

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- Abbott, Evelyn, M.A. Theodoric. \$1.50. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson & Co.
- Ames, Fisher. American Leads at Whist. 25c. New York: Chas. Scribner's.
- Davin, Nicholas Flood. High Commissioner—A Speech. Ottawa: J. Durie & Son.
- Harris, Joel Chandler. Balaam and His Master. \$1.25. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Toronto: Williamson & Co.
- McLaughlin, And. C. American Statesman: Lewis Cass. \$1.25. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Toronto: Williamson & Co.
- Page, Thos. Nelson. On Newfound River. \$1. New York: Chas. Scribner's; Toronto: Wm. Briggs.
- Strong, Rev. Jos., D.D. Our Country. New York: The Baker & Taylor Co.; Toronto: Wm. Briggs.
- Smith, F. Hopkinson. Colonel Carter of Cartersville. \$1.25. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Toronto: Williamson & Co.
- Sweetson, M. F. The Maritime Provinces. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; Toronto: Williamson & Co.
- Tineau, Leon de. Jenny's Ordeal. New York: Worthington Co.
- Worthington, Slack. Politics and Property; or, Phonocracy. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson & Co.

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

BEDTIME.

WHEN they have said
Their small, short prayers,
At which, methinks, God, unawares,
Must sometimes sigh,
Into their little beds they go,
And there on pillows white as snow
The flaxen and the brown heads lie.

Perchance some angel, tender eyed,
By mother-sight, unseen, doth say
"Here now to dreamland runs the way,"
And their sweet, tottering steps doth guide
Into those realms beatified
Of baby dreams,
Where we catch the passing gleams
In sleepy smiles and broken words
Dropped like the thunder-song of birds.

—Minnie C. Ballard, in the *Queries Magazine*.

THE DRAMA OF THE FUTURE.

We are entering upon a new era in dramatic writing. The literary play, so long divorced from the stage, is to be reinstated—indeed to some extent it is reinstated, and we may hope to see it become firmly established. How few alas! are the plays which read in the study are not utterly insipid, nay, worse, filled with cheap sentiment and vulgarity. After Shakespeare, the Elizabethan school, Sheridan and Goldenith, only George Colman, the younger, and a few of the old comedy writers, will bear the test of reading, until you reach Robertson. Lytton's and Charles Reade's plays cannot be read; even the "Lady of Lyons" fails to be satisfactory without a stage setting. Simplicity and artistic veracity are now demanded of the playwright. Playgoers are growing more educated and more critical, and theatrical managers are recognizing the fact, though perhaps none too rapidly. If one may judge from the criticisms which find their way into print in some quarters the least discerning persons in an average audience are the professional dramatic critics so called.—W. Blackburn Harte, in the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

DARWIN'S METHODS OF WORK.

As a working naturalist Darwin was a model of exactness, patience, and perseverance; he rarely lost a moment, and while not a rapid worker, he compensated for this by the attention he gave to the subject. His study was adapted for work, his appliances being essentially simple. A dissecting board with a low, revolving stool was a principal feature, while a table bore his tools, and various drawers contained the various articles he was likely to use. Darwin's library was a curiosity, as he considered books simply as a part of his working material, and had not the reverence for them that we find in the bibliophile. They were marked with memoranda, and divided if too large. He often laughed with Sir Charles Lyell over the fact that he had made him bring out an edition of his book in two volumes by informing him that he was obliged to cut the book in halves for use. Pamphlets he cut up, often throwing away all the leaves that did not relate to his work. When books were filled with notes he frequently added an index at the end with the number of the pages marked, and thus had a list of the subjects in which he was interested, so that at short notice he could command all the material bearing on a certain point in his possession. Fortunately, Darwin had ample means, which enabled him to devote his entire time to scientific work without the distraction which would naturally have come from an attempt to make his labour pay a yearly dividend or income. His habits were simple and methodical, and within a short distance of the hum and bustle of the great city of London he carried on his experiments for forty years, happy in the companionship of such men as Huxley, Hooker, Owen, Lubbock, and others, producing results that will place him among the leaders of science as long as time endures. One of Darwin's experiments will illustrate his method of work, and the consideration and labour which he gave to it. While on a visit to his uncle the latter suggested that the supposed sinking of stones on the surface was really due to the castings of earth-worms. The idea made so strong

