

## READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

## THE PORTRAITS OF DEAD LADIES.

I LOVE you in your settings quaint,  
Faces of ladies lovely and dead;  
The flowers in your hands are faded and faint;  
'Tis a hundred years since their bloom was shed.

The empire of beauty has passed away;  
The Pompadour and Parabère  
Would find no lovers to rule to-day;  
They sleep in the tomb, and love's buried there.

But you, sweet faces that men forget,  
You rest o'er the tombs where your beauty's fled,  
And sadly you smile—who are smiling yet  
At the thought of your lovers so long time dead.  
—Theophile Gautier.

## A PROBLEM IN ASTRONOMY SOLVED.

MR. S. E. PEAL, in proving that Greenland is covered by a large ice-cap, may have solved a problem in astronomy. The polar caps of Mars are not diametrically opposite; the southern one is not centrally over the axis of rotation. A like anomaly may exist on our earth. Flat-topped icebergs 2,000 feet high and several miles long are seen in Antarctic waters. These are apparently fragments of the permanent ice-cap over the South Pole. Thin ice prevails in the Arctic region. This may prove the theory that the North Pole is covered by a deep sea having no islands and free from permanent ice. Nansen's recent expedition may prove that one of the polar ice-caps covers the continent of Greenland.—*Iron, London.*

## THE GIRL OF THE FUTURE.

THE *Universal Review* contains an article, by Mr. Grant Allen, on "The Girl of the Future," which is likely somewhat to shock the susceptibilities of the average reader. While many of the observations contain undoubted truths, the new theory he advocates with regard to social relationships is scarcely likely to prove acceptable. The theory in question is summed up in the following paragraph: "Instead of yielding up her freedom irrevocably to any one man, she would jealously guard it as in trust for the community, and would use her maternity as a precious gift to be sparingly employed for public purposes, though always in accordance with instinctive promptings, to the best advantage of future offspring. If conscious of failure in any important maternal quality—be it in physique, in constitution, in mind, or in character—she would resolve, while freely using all her functions as a woman, never to employ her functions of a mother—never to impose upon the State undesirable citizens, or upon her children the burden of a feeble heredity. If conscious, on the other hand, of possessing valuable and desirable maternal qualities, she would employ them to the best advantage of the State and for her own offspring by freely commingling them in various directions with the noblest paternal qualities of the men who most attracted her higher nature." The adoption of the limitations laid down in the first part of this sentence would perhaps benefit the world at large; but the second is utterly impracticable, and any attempt to bring about its realisation would shake the whole social fabric to its foundations. The author does not underestimate the difficulty of discussing the subject in public, although he succeeds in treating it in as delicate a way as is possible under the circumstances. We may admire the style, which is at all times forcible, while dissenting from the main theory.

## EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

WRITERS have for many years regarded the publisher as a sort of necessary evil, a sordid person, who, if he fulfilled his full duty, would confine himself strictly to "downstairs" affairs, furnish money as required, and obliterate himself as much as possible except on salary day. It has been the fashion to accord to the brilliant editor all the credit, and saddle upon the publisher all the blame. If the paper was a success, the editor was glorified; if it was a failure, it was "bad business management." From the writer's standpoint, this position was perfectly logical. It is the duty of the publisher to sell the paper, secure advertising, and pay salaries. If he failed to do these things, he was plainly at fault. The fact that the editor was manufacturing for the publisher an unsaleable article never occurred to the dignity of the pastepot and quill. If, on the other hand, the publisher sold the papers, gathered advertising, and consequently paid expenses, he was, in the opinion of the editor, deserving of no special credit; he was merely acting as an intermediary between the editor and an appreciative public, who demanded the editor's brilliant articles and pleaded that their business announcements might be placed "top of column" next to the editor's fascinating reading matter. A good deal of this prejudice has already disappeared among the more enlightened newspaper men, but it is still cherished by a large class of young—and old—impractical writers. The publisher is looked upon as a money grabber, but little, if any better than a person "in trade." The tendency of the age is steadily working against this notion, just as it is working against the old-fashioned idea that a man must of necessity pass through the preliminary training of the composing-room and reporter's note book before he is competent to occupy an editorial position. The vast majority of the newspaper workers of to-day realize that a large amount of first-class brains are required in the business office as well

as in the editorial room. The success of the really great newspapers is proving that the editor and publisher must work in perfect harmony and each second the efforts of the other in his own peculiar line. But still the publisher is far from receiving his fair amount of credit. So far as reputation is concerned, to the editor belongs the spoils. It is the editor who responds to the toast of "The Press" at public dinners. It is the editor who is regarded with admiration and awe by the outside public. It is the editor who is sent to Congress, on foreign missions, or is given the postmastership. And it is becoming more and more frequently the case that it is the publisher who makes the paper, and the editor along with it. We are in a commercial age; we have had our era of great editors, and now the great publishers are coming to the fore. The publisher who can write an editorial and make a contract with equal facility is daily becoming more frequent, while the editor who can buy ink at less than the list price, or who really knows anything except the theoretical difference between a one dollar and a ten dollar bill is a very rare bird indeed. The best newspaper men combine the two qualities in a marked degree. The fact is that in most cases in the leading newspapers of to-day the publisher could get along quite comfortably were he suddenly obliged to take the editor's desk, while the chances are that the editor would get into no end of a muss if he attempted to perform the manifold and perplexing duties of the publisher.—*The Journalist.*

## MY LADY SLEEPS.

STARS of the summer night,  
Far in yon azure deeps,  
Hide, hide your golden light,  
She sleeps, my lady sleeps!

Moon of the summer night,  
Far down yon western steeps,  
Sink, sink in silver light,  
She sleeps, my lady sleeps!

Wind of the summer night,  
Where yonder woodbine creeps,  
Fold, fold thy pinions light,  
She sleeps, my lady sleeps!

Dreams of the summer night,  
Tell her her lover keeps  
Watch, while in slumbers light  
She sleeps, my lady sleeps!

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

## COMMUNISTIC JUSTICE.

FROM one who knows him, I learn that Prince Kraptokin blames the English socialists because they do not propose to act out the rule popularly worded as "share and share alike." In a recent periodical, M. de Laveleye summed up the communistic principle as being "that the individual works for the profit of the State, to which he hands over the produce of his labour for equal division among all." In the communistic Utopia described in Mr. Bellamy's "Looking Backward," it is held that each "shall make the same effort," and that if by the same efforts, bodily or mental, one produces twice as much as another, he is not to be advantaged by the difference. At the same time the intellectually or physically feeble are to be quite as well off as others: the assertion being that the existing régime is one of "robbing the incapable class of their plain right in leaving them unprovided for." The principle of inequality is thus denied absolutely. It is assumed to be unjust that superiority of nature shall bring superiority of results, or, at any rate, superiority of material results; and as no distinction appears to be made in respect either of physical qualities or intellectual qualities or moral qualities, the implication is not only that strong and weak shall fare alike, but that foolish and wise, worthy and unworthy, mean and noble, shall do the same. For if, according to this conception of justice, defects of nature, physical or intellectual, ought not to count, neither ought moral defects, since they are one and all primarily inherited.—*Herbert Spencer in the Popular Science Monthly for June.*

## THE COST OF NEWSPAPERS.

FROM a suggestive article on newspapers, by Eugene M. Camp, in the *June Century*, we quote as follows: "What is the total annual cost to the wholesale purchasers of news—namely, the publishers—of the entire newspaper product of the United States? An answer to this question would be of interest, but it has never been answered. For several years I have been gathering information upon which to base an estimate. Publishers have uniformly extended me every courtesy; nevertheless I find it an exceedingly difficult quantity to arrive at, and for my figures I do not claim absolute accuracy. Publishers in this country annually expend something near the following sums for news:

For press despatches.....	\$1,820,000
" special .....	2,250,000
" local news .....	12,500,000
	\$16,570,000

"The business of the Associated Press, a mutual concern which pays nothing for its news and which serves its patrons at approximate cost, amounts to \$1,250,000 per annum; and that of the United Press, a stock corporation, is \$450,000 per annum. The former aims to provide news about all important events, in which work \$120,000 in telegraph tolls is expended; while the latter endeavours, above all else, to provide accounts of events occurring in the vicinity of the respective papers served."

## MODERN BIG GUNS.

Now that the U. S. is going into the business of building a National navy it is well to study what other nations are doing. The two crack ships of the British navy are the *Trafalgar* and the *Nile*. These are supposed to be the very last and best thing in battle ships. Clark Russell in his *Life of Nelson*, just published, says that the *Trafalgar* could have sunk the entire British and Danish fleets at Copenhagen with little or no damage to herself. She is a turret ship with 20-inch armour on the turrets; her displacement is nearly 12,000 tons; her motive power equal to 12,000 horse-power; she carries, besides eight 2-ton guns, four guns of 67 tons each, throwing a missile weighing 1,250 pounds. This monster has just had a trial trip, on which her guns were tested. The big guns were first fired with small charges of powder, which did no damage to speak of beyond knocking a few wheels off the capstan and blowing some odds and ends overboard. But when a 67-ton gun was loaded with a full service charge of 630 pounds and fired at an elevation of three degrees the deck was depressed two full inches, the deck beams were bent and one mess-deck stanchion was broken short off. The gunners declared that a second shot with the same charge would have depressed the deck four inches, would have broken more beams and opened the seams below so as to admit the water, and that half a dozen shots would have disabled the ship so that she would have had to steam out of action. In other words, while these crack new ships can inflict terrible injury on an enemy, and their turrets are practically impregnable, they are certain to do themselves up after an engagement of a quarter of an hour. What is the good of war-ships like that? There is a limit to the volume of powder which can be used in a gun, and to the size of the bore. The force exerted by the explosive power of powder in expanding the air is so vast that beyond a certain point it is as fatal to the surroundings of the gun as to the object at which its shot is aimed. Very few objects could stand the impact of a shot weighing nearly five-eighths of a ton and driven through space by 600 pounds of powder, but if the power which impels the shot is distributed laterally and vertically from the gun's muzzle with such force as to depress a gun-deck two inches and to break steel stanchions like pipe-stems the gun will evidently do as much damage to the battery in which it stands as it can inflict on the enemy.—*Public Opinion.*

WELL hath he done who hath seized happiness!  
For little do the all-containing hours,  
Though opulent, freely give.

—Matthew Arnold.

THE Mechanical and Scientific Society of London, England, have on exhibition articles illustrating the progress made in mechanics. There are two instruments used in gun-making, one that accurately measures thickness down to the one-thousandth part of an inch, and another that grades thicknesses in millionth parts. A delicate scale made by Oertling will carry 3,000 grains and turn distinctly with the one-thousandth part of a grain. An engine made by a watch-maker, consisting of 122 pieces, with 33 screws and bolts additional, is so small that it can be packed inside a lady's thimble.

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