

certainly news for us to learn that the Hon. Geo. Foster, Minister of Finance, "is a bachelor and a sort of social Diogenes." We imagined that he was married. Upon what grounds does the writer further assert that Sir Adolphe Caron—one of the most brilliant Frenchmen in the Dominion and a capital entertainer, fond of musical parties, dinner parties and all kinds of parties—is "out of the social world"? Another fact is the somewhat remarkable one that "despite the severe Puritanism of the social atmosphere in Canada," small and select tobogganing parties have been given at Government House on "Sunday afternoons." An analysis of Lord Stanley of Preston begins by stating that he is a "wholesome British aristocrat—indeed he was generally known in transatlantic society as the 'first gentleman in England.'" We are told that he is by no means "brilliant," that "there is nothing of the patrician about his appearance," but that he is still "a perfect gentleman in the large sense of the word as it is accepted in democratic America." Lady Stanley, is too, "a woman particularly adapted to supplement her husband's intellectual and moral being, and a product of the British civilization and social system." There can be little doubt that this paper will throw light upon various interesting aspects of society at the Capital, the "exuberant" hospitality of which long-suffering town the writer has partaken of—some time ago. Among the remaining papers is one on the "Grand Prix," profusely illustrated by pictures taken from French periodicals. An equestrian figure of Gen. Boulanger shows him to be a short, well-knit dapper little Frenchman. The stables of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld are described as possessing marble walls, boxes and mangers, in old oak, set off with silver. Articles on rural life in Norway and provincial France are beautifully illustrated, and the magazine is quite as entertaining as ever.

#### LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

LADY COLIN CAMPBELL is writing a novel, which is to appear shortly, entitled "Darell Blake."

THE taste for novel-writing has infected the Duke of Argyll. He is preparing a three-volume novel.

THE publishers of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," A. and C. Black, of Edinburgh, are about to transfer their business to London.

A PRETTY conceit in literature will be "The Book of Wedding Days," to be illustrated by Walter Crane and dedicated to the Princess of Wales.

THE English Socialist magazine, *To-day*, has changed its title with the July number to the *International Review*. It will be edited by Mr. H. M. Hyndman, and be issued at sixpence.

MACMILLAN & Co. will publish in September a revised edition of Bryce's "American Commonwealth." It is said that 10,000 copies of this work have been sold in the United States.

FREDERICK TENNYSON's poems are shortly to be reprinted in London. They originally appeared in 1854. Charles, Alfred and Frederick were the three most highly gifted of a clever family of twelve.

A SISTER of the late Maria Mitchell will prepare for the press the "Life and Letters" of the distinguished teacher. Her correspondence is said to be very rich in letters from Herschel, Humboldt, and others.

THE London *Athenæum* says that serious fears are entertained for the safety of Mr. Malcolm Macmillan, son of Mr. Alexander Macmillan, the well-known publisher. Mr. Macmillan, who has been travelling in the East, undertook the ascent of Mount Olympus, and has been lost on the mountain.

THE D. Lothrop Company's books have found many admirers at the Paris Exhibition. The bound volumes of *Wide Awake*, and the rendering by wood-engraving of monotone drawings by Chase, Sandham, Church and others, have awakened much genuine admiration among visitors, who perhaps more particularly admire the photogravure edition de luxe folios of Tennyson.

HENRY GRÉVILLE's latest novel, entitled "Nikanor," has a remarkably fresh plot, turning upon the peculiarities of the Russian marriage laws among priests. A Russian priest is compelled, it seems, to marry before he can take charge of a parish, but if he has the misfortune to lose his wife, he may not marry again. The tragic tale, founded on this curious legal quip, appears to be one of the well-known author's best efforts.

ANOTHER illustrated weekly makes its appearance, this time in New York, devoted to literature, the arts and sciences, politics and general topics. It is called *La Nouvelle Monde*, and addresses French-Americans and speakers of French in Canada, Mexico and the United States. In this connection the steady progress of our own French journal, *Le Canada Français*, should be mentioned, containing as it does articles and *feuilletons* of varied interest and mostly good execution.

THE Boston *Literary World*, in reviewing a recent volume of verse by Mrs. Emily Pfeiffer, makes the mistake of alluding to her as Miss Pfeiffer. The authoress in question is well known in London circles, her best work being a long poem, interspersed with narrative, entitled "The Rime of the Lady of the Rock." Mrs. Pfeiffer may be said to divide with Augusta Webster and Graham Tomson (also a lady) the honours of English verse at present among women.

