guns, but by bodkins and darning needles, scissors and breastpins. Novels will have to be met by novels." The fact that the Doctor feels called upon to refer to them shows how potent the influence of such novels are, and proves that he fears this influence to some extent. Novel-writing women have certainly gained remarkable success, and it is no small triumph for them to secure the recognition of serious attention from men of the character and calibre of Mr. Gladstone and Dr. McCosh.—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

THE PEWS AND THE POOR.

FREE pew-rentals—with prices proportionate to the nearness to the pulpit, just as in the theatres the price of seats is proportioned to eligibility—are not the one barrier between the rich and the poor that must be broken down if we are to see the masses throng our Protestant sanctuaries; but, unquestionably, they are a barrier which will disappear when the rich and the poor meet together, as they do not meet together at the present time. What with "eligible" pews at a good price, plus ground rents; what with special upholstering and richly-bound hymnals, prayer books, and Bibles, and the admonition to the sexton "not to put strangers into pew 99," a clubbable character is given out to our churches which is not Christian however it may minister to social comfort and family exclusiveness. And who does not know that the spirit underlying this system is to-day extended to the stranger entering within the gates—in many churches at least—so

that the man with the gold ring in goodly apparel is told, "Sit thou here in a good place," while to the poor man in common raiment the message comes, "Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool." That this is too true, and painfully true, is beyond dispute to those who have attended some of our most fashionable churches and used their powers of observation. Of course, such a condition of affairs does not pertain to all, and perhaps not to the larger part, of the pew-rental churches, and it is not a necessary concomitant of the pew system; thousands upon thousands of our churches are free from a taint of any such spirit. But in our cities, among our wealthiest churches, such a spirit is to be met with, and there can be no question that it is a natural outgrowth and result of the pew-rent system. From all this may the good Lord deliver the churches.—*The Christian At Work*.

SONNETS OF WINTER-TIDE.

I.

THROUGH night's dark hours the snow fell, feathery light,
Until at break of morn, afar and near,
No leaflet is described nor brooklet clear,
So close the earth is wrapped in mantle white.
Round yonder hill the snow-plough comes in sight,
Disclosing where the high-road should appear,
Tossing the white wreaths o'er the landscape drear,
Like waves before a ship, to left and right.
Symbolic picture of the march of mind—
Agent invisible—which yet doth know
Earth's proud wealth to dispose—philosophy
And art, and poesy—what it shall find
Upon its course as forward it may go,
New vistas opening for humanity!

II.

"Death is perhaps the last superstition."—*Heine*.

I READ the secret of the earth and air,
Concealed—revealed—in frozen twig and leaf,
As surely as in Spring-tide's blossom brief:—
Death opens Life's door, away, everywhere.
The bud we call 'To-day,' fresh fair, and sweet,
Roots in dead Yesterday, and fades from view
Yielding To-morrow—Mount of purple hue
Whose peak aspires the highest heaven to greet.
Decay and growth! A prophecy is each,
One of the other, in unbroken chain.
Distrustful human heart, how shalt thou reach
The knowledge that they are but aspects twain
Of the imperishable Substance—Life!
This truth attained, O soul, shall end thy strife!

Mary Morgan (Gowan Lea) in *Open Court*.

SCIENCE AND THE DICTIONARY.

ONE of the most important accompaniments of the progress of science, indeed an essential factor in it, is the increase of its vocabulary. Every advance in accurate observation, discovery, analysis, or constructive theory, brings with it a new term, or, more often, a group of terms. This multiplication of words is largely inevitable. The new things must, of course, generally receive new names, and the new ideas will not always fit into the frames of association in which the old words are set. The scientific demand for precision and brevity must be satisfied even if linguistic purity suffers. It thus happens that every year the language of science receives a large addition which students of science must understand and use. How very large this increment is, it is difficult, even for those who are familiar with several departments of science, to appreciate. Moreover, the process of growth does not stop with what is necessary. Unfortunately, the liberty which in many cases must be taken with the language has led many reputable scientific men to feel that they are free to do what they please with it, in any case. The result is a vast number of coinages which might have been dispensed with, but which must be learned and remembered, since they often become current through the reputation of their inventors. The number of such words increases at the rate of probably several thousands a year. To this increment through direct coinage must also be added the numerous, and not less significant, specializations and enlargements of the meaning of established and even common words, such as "energy" and "potential." Every movement in science unsettles much that has been done before, and of this continuous readjustment its language is a true reflection. It is obvious that at this point science can receive a great deal of help from competent lexicographic aid. While the dictionary is not, in many respects, an adequate exponent of scientific knowledge, it may be an invaluable record of the greater number of the elements or details of that knowledge. Its aim is, of course, necessarily to state merely what is or has been in the language it describes, not what scientifically ought to have been; but, if it is accurately and intelligently performed, this historical labour approaches in its value to science very near to original work. It is true, also, that the utility of the ordinary dictionary is limited by the narrowness of its definitions and the formalism which marks its treatment of its material; but these defects are largely conventional, and it is quite possible for an editor who understands the wants to be met, and who has the necessary disregard of traditions, to model a dictionary which will satisfy every reasonable scientific demand. In a word, the impossibility now felt of keeping track of the linguistic development not only of science as a whole, but even of one specialty, and the difficulty of guarding even established words from misuse or abuse, make the con-

struction of a dictionary which will not only record the entire vocabulary of the sciences, but will record it and define it so fully and accurately as to conform to the needs of scientific men, one of the most urgent requirements of the time.—*Science*.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

THE BAND CONCERT.

