

And we feel like Xenophon's men,  
 When they heard once more  
 The wild waves roar,  
 And knew they were home again.  
 We have spanned a continent—shore to shore;  
 The strength of an iron band  
 Has bound the Provinces all in one,  
 And has called, like a fairy wand,  
 An empire up from the virgin soil  
 To an honoured place and name;  
 And perhaps, some day,  
 Our children may say,  
 To high rank in the scroll of fame.  
 When the chief, who has laboured for Canada's good,  
 Has at last been laid to rest;  
 When malice is dead, 'twill be freely said  
 "He served his country best!"

Kingston.

K. L. JONES.

## SOME NEW BOOKS.

BRET HARTE's vein is apparently inexhaustible. The quality of the ore it produces does not change, and he works it now in precisely the same rudimentary fashion as he did years ago, when its novelty made the method of its production of somewhat less consequence. "A Millionaire of Rough-and-Ready" is his last book, issued in neat brown cloth by Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, of Boston, and for sale by Williamson and Company, in Toronto. The story is, as usual, brief, concentrated, full of garish lights and black shadows. Bret Harte's genius seems incapable of sustained effort; and indeed, it would be a difficult matter to greet such effort seriously. His work is so intensely dramatic that it suggests the artifice of the stage as well as the art. We see its clever mechanism, its "make-ups," which are not so clever; we smell the burning powder which casts such lurid magnificence over the scene, and we fail to criticise the characters in their relation to melodrama, not to fiction. Nothing could be more insupportable than an interminable play. Bret Harte is wise therefore, in putting nearly all of his into three or four acts.

"A Millionaire of Rough-and-Ready" will mark, for those who are speculating about its author's future work, a backward tendency which many will regret to see. It embodies, with all the vigour and picturesqueness that are inseparable from his writing, all of its poorest features, and few of those that won the place in literature Bret Harte now occupies. The people of the book are unnecessarily coarse, without a single redeeming man or woman. The situations are strained to a degree, and the plot is evolved out of a series of improbabilities that tax even the willing and charitable imagination to the utmost. Then we get little of that delicate and graceful descriptive writing that goes so far to soften and condone in Bret Harte's books, and nothing at all of the Spanish life the book gave ample opportunity for. On the whole it must be considered a disappointment.

"IN ONE TOWN," by Edmund Downey (New York: D. Appleton and Company), is a novel of seafaring life, in which the destinies of a number of the inhabitants of "Sloughford," an English seaport, are tangled and straightened. The characters are crude depictions, and the story lacks colour. Its narrative drags somewhat, and seems to indicate a lack of experience on the part of the author. It contains some amusing dialogues, however, and is not without merit as to plot.

It is a matter of regret that even such faint praise must be withheld from "Taken by Siege," just issued by J. B. Lippincott and Company, of Philadelphia. The book attempts to treat of newspaper life in New York, but does it in such a feeble and ineffectual manner as to convince the reader of a total lack of experimental knowledge on the part of the writer. The characters are vapid and self-conscious creations, and the book is saved from ignominy only by the pleasant and wholesome tone that pervades it. A volume like this from the Lippincotts' press is a disagreeable surprise. The care and consistency with which it is written may be gathered from its final paragraph, describing the happy dénouement:

"My darling!" And Rush's strong arms were around her in a second, and her head was resting on his broad shoulder. The long twilight shadows lay across the floor; but Rush saw only the glory of the October sun as its rays fell upon the face of her whom he had at last won after years of patient waiting.

The book is quite as amateurish as this remarkable "twilight effect" would suggest.