an impression upon the mind of the naturalist, that he read the paper previously referred to on the subject before the Geological Society. When the farm at Down was secured, in 1842, he set apart some of the ground for his experiment, which was to cover a part of the field with broken chalk, and note, among other things, the disappearance of the layer through the agency of the worm castings. The plot was covered in December, 1842, Darwin waiting twenty-nine years, or until November, 1871, before noting the results; a trench was then dug across the field exposing a series of white dots or nodules; the original deposit of chalk being found on both sides of the trench at a depth of seven inches from the surface. Another portion of this field was spread with cinders in 1842, and twenty-nine years later the stratum was also found seven inches below the surface, so that Darwin assumed that the mould, exclusive of the turf, had been thrown up at an average rate of .22 inches per year.—*From C. F. Holder's Life of Charles Darwin*.

THE OBSCURITY OF BROWNING AND MEREDITH.

My charge against them [Browning and George Meredith] is this:—

(1) They have hurt the English language, by undoing (for a while, at least) all the purity and precision that the eighteenth century won for it, at great cost and pain.

(2) They have done this out of mere egoism—Browning maiming and torturing the delicate instrument to make it reproduce the processes of his thought, and Meredith distorting it for his adornment, as a fop before a looking-glass might pull a good tie this way and that until he crumples and spoils it in the attempt to look smarter than his fellows.

And I urge, in the first place, that though language may (and, indeed, must) help thought in the making, literature has not to express the process, but the product. Take this for instance—

My curls were crowned
In youth with knowledge,—off, alas, crown slipped
Next moment, pushed by better knowledge still
Which no wise proved more constant: gain to-day,
Was toppling loss to-morrow, lay at last
Knowledge, the golden?—lacquered ignorance!
As gain—mistrust it! Not as means to gain;
Lacquer we learn by: . . .

A man in this year of grace 1891 will, of course, be laughed at if he declares the above to be neither poetry nor English. And yet with a weak voice in the wilderness I assert the extract—a very fair one—to be no more nor less than a piece of scamped work. A conscientious artist would have worked out the thought and compressed it into a single line. Worshippers of Browning speak of his condensation, and it is true that he gives colour to that delusion by omitting to articulate his sentences; but I ask how the thought in the above passage could be more diffusely expressed. An amiable versifier once wrote—

As I walked by myself, I talked to myself, and thus to myself said I . . .

and this pleasant line sums up the method.—C., in the *Speaker*.

INCIDENTS OF THE EMPEROR'S VISIT.

THERE were one or two little incidents in the reception of the German Emperor that will remain stamped for ever on the memory of those who happened to observe them. The first was the obvious embarrassment of the Duke of Clarence when his Imperial cousin planted a manly kiss upon his cheek. The Prince of Wales had gone through this ordeal with practised firmness, but it looked as though his son was unprepared for such an accolade, and, whether spontaneously or in accordance with the programme, the Kaiser bestowed no osculatory greeting on the Dukes of Edinburgh or Connaught. Then there came rather a pretty and natural scene when the Royal and Imperial party came ashore after luncheon, and Miss Benson, the youthful daughter of the Vicar of Hoo, timidly stepped from the little crowd and off red the Empress a bunch of Marshal Niel or tea roses, exclaiming: "These are English flowers, your Majesty." The Empress took them with a ready smile, and replied at once in English: "Thank you so much. It is kind of you to give them to me." Another interesting sight was the face of the Mayor of Windsor and of others in the audience when the Emperor, in his answer to the long-winded address of the Corporation, artlessly referred to her gracious Majesty as "Grand-mamma."—*Picadilly*.

ANNEXATION—AN AMERICAN VIEW.

NOT within the last fifty years has the sentiment in favour of bringing Canada into the Union been so feeble among the American people as at present. This country has ample territory for its full political development, and quite enough political and social problems of its own without seeking new complications. The cry of "Manifest Destiny," once so familiar on the lips of Fourth of July orators, is scarcely ever heard, and the old earth hunger, so greatly stimulated by the desire of slavery to extend its area, has well-nigh subsided. The admission of eight or ten Canadian States into the American Union would be little less than a political revolution. Instead of strengthening the bonds of union, it would be more apt to relax them by creating within our boundaries interests antagonistic to the General Government. The Canadians, too, have their own peculiar problems, which they can best solve for themselves and in their own way. Annexation, so far from removing, would increase the embarrassments which these questions present.—*Philadelphia Record*.

