

VII. Short Critical Notices of Books.

— **OUR OLD HOME.** By Nathaniel Hawthorne.*—This volume contains a series of twelve English sketches, the material for which were collected by Mr. Hawthorne, while United States Consul at Liverpool, under President Pierce's administration. The Sketches are pleasant reading, and are generally entertaining. Mr. Hawthorne is evidently in love with the old English shrines which he has visited, and especially with the grand old Cathedrals; but while he looks at them with reverence and veneration, his criticisms on English life and character are intensely American in their tone and spirit. His satire, however, is genial and gentle, his wit pleasant and not pungent, and his admiration for the truly great and noble in the "old home" of his race genuine, and unaffected.

— **ARTHUR HALLAM'S REMAINS.***—Tennyson's touching poems *In Memoriam*, of his love and friendship for Arthur Hallam, has made the public familiar with the name of this gifted man. Curiosity, therefore, to learn something of the mental power and personal excellence of the youthful Hallam, has increased in proportion as the memorials of a friendship so touchingly recalled, have been read and appreciated. This curiosity will be found to be abundantly gratified in this volume of "Remains." It contains a choice selection of pieces from young Hallam's pen, both in prose and verse. It also contains interesting prefatory sketches of the brief lives of Arthur Hallam, and of his equally gifted brother, Henry Fitzmaurice, who also died young, to the inexpressible grief of their father, Henry Hallam—the distinguished author of the "Constitutional History of England," and the "Middle Ages of Europe."

— **AGASSIZ'S METHOD OF STUDY IN NATURAL HISTORY.***—M. Agassiz's fame as the eminent Professor of Natural History at Harvard University will naturally dispose the public to welcome this volume with satisfaction. It does not profess to be an elaborate treatise on Natural History. It is rather a series of interesting sketches or lectures on the subject which lately appeared in an American Magazine. The illustrations are very good, and sufficiently numerous to aid the reader in understanding the text.

— **GALA DAYS.**—By Gail Hamilton.* This volume contains a series of lively sketches of travel and personal adventure and observation, written by an American lady. There is a good deal of affected wit and current American slang in many parts of the book, yet in other parts the authoress's better nature and good sense appears. As a good specimen of American ephemeral literature the book is worth reading.

— **EYES AND EARS.**—By Henry Ward Beecher.* This is a most entertaining book, written in the author's agreeable and emphatic style. It contains many admirable criticisms on the current follies and foibles of the day, together with some lively and amusing reminiscences of the adventures of boyhood both in town and country.

— **FREEDOM AND WAR.**—By Henry Ward Beecher.* This volume contains a number of "discourses on topics suggested by the times." The sermons embody a combination of intensely Northern-Federal-American political opinions and invective against the South. They are marred by a good deal of irreverence, intolerance, and bitterness; and in our humble judgment they are utterly opposed to the Spirit of the Gospel of Peace which the author professes to preach.

— **HOSPITAL TRANSPORTS.***—"A Memoir of the Embarkation of the Sick and Wounded from the Peninsula of Virginia, in the summer of 1862; compiled and published at the request of the Sanitary Commission." This volume shows what a dreadful thing war is, stripped of its "pomp and circumstance." It reveals a most painful history of the sufferings and death of hundreds of Federals in the American Civil War, and of the efforts—vastly inadequate and fitful—made to alleviate the dreadful condition of the wounded and dying in that dreadful strife.

— **THE CANOE AND THE SADDLE.**—By Theodore Winthrop.* This volume contains a number of amusing sketches of the author's adventures with the Indians on the Pacific coast, the valley of the Columbia river, and in California. Some of the incidents are highly ludicrous, and reveal the inner life of the Indians on that part of the Continent in a very unromantic manner. Mr. Winthrop was a scion of the celebrated John Winthrop family, and bid fair to be a promising author, but his literary labours have been cut short by death—he having fallen on one of the battle fields in the American Civil War.

— **THE POET'S JOURNAL.**—By Bayard Taylor.* Mr. Taylor is better known as a traveller than as a poet, yet this is the third volume of poems

which he has published. Some of those in this volume are sweet and tender, especially those entitled "In Winter," "The Mother," and "The Song of the Camp."

— **AGNES OF SORRENTO.**—By Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stow.* Though a well written tale, full of striking incidents and sketches of Italian life, this work falls far below the pathos, the beauty, and natural, life-like scenes and pictures in "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

— **STORY OF THE GUARD.** By Jessie Benton Fremont.*—This is designed to be a memorial volume of General Fremont's mounted body-guard, during his brief campaign at the South-West. It is written by Mrs. Fremont, as her contribution towards the support of the widows or near relatives of the guard who fell in battle.

— **ON LIBERTY.** By JOHN STUART MILL.*—Mr. Mill is, without doubt the greatest writer of the present day on politico-economic subjects. His writings have a depth, a force and an originality about them which stamps them as the production of a great mind. In the present work, the author treats of the liberty of thought and discussion; of individuality, as one of the elements of well-being; of the limits to the authority of society over the individual; and, in a closing chapter, he makes important applications of the thought expressed in the previous chapters.

VIII. Educational Intelligence.

CANADA.

— **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.**—The annual convocation took place on the 30th ult, in the Convocation Hall. A numerous assemblage of spectators were present, the major part of whom were ladies. The President of the College, Rev. Dr. McCaul, and the several Professors, all of whom were present, having taken their seats on the elevated dais, the proceedings commenced with the admission of 46 new matriculated students. Recitation of prize compositions followed; the Latin and English poets respectively on this occasion being Mr. N. McNish, and Mr. G. H. Squire. Mr. McNish had selected as his subject "Zenobia;" and Mr. Squire as his, "The Northmen in America." Both gentlemen, after reciting their compositions, were rewarded with the enthusiastic applause of their mates. —The prizes were then distributed by the various Professors to the successful competitors in their respective classes. Professors McCaul, Beaven, Croft, Cherriman, Wilson, Hincks, Chapman, Forneri, Hirschfelder, Buckland, presented the prizemen of their respective classes, and in each case accompanied the presentation of the prizes with a few words of compliment or congratulation. Dr. McCaul presented the special prizes for public speaking, English essay, and public reading, awarded by the College Literary and Scientific Society. The distribution of prizes having been completed, Dr. McCaul, as President of the College, made some closing observations, illustrative of the progress of the institution. Having traced the various changes and modifications which at last resulted in the Toronto University, and University College, Toronto, as they now existed, springing out of the original King's College, he proceeded to give figures showing the progress of University College during the ten years of its existence. Before giving these figures, however, he remarked that he should be sorry if any one supposed that he looked upon mere numbers, or the increase of numbers, as a true test of the efficiency of an educational institution. There were other and truer tests of efficiency than this. Of these, however, he would not speak, but would leave the public to judge of the efficiency of this institution by the attainments and standing of the young men whom it sent forth into the world. (Cheers.) But adopting the popular criterion of the progress of an institution, he should read the numbers who had attended University College from the commencement. Before doing so, he might explain that in this college there were two classes of students, the matriculated and the non-matriculated. In the old Universities there were none but matriculated students. Here it had been thought better to have a class of non-matriculated students, in order that those who might not wish to proceed to degrees, or who might be unable to pass the matriculation examination, might have the benefit of attending any particular course of lectures they desired. In this, they had not introduced any novelty. It had been acted on for a considerable length of time in King's College, London, and also in the University of London. For the first year, 1853, he should give no numbers, as the institution was then in a transition state. The following table showed the numbers of matriculated and non-matriculated students in the subsequent years: