

What the poet wants is what no genius nor poetic fire will compensate for the lack of—a common school education.

Messrs. Drysdale's last book is *Van Bibber and Others*, by Richard Harding Davis, a neat 249 page volume, with four illustrations, published by Harper and Brothers of New York. Its short stories, in which Mr. Davis excels, are fifteen in number. Van Bibber, the hero of several of them, is a New York wealthy young man about town of a somewhat manly and benevolent type. Dining, betting, and theatre going are his and his friends' chief occupations, but he and they can, on occasion, do plucky and generous things, all of which Mr. Davis tells in a strain of dignified humor, even to Van Bibber's laying out three athletic toughs of the Bowery. There is appreciation of kind hearts in *A Recruit at Christmas*, and *A Patron of Art*; pathetic sadness in *Outside the Prison*, and *An Unfinished Story*; and the delineation of the chivalry of humble life in the tales concerning *Hefty Burke*. There is not a particle of theoretical religion in them, nor of high consistent moral purpose, but the stories are pure and generally inculcate a spirit of manliness, honor and kindness. Recent revelations of New York's gilded youth do not necessarily prove that there are no Van Bibbers among them; yet, if Mr. Davis's book will have the effect of encouraging among them a higher standard of acting, it will accomplish a good end.

Finally, Mr. Chapman furnishes the Talker's table with the two volumes of Fridtjof Nansen's "*Farthest North*," being the record of a voyage of exploration of the ship *Fram*, 1893-96, and of a fifteen months' sleigh journey by Dr. Nansen and Lieut. Johansen; with an appendix by Otto Sverdrup, captain of the *Fram*. This book of 351 and 471 octavo pages, is published in Macmillan's Colonial Library. Everybody is familiar with the newspaper outline of the story of the Norwegian expedition which went farther north than any other, but managed to miss the pole. It was not, therefore, able to report whether the Scotchman is sitting on it or not. If he has been sitting there long, he must be pretty dead. *Farthest North*