

The Canadian Spectator.

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December 1st, 1880.

The attention of advertisers is requested to the fact, that during the holiday term our issue will be *largely increased*. The usual excellent advantages of the SPECTATOR as a means of reaching the public will be, therefore, greatly enhanced. Those who place contracts now will receive the extra benefit of this increased circulation, with the further advantage of our holiday advertising rates. We are confident that our efforts will be duly appreciated.

THE TIMES.

I give hearty Christmas greetings to the readers of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR. May they all have the "cheer" of happy circumstances and good hope. To those who are sick, or in sorrow, I hope the season will bring some memory of things that have been, and some thought of Him who, eighteen hundred years ago, came to speak blessings on the mourners and the poor, which shall lighten a little their pain, and burden, and woe. To those who are well in body and circumstance, I hope will come a gush of generous feeling, sending them out to dispense "those charities which heal and bless, and climb aloft to shine like stars." Any man will enjoy his Christmas day dinner the better for having comforted some needy brother. There is no joy known like the joy of doing good.

There are hundreds upon hundreds of young men in our cities who have no homes. They are three thousand miles away from the home in which they used to spend Christmas so merrily with father and mother and brothers and sisters and cousins about them; and as they sit in the dull boarding-house, their thoughts travel back to those days and places with unutterable sadness. To invite them to spend the day with a bright family, where they will be distracted and filled with brightness, would be to bless them—perhaps to keep them from wanderings which end in a club or saloon.

Unquestionably this Christmas finds us fairly prosperous. The cloud has lifted—the faces of people are brighter—the purchases are more extensive, and the extra demands which the holiday makes on the purses seem to be ably and cheerfully met. The times have improved. Whether the good harvest has brought the change about, or the N.P., or the general revival of trade the world over, or the conjunction of all these, it has been done, and we are thankful. Montreal especially seems to feel the new state of things. Store-keepers of all kinds appear to have laid themselves out to do a good business, and if crowded counters are to be taken as meaning anything, they have not been disappointed.

I have at last received a book for which I have been looking with more or less impatience. Since the days, when as a student, I spelled my way laboriously through the pages of heroic Greek verse, I have longed to know something more about those ancient Trojans who cut so great and strange a figure in the mythical ages. For years I have been following the stories Dr. Schliemann had to tell of his discoveries on the site of Troy. The Dr. was an enthusiast about his work—an antiquarian from childhood—having a very genius of research. He entered upon business in America with a determination to make money and spend it again in antiquarian researches. He boldly met and mastered circumstances, and so soon as the money was in hand, went away to the site of ancient Troy. He tells the story fully in this book he calls "Ilios: City and Country of the Trojans;" he takes us along with him month by month, year by year, clearly describing and beautifully illustrating everything he found. A flood of light is let in upon that old heroic race which ever since has filled a large place in the world's fancy. Dr. Schlieman tells us of the physical features of the country, its ethnography and the history of the people; then of the seven cities he uncovered. Additional value is given to the volume from the fact that the work of Dr. Schliemann is prefaced and supplemented by such men as Virchow, Sayce, Max Müller and others. The book is beautifully got up, well printed, well illustrated, and would make a splendid, because useful present, to a friend. It is printed by Harper Brothers, and sold in Montreal by Dawson Brothers.

Another book has come to hand—also from Dawson Brothers—which I gladly welcome, "A Personal Life of Dr. Livingstone," by W. G. Blaikie. The biographer is perhaps better adapted than any man living to do this work. He has the kind of genius which can appreciate such a lofty character as David Livingstone, and has just the enthusiasm needed to describe the doings and sayings of the great missionary explorer. There are a good many things in the book new to those who had close acquaintance with Livingstone's life and work, for Dr. Blaikie has had access to private papers and correspondences in possession of the Livingstone family. But all the new lights only show the man in fuller character. He was a hero and a saint, and to read the story, as Dr. Blaikie tells it, is to feel a fresh impulse for great work and self-sacrifice.

Another of Harper Brothers' books (Dawson Brothers) is "Pastoral Days," by W. H. Gibson. It makes a beautiful present, for it is got up and illustrated in a manner beyond criticism. The writer makes a very successful effort to give some "memories of a New England year." He describes spring, summer, autumn and winter with the different plants and flowers which come with the different seasons. Now and then he tells a pleasant story illustrative of New England life. The style is a little gushing, but it hardly detracts from the book—for we expect something of the kind from enthusiasts in flowers and the illustrations are among the most exquisite I have ever seen.