THE banner house of the season was at the Pavilion on Thursday evening, 28th ult., when the Queen's Own Rifles' Band gave a concert, at which it had the assistance of the band of the Thirteenth Battalion of Hamilton, one that has long been famous, not only in Canada but in the United States as well, for its excellence and efficiency. The visiting band was well received and played the *Freischütz* overture with a rare fullness of tone. The distinctive excellence of this band lies first of all in its intonation. That is perfect, and accounts for much of the freshness and clearness of tone shown by the band. Then its reed department is excellent, and a heavy, solid bass contingent makes a splendid foundation for the other instruments. The Queen's Own Band is not so strong in tone, nor yet so true in intonation as the Thirteenth, but it is, nevertheless, its equal in some other respects. It is better balanced in tone, and the tone colour blends better than in its Hamilton rival, which strikes one as being more of a martial than a concert band. The playing of the combined bands was very effective, a magnificently full and comprehensive tone being produced by the seventy or eighty men who were on the platform, and a well-defined equilibrium being obtained between the parts. The "Hallelujah" and "Heavens are Telling" choruses especially received a notable rendering. Miss Clara E. Barnes was not up to her best form, as she allowed some of her songs to drag, and her voice also showed signs of weariness. Her rendering of Schumann's "Sonnenschein," however, was most artistic, and yet possessed a delightful degree of spontaneity.

THE LEVY CONCERT.

A FAIRLY-SIZED and exceedingly well dressed audience occupied the Pavilion on Monday evening, and was exceedingly demonstrative in its approval of Mr. Jules Levy, the great cornet player. By one of those curious freaks which sometimes show themselves in large gatherings, the evident culture of those present was belied by the avidity with which every opportunity to applaud was seized, no matter whether the subject was good or the reverse. As far as Mr. Levy was concerned, the applause was well-merited, for he is an artist on the cornet. The strident bray of the cornet, in his hands, is mellowed into a soft flute-like tone which he expands at will to the fulness of the trumpet. He phrases elegantly, and the mysteries of double and triple tonguing and what not else pertaining to this instrument, he is completely master of. His company was not a particularly brilliant one. The tenor and bass, Sigs. Tamberlik and Maina, were two singularly unprepossessing looking men, whose singing accorded very much with their appearance, the bass having, if anything, a slight advantage over his confrere. The soprano, Signora Stella Costa, was a tall, handsome lady with a small voice, who sang indifferently well. The contralto was better, and showed some signs of training. Altogether it was not worth the money that the tickets cost.

THE TWELVE TEMPTATIONS.

THIS title is rather suggestive of St. Anthony, and as the temptations that beset that father of the Church would not perhaps bear representation on the stage, there was this week, for a day or two, some doubt as to whether really good people would be able to go to the Grand Opera House to witness this extravaganza. Those that went found nothing reprehensible, and were well rewarded for their courage by seeing some fine costumes, some excellent ballet work and some magnificent scenery. The comicalities and horse-play and the eccentric acrobatic acts of the Caron Brothers were ludicrous in the extreme, and very trying on one's diaphragm: the dancing of Mme. Bonfant, Mdle. Eloise, and Victor Chiado has rarely been surpassed in Toronto, and the closing "Ballet of Nations" was a splendid spectacle. The histrionic part of the work was most rapid as to its writing and acting, but few cared for this. The eye and the sense of humour were gratified, and that was sufficient.

PATTI is going to leave her well-beaten track, and will sing some new rôles while in America next year. She will take part in *Lakme* and *L'Etoile du Nord*, and will also sing in Gounod's *Romeo e Julietta*. Her projected retirement cannot take place till autumn, 1891, for she has signed contracts to sing till then. Patti's contract with Mr. Abbey gives her \$4,000 for each performance and a share in the receipts whenever they exceed \$10,000.

MME. SCALCHI will be in America next season, and there is some likelihood of Mme. Nilsson-Carvalho being one of next year's stars.

MME. ALBANI leaves in about a fortnight for the Pacific Coast, visiting intermediate cities.

EVERYBODY has read Rider Haggard's novel *She*, and its dramatization by Gillette will be witnessed next week at the Grand with considerable interest. Its representa-