

erected to him; that general is accepted as the type of the patriotic and self-made soldier. Gambetta made the annual gatherings the pivots for programme-speeches. The fête just held opened with a review of 6,000 troops; the torrid heat they endured was equivalent to a *baptême de feu*. Trains brought tens of thousands of visitors. In the evening the public buildings of Versailles were illuminated; but that city has the privilege of not illuminating on 14th July, deferring the joy till the Sunday following. The Hoche fête on the present occasion was heightened by the inauguration of a statue to Jean Houdon, the sculptor, who executed the remarkable statues of Voltaire, of Catherine II. on horse-back, and of General Washington. The two latter works explain why the Czar and the American Government contributed to the testimonial, and why the Russian Minister attended to give it his diplomatic benediction.

France has committed another of those blunders which is worse than a crime, and that in political short-sightedness is on a par with her backing out of her dual contract with Egypt. Her Parliament has refused to ratify the Act of the Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference, for the suppression of the Slave Trade on the Congo, etc., although fifteen European powers have done so. Public opinion is far from unanimity respecting that refusal. France will not, from sentimental reasons, allow England, Germany, etc., to exercise the right of search on any coasting Arab luggers flying the tri-colour—though laden with slaves, while the other fifteen powers mutually accord the exercise of that search—admitted to be a death-warrant for the slave trade. No wonder Cardinal Lavignerie puts on sack-cloth and ashes at the deputies condemning his work to failure, and France to further isolation. It is not good either for a nation or man to live alone.

Miss Crowe, sister of Sir J. Crowe, commercial secretary of the British Embassy, has received the "Academic Palms," from the Minister of Public Instruction, for her success as a teacher of the English language. Miss Crowe is the leading professoress of English at the Rudy Polyglot Institute. At the annual teachers' banquet, where M. Jules Ferry presided, Miss Crowe occupied the seat of honour, on his right; and at Madame Carnot's Garden Party, her French pupils and friends gave her quite an ovation. These honours to Anglo-Saxon ladies are rare, and hence the more merit to be made known. Z.

THE DIP IN THE ROAD.

OUR nature is so full of affection that if we cannot find a fellow-being to love, we will make close companions of the faithful, dumb brutes. Failing a dog or a horse, failing even the flower or the spider of the poor prisoner, we will love mere things. The sailor loves the ship which has been his restless home for years; the scholar, his lonely study, the very walls of which seem stained with the traces of intellectual conflict, triumph and joy. There is a sense of loss, a sort of homesickness when they are withdrawn; and a kindly, cherishing feeling whenever they are recalled to mind. Many feel this attachment to places of habitation; and not a few have gone further and know what it is to form a fondness for such a prosaic thing as a strip of road or a parcel of ground. Not from pride of possession because it is part of our farm or estate; not from sentimental association, as we might have for the whispering grove, where we told our first passion; but solely from close acquaintance and long companionship. This may seem strange, for what is a road but a levelled ribbon of hard, unflowering ground, bordered with grass between two shallow ditches and two fences? A moment ago I called it prosaic: but it is so, only to the careless wayfarer. To him, whose heart is not shut to the deep meanings of wayside flowers nor his eyes blind to the workings of God's rain and sunshine, it is a gallery of pictures, and a constantly acting drama. If the road lies between home and your work, you will be abroad at almost all hours of the day and night, in all seasons and in all weathers. Day after day, at the same hour you pass along and, almost unconsciously, learn every foot of the way: till you miss a pebble out of its place and know when a weed has its stem broken. And however common place it may seem by daylight, nothing can be more eerie than this fading track of ghostly dust in the noiseless, moonless summer night. The landscape on both sides of the way has sunk out of sight in impenetrable darkness; and you seem to be walking on the very rim of the world and rolling the round ball of it under your feet. Its aspect is changing continually—in the rain, under the burning sun, when the snow comes and the earliest flowering weeds. You understand the procession of Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, better for observing their march across something fixed, limited and having the mathematical quality of a straight line.

But Nature, even on the highway, will not yield her secrets to the hasty passer-by. You must plod along on foot if you are to learn any of this love for the road. There is compensation in the mere exercise, which becomes first unconscious, and then joyous and leaves you free from personal considerations, to take note of all you see. Here and there will stand a brotherhood of primeval forest trees for shade; now and then you will find a grass-grown bank for rest, where the pink flowers of the burr silently ask you to look at them. As you pass, you see fruit trees blossoming in gardens, fields of wheat or pasture land with slow-moving cattle, knee-deep in the clover. Now you pass the stern gates that guard some rich man's pos-

sessions; and now a farm house or cottage with children at play. Costly equipages whirl past in the pursuit of pleasure, and heavy-laden waggons rumble by. It is not pleasure they are seeking; they are on the road because the teamster's daily bread depends on it. Then there is sure to be a sudden turn or crook which you encounter with fresh surprise every time you come to it.