The Infinite always is silent,
It is only the finite speaks;
Our words are the idle wave caps,
On the deep that never breaks.
We may question with words of science,
Explain, decide and discuss,
But only in meditation
The Mystery speaks to us.

—John Boyle O'Reilly.

POLO IN ENGLAND.

MR. MORAY BROWN classifies English polo in three eras: Looking back at the changes that polo has undergone during the twenty odd years of its existence in Britain, it may be said that there have been three distinct phases or periods in the game—viz., the first period, when it was a comparatively slow, dribbling game, played on small ponies, of which the Messrs. Murrieta were the ablest exponents; the second period, when the numbers were limited to four a side, and (owing mainly to the Messrs. Peat) it became a fast, galloping game, in which, except for the placing of a man back to guard the goal, there was no organization of the sides, each of the three forward players playing as much as he listed; and the third, or present period, which, owing to Mr. John Watson, is quite a scientific game, each member of a team being assigned his position in the field, and having distinct duties attached to that position. It is, therefore, very apparent that now the excellence of a polo team is not so entirely a matter of individual ability (although that is, of course, of very primary importance), but that it depends on combination and on a man not only knowing his place and duties, but sticking to them and playing for his side, and not for himself. There is no doubt that when polo was first introduced into England, it was looked upon generally as a purely and essentially military game; but public opinion altered, and as civilian clubs started up in every direction, with very satisfactory results, it became evident that the sport, besides its individual attractions, encouraged and cultivated a very high class of horsemanship.—*From Riding and Polo*.

THE MAN MILLINER.

AN original dramatic sketch, by Mr. W. R. Walkes, in *Temple Bar*, entitled "Her New Dressmaker," opens with the following amusing complaint by a fashionable young widow: "I declare that dressmakers are the greatest nuisances in life—worse, far worse, than even husbands, for when poor George was alive I could coax a new frock out of him with one-twentieth of the trouble it cost me to get it made. It was bad enough when the business was in the hands of tradespeople, but now that dukes and duchesses have taken it up one encounters all the vices peculiar to dressmakers with aristocratic *hauteur* and *nonchalance* thrown in. (Sits, R.C.) Every one knows that the ducal house of Cordelie et Compagnie is the only place one can go to for garments; but it is much more difficult to get a new frock from them in a reasonable time than to procure an invitation to their place in the country. After waiting for three whole weeks merely to give an order for a gown, I receive a note informing me that if convenient—I presume to myself—their representative, Lord Adolphus Fitzcilverin, will give himself the pleasure of dining with me this evening to talk the matter over. (Rises) There's a pretty way of doing business! Makes me so nervous, too; suppose the soup is cold, or the quails are overdone, he'll cut my stripes all wrong and I shall be ruined. Besides it's so embarrassing; how on earth can I talk to a lord about clothes? I shall have to dodge round the subject and lead up to it by degrees, just as if I were trying to find out if his grandfather had been hanged for forgery; and all the time I shall feel conscious that he's taking me in from head to foot, and saying to himself, "My good woman, who on earth has clothed you up to now?" They all do that when you go to them for the first time; but it always makes me so miserable and ashamed, that I feel I must cry out to them, "My good people, charge me anything you like, only make me fit to be looked at by you." Oh! dear (sinking into chair), I wish there were no such things as clothes in the world! (Very slight pause) But no I don't; life would be very dull without the pleasure of cutting out one's best friends."

HER MAJESTY'S warrant has been gazetted approving the Constitution of "The Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India, and the Isles of the British Seas." There is something very breezy about the last part of this title. Since England's flag floats o'er every sea no doubt the expression "British Seas" is intended to suggest, if not actually to include, all the salt water on the globe. Looking at the more prosaic side of the Constitution of the Institute, the *Chamber of Commerce Journal*, while not complaining generally of the recognition accorded to Chambers of Commerce in respect of the right of nominating Governors, yet calls attention to the absence as yet of any direct appointing power granted to the powerful Chambers of Commerce in the colonies. Surely this is an omission that should be supplied. The Boards of Trade in Canada and some of the Chambers of Commerce in Australia are particularly active and useful bodies, specially qualified to exercise a useful influence upon the counsels of such a body as the Imperial Institute.—*Imperial Federation*.