THE fact that Dr. Wells's "Study of Mexico" (New York: D. Appleton and Company) is a reprint of the various papers contributed by that author's scholarly pen to the *Popular Science Monthly* is not only a guarantee of its value, but an indication that its value will be very widely

and thoroughly appreciated. None of the publications that endeavour to translate science for the benefit of the great majority whose scientific education has been neglected succeed more signally than does this journal; and the firm by which it is issued could hardly bring out a more acceptable book than one that owes existence to the monthly demands of its readers. As the title indicates, Dr. Wells's "Study of Mexico" is not an exhaustive work upon the subject, and makes no pretence to supply fully the needs of the serious student of Mexican history, or the present condition of that interesting country's affairs. Neither is it a mere pleasantly written collection of notes by a traveller who has kept his eyes open. Dr. Wells chronicles many facts that came within his experimental knowledge in Mexico, but he adds to them in the way of comparison and conclusion most of what goes to make his book most valuable. The range of the volume is very wide, and the information given of the most practical nature. It is an important addition to the Mexican literature that recently quickened interest in that country is rapidly filling our shelves with.

WE have nothing but commendation for the idea of which "The Golden Justice," by William Henry Bishop, is an outgrowth. It is simple, direct, forcible, well conceived. The story opens with the criminal action of David Lane, which results in the death of a fellow-citizen under circumstances that throw an accidental appearance over the affair and effectually shield Lane, whose life is ever after, however, haunted by remorse. He makes it one long atonement, and his many public benefactions result in his being elected to fill various offices, finally that of governor. During his incumbency a brass statue of Justice is placed upon the dome of the city hall of the western town which is the chief scene of the story. Burdened by the knowledge of his crime, Lane relieves himself of it in a strange but quite comprehensible fashion—by writing out a full confession of it, and dropping it, with other memorial papers, into the globe on which the "Golden Justice" stands, upon the occasion of the hoisting of the figure into place, when he as governor officiates. Lane has a daughter, and Barclay, the man he has indirectly murdered, a son, who meet abroad, and become mutually attached. Lane prevents the match, and marries his daughter to a German scamp of nobility, who deserts her. Returning to America she again meets Barclay, and again, upon the death of her husband, they desire to become united, and meet the same opposition from Lane. At this juncture the Golden Justice blows down in a tornado, and the paper containing the confession comes directly into Barclay's possession. This, of course, is the climax of the story. Barclay destroys it in Lane's presence, marries the daughter, and the secret is buried between the two individuals most nearly interested in it. This is the barest outline of a plot, every detail of which is worked out with an ingenuity and faithfulness which is most creditable to the author. It is remarkable that in spite of the skill which has gone into its construction the book signally fails to please. There is a coldness and hardness about Mr. Bishop's style which repels the reader. We are conscious of a lack of that sympathetic relation which should exist between an author and his creations. Mr. Bishop manipulates his people as he would so many dummies. We cannot say much for the people either. Mr. Bishop's insight, where human nature is concerned, is not very keen, or he has chosen extremely shallow types to concentrate it upon. This fault, a grave one, with the forced air and artificial action of the book, seriously interferes with the reader's enjoyment of the really clever conception upon which it is based. The publishers are Houghton, Mifflin, and Co., Boston; Williamson and Co., Toronto.

## READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

## THE TRIALS OF A COUNTRY PARSON.

UNDER this title the Rev. Dr. Jessopp contributes a bright paper to the March number of the *Nineteenth Century*, in which he rallies that portion of the general public resident in cities, who know little of a country parson's life, on the false conceptions prevalent of them, as a class, and the mistaken notions of their character and their work. His paper is a genial compound of banter and rebuke, with not a little that is serious as well as amusing. It is chiefly directed against those who have somehow formed the impression that the country parson leads an idle, useless life; that he is well paid and tenderly cared for; and that the profession have earned the right to be set forth in fiction in the various guises which novelists of the time love to portray the handsome young curate and the pompous, twaddling old rector. Dr. Jessopp gives us the other side of the picture, and manages with a great deal of cleverness to place before his readers some of the real trials of a country parson, interspersed with a good many sly rubs at those complacent critics of "the cloth" whose ignorant "chatter and babble" have long and freely been poured out upon the profession. The writer is specially effective in combating the notion that the country parson has little to be anxious or perplexed about, that there is little need of his harrowing his heart over distress and suffering, which he has no business to relieve with charity, and that, in the routine of his somnolent