Of the many roads that I have grown familiar with by such constant, close companionship, there is a certain three-mile strip leading into a college town, for which I have a special fondness. As I think of it, it all comes so vividly before me that, in imagination, I am walking over it again. Leaving the old farm house while the dew is on the grass, I strike into the shady lane and plunge down the small ravine, at the bottom of which the railway runs. Crossing the rails and climbing the opposite hill, I find myself on the clean, yellow turnpike. I have barely gone half a mile when the road makes a bend like a pot-hook or a capital S, to pass through a bit of woodland. For a few minutes I am as completely shut in on all sides as if I were miles from any human habitation. Presently I am out of the wood; on the right hand are the barred gates of a rich estate, and on the left, a group of gaily-painted villas. The next landmark is the toll-gate, a mile farther on, at the crossing of a wooded lane, with vistas tempting exploration whichever way I look. Then comes another long, level stretch, at the end of which the road dips suddenly and then climbs a long, steep hill, from the top of which the traveller sees the city spread on the plain that slopes away like a great glacier from his point of vantage.

This valley is the strangest spot in that league of pleasures. It is not because of the clear stream that babbles at one side, nor the fresh turf where the city children come to gather the many wild flowers, which southern suns bring forth in such profusion. It is the configuration of the road and the wood that gives the glen its character. On the one hand there is a park-like grove with some tall forest trees spreading above the rest; on the other, a group of four or five gigantic elms towers to the sky, and just where the broad road begins to dip down, the huge branches meet overhead in a wonderful triumphal arch. In this climate all growth is rapid; three days suffice to work the greatest changes. Here spring comes with flying steps. In winter, the woods seem empty and the landscape is open. You can see between the tree trunks in all directions, and the fine tracery of the topmost branches is outlined against grey cloud or etched on the cold silver of the after-sunset. No leafy screen shuts out the distant hills. Then the rains drop down, the warm days come, and, in a week, the leaves are fully out. You feel the difference at once. The emptiness of the wood is gone. You are shut in, covered over; your outlook is narrowed; there is a sense of fulness and the distant views are hidden. In the spring, I felt all this most strongly at this point; for the green roof shut out the sky. When I reached it in the morning, the sun, although powerful on the unsheltered level, had not prevailed over the coolness of the little valley; for at that hour he had not risen high enough to cast his beams directly into the ravine. The overshoot light caught only the green leafage that overhung the road and transfigured it. The whole glen was cool and full of shadow, so deep that one could walk through bare-headed. The grateful freshness felt like a breeze, and enclosed one round on every side.

It was like a long dive into clear, deep water. The old wooden jetty by the lakeside, the warm unmoving air, the water so transparent that you are afraid it will not buoy you up—you can see every pebble on the bottom—that is the beginning of it. Then comes the muscular effort of the leap—the momentary shooting through the air—the noise of your own splash filling your ears—"the cool silver shock of the plunge"—the inverted feeling as you eke out the force of your spring by swimming downwards; then, opening your eyes on the clean, undisturbed sand, spread like a floor, you turn, and, as you fight your way to the surface, you see the green light, wavering through the cool, watery masses piled above your head.

The shady valley had that effect every morning. Refreshed by that plunge, I went on to the busy, dusty city, to my day's work, and kept the freshness of the morning far into the afternoon. It was only a bit of road, and this was only one good thing it did for me; but is it any wonder that its dust cleaves to my shoes still?

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THE COMING NOVEL.

THE literary world just now is discussing the future novel; what it will be like, and who will write it. So far no solution has been arrived at, and the question is still an open one. The literary fecundity of the present age is remarkable, particularly in the department of fiction, and this, it must be believed, is at the bottom of the problem. Public appreciation is at present in a condition of flux, as a result of the variety of fare in fictitious literature. The realistic and romantic seem to divide the honours; stories of adventure may be given a third place; the religious novel is not in very wide demand unless it can equal "Robert Elsmere"; then come the dreams of metempsychosis, and the theosophic and purely psychological studies. Some of these works are humorous, others didac-

tic; some are weird, and others are certainly wicked. There is no prevailing school of fiction; and as far as ability is concerned, it is about equally represented in the different classes of work. But the mantle of Scott, or of Thackeray, or of Balzac, or of Fielding remains unclaimed, and, with one or two exceptions, the existing rate of production renders that impossible. That there is an increasing decadence in fictitious literature can be amply demonstrated in the magazines and periodicals, and by many of the works now issuing from the press. While all this may be so, the coming novelist is being eagerly looked for. An effort was made some time ago by the Book Syndicate Press to decide who he would be, and what his work would be like; and with that view interviews were obtained with a number of authors of note in America and abroad. The New York *Herald*, and the Boston *Herald* published these interviews simultaneously. The answers given by the *literati* show the diversity of opinion there exists among them.

R. H. Stoddard believes that the realism of to-day will give way to the romantic school of fiction. "The great novel of the future," he says, "will be romantic." The novel that will approach Mr. Stoddard's ideal will be a fiction, pure and simple, a reflex of Walter Scott and Fielding—an effort of the imagination that will be full of love and adventure, beauty and gallantry. Max O'Rell, with some French models in his mind, says the future novel will be analytical and depict character. It will be a psychological study. The school represented here has received an impetus of late, and its adherents are rapidly increasing. To make it permanent, the highest form of ability, if not genius itself, is necessary. Daudet is a master here. Mary E. Wilkins believes the romantic and realistic novel will hold sway, and in this view she is supported by Richard Watson Gilder, the editor of the *Century*, who says "The future novel will be distinguished . . . by imaginative realism. It will depict nature in the light of imagination." And Thos. Nelson Page also says that it will combine realism with the best imaginative qualities; and he quotes "Don Quixote" as an illustration of what he means. But Octave Thanet says it will "deal with distinctly modern problems." William Dean Howells supports his own class of works, and says that all will depend upon the study and development of character. That may all be, but if no better model can be found than he, there is something in the prediction of Amelia B. Edwards, that novel writing may soon die out. Noah Brooks, Mrs. Southworth and Mary J. Holmes express similar views. The first says the future novel will be a picture of the life of the present, or the past, realistic and a love story. Mrs. Southworth says it will be marked by truth to life and nature. Mary J. Holmes believes it will be a living, natural novel; and both she and Noah Brooks assert that its tendency will be to raise the standard of morality. Marion Harland's opinion is something like Max O'Rell's: To wit "The novelist of the future must be a keen analyst of human nature, and endow his heroes and heroines with life, heart and character." Augusta Evans Wilson hopes that the novel of the future will wear the "vivid vesture of realism, animated with the immortal soul of idealism." Who is to produce this class of novel? She does not even hint at it. John Habberton believes it will be realistic and humorous; and Charles Dudley Warner says the present drift is rather to thought than action. Rose Terry Cooke says it will have dramatic and not sensational situations. Neither murder nor divorce will enter into it. Amelia E. Barr says it will reflect the domestic and social life of the passing period, and Louise Chandler Moulton gives it as her opinion that it will be the story of the human heart—dramatic rather than descriptive.

From the foregoing symposium it is difficult to tell what the future novel will be like. The probability, however, is strongly in favour of imaginative realism, or the romantic and realistic—not the realism of Zola, but that in which human nature is depicted in its varying moods, and as we know it on the street or in the parlour. It will doubtless have a high moral tone, and be full of life and movement. There is nothing society enjoys better than to find itself mirrored in literature, and particularly so when invested with an air of romance.

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A THEORY OF THE DELUGE.

IN articles emanating from the Darwinian-Huxley school of modern philosophy, the story of the deluge has been discussed on the ground of its probability and possibility, or perhaps we should say on the ground of its improbability and impossibility, ignoring, as usual with men of that mode of thought, any such admission as a Divine agency in the matter. At the outset of their arguments we are allured on by certain admissions in favour of the reality of such an event; they grant that the Biblical account is tolerably specific; that there are traditions current generally through all tribes, nations and peoples that have ever existed, that some such a catastrophe once occurred in the world's history; that certain corroborative tablets have been brought to light in the explorations of the ruins of Babylon and Nineveh, particularly the one deposited in the British Museum, and which, as deciphered by Mr. Smith, describes the occurrence in its main features in remarkable correspondence with the Scriptural narrative; but strange to say all these presumptions, and indeed collateral evidences, seeing that the exhumed tablets were