THE author of "Micah Clarke," the historical novel recently published by Longmans, Green & Co., is an English physician who is only thirty years old, and who has been a writer of magazine stories for ten years past. Dr. A. C. Doyle is a tall, athletic young man, who not only attends to a good practice and writes novels, but is a famous cricketer. He has, moreover, seen service on the West African coast and has roughed it in a whaler. He is a nephew of Richard Doyle, the *Punch* artist and illustrator of "The Newcomes."

A THIRD series of "Tales from Blackwood" has been begun in the issue of a handy volume in paper, containing a half-dozen of the best short stories which have appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*. A companion volume begins a series of travel, adventure and sport, containing Captain Speke's "Discovery of the Victoria Nyanza," Lawrence Oliphant's "My Home in Palestine," "A Sketch in the Tropics," and Sir Stafford Northcote's "How I Caught My First Salmon." The volumes are just right for the hand and pocket, are beautifully printed and contain fine specimens of writing. They are published by White and Allen, New York, at 40 cents each. Such a publication will give the critical public a chance of comparing English and American short stories. The older "Tales from Blackwood" were certainly equal in power and freshness to much that we get in these latter days in the pages of American periodicals.

UNDER the head of "Discrimination in Criticism" might come the following notices. The first is from *Public Opinion*—the American journal of that name; the second from *The American*, published at Philadelphia. "The Story of Helen Davenant," by Violet Fane, appears in Appleton's "Town and Country Library." (1) "It is an exceedingly well-told and effective account by Helen Davenant of the misunderstandings and alienations which grew up around her, and which bore their usual fruit of sorrow and unfulfilled hopes. We are getting in this library a quantity of writing for summer use of a comparatively high order. One can hardly miss an interesting hour in any one of the volumes." (2) "The Story of Helen Davenant," by Violet Fane, is a reprint from a low and objectionable class of English fiction, which we are surprised that a house like that of Messrs. Appleton should countenance. It is probably the fact, however, that the demands of these many short interval 'Libraries' are so insatiable that to provide them with matter really worth reprinting is an impossibility. But that being the case, does it not seem in point to suggest that the periodical fiction business is badly overdone, and that a halt may be properly called in what is really a demoralizing proceeding? 'The Story of Helen Davenant' is a flashy, silly (or worse than silly) story, in the manner of Rhoda Broughton, but without any of that writer's ability. We dare say that Messrs. Appleton would never have accepted it upon merit."

THE following "Fairy Tale" from the *Saturday Review* has been suggested by the Howells onslaught on Sir Walter Scott: "It can scarcely be denied that, considering his heavy-pated generation, Scott created more characters whom we remember, who are familiar friends of half the world, than any other author, save Shakespeare and Molière. That counts for something, in spite of his universally confessed blemishes of careless and clumsy style. Nor is he really so dangerous, we hope, as Mr. Howells thinks to American youth. A fairy tale of the old sort might be written to this effect: Once there was a Rich American Merchant who had Three Daughters. All were beautiful; but the youngest, the Bud, was his favourite. On his death-bed he called them together and said: 'My dear daughters, I am busted up on Chicago Preferreds. I have nothing left for you but these three books. To you, Morlina, I give Monsieur Flaubert's "Madame Bovary." "It is one impassioned cry of the austere morality," Mr. Howells says: and, my dear girl, you need it all! To you, Felicia, I present "The Quick or the Dead," by Miss Amélie Rives. She is "our American female Shakespeare;" I read that in the papers. Follow her maid, called Barbara—vous irez loin. And for you, Emmie, I have kept a bad old book; but you will not be harmed by it,' he said, addressing the Bud. 'It is "The Heart of Midlothian," by a man who had a wicked feudal title, Sir Walter Scott. I should be very culpable if I did not warn you that the author was a blind Jacobite, and intensely devoted to the institutions of his country and his time. But you are warned.' Here the Merchant expired, and the Fairy Tale would trace his daughters' adventures. Which young lady would you prefer to follow through life?"

#### READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

##### NIGHT SINGERS.

ALMOST any bird heard singing at night is popularly set down as a nightingale. This shows a deplorable want of knowledge of British birds, for among them are quite a number of night singers. Besides these, there are others which are active and assertive through the hours of darkness, and which make the woods resound with their crying and calling. Standing in one of the rides of a woodland glade just as day is departing, one is pierced and thrilled by a perfect storm of song. This loud-swelling volume of sound softens as the darkness deepens, and then only the polyglot woodthrush is heard. The stem of the silver birch has ceased to vibrate to the blackbird's whistle, and as darkness comes a new set of sounds take possession of the

night. Crake answers crake from the long grass, wood-owls hoot, and herons scream. One of the greatest night-helpers to the gamekeeper in staying the depredations of poachers is the lapwing. It is the lightest sleeper of the fields, starting up from the fallows and screaming upon the slightest alarm. Poachers dread the detection of this bird, and the keeper closely follows its cry. A hare rushing wildly past will put the plover away from its roost; and when hares act thus in the darkness, there is generally some good cause for it. Many times have we heard the round, full, lute-like plaintiveness of the nightingale—sounds which seem to seize and ingrain themselves in the very soul, that "make the wild blood start in its mystic springs." To us, the delicious triumph of the bird's song is in its utter abandon. The lute-like sweetness, the silvery liquidness, the bubbling and running over, and the wild, gurgling "jug, jug, jug!" To say this, and more—that the nightingale is a mad, sweet polyglot, that it is the sweetest of English warblers, the essence and quintessence of song, that it is the whole wild bird achievement in one—these are feeble, feeble! This "light-winged dryad of the trees" is still "in some melodious spot of beechen green and shadows numberless, singing of summer in full-throated ease"—and there she will remain. Unlike the songs of some of our warblers, her's can never be reproduced. Attempt to translate it and it eludes you,—only its meagre skeleton remains. Isaak Walton, in his quaint eloquence, tries to say what he felt:—"The nightingale, another of my airy creatures, breathes such sweet, loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight . . . should hear, as I have very often, the clear airs, the sweet decants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say,—'Lord, what music hast Thou provided for the saints in Heaven, when Thou affordest bad men such music on earth!'"—*The Spectator*.

##### AN AUGUST DAY.

THROUGH green-winged boughs, which bend before the breeze,  
I see a distant farmhouse glimmer white,  
As though a snowy cloud grown tired from flight  
Had settled down among those shady trees;  
Near by me hum the honey-laden bees,  
And, where the new rail fence draws o'er yon height  
A long and jagged line of dazzling light,  
The clovered hills lift high like foamy seas.  
But, ah! now strikes the fiery noontide heat  
On burning field, while over all the land  
A sudden silence falls. With joy I gaze  
Across the winding strip of ripened wheat  
That seems a broad and glaring, golden band,  
To streams beyond and pleasant woodland ways.  
*Herbert Bashford in the Cosmopolitan.*

##### A DAY'S SHOOTING WITH THE SHAH.

WHEN the day's shooting has been decided upon, the Shah leaves his lodge on horseback early in the morning, accompanied by a small retinue, among whom the most noticeable figure is the Mirakhor, or Lord of the Manger (practically the Master of the Buckhounds of Persia). This most interesting dignitary has charge of all the Royal stud. He looks after the greyhounds and the hawks, and on these special hunting occasions is the person of consequence. He is certainly a wonderful old man—I was told he was seventy-five, and yet he is still as active and as keen as a boy. Perched high upon his Persian saddle, and riding a horse of admirable stamp and quality, with most extraordinary walking and cantering powers, he seems able to go for ever. He wears a quaint hunting costume, reminding one of the pictures of old French sportsmen, a longish Persian frock coat, high boots over the knees, and a regular hunting cap with a peak that can be pulled round or off if required, with a telescope slung across his shoulders. Away go the hunting party, the Mirakhor leading. After an hour's riding or so up wind, in whatever district may have been selected for the day's sport, a halt is made, the old man is off his horse in a minute, his glass out of its case, and he is spying the ground like an ordinary Scotch stalker. At last he stops, holds up his hand, and then one of the attendants takes the Shah's horse, and the rifle is produced from its case. A few steps forward, and the Mirakhor crouches down and slowly moves to the verge; one quick glance reassures him, and beckoning to his Imperial master he places the loaded weapon in his hand. The Shah is now in his element; a splendid sportsman, big-game shooting is his one great passion, and every Englishman must readily feel with and for an Eastern potentate who, unlike so many of his brother Sovereigns, despising the effeminacy and the miserable *dolce far niente* of Eastern life, takes his pastime like a man, loving horse, hound, and rifle as well as any Briton of us all. He crawls with the utmost care to the edge of the ravine, and there, 150 yards below, lies the old ibex that has lately been seen so often by the watchers and proclaimed as having an unparalleled head. It is a moment of intense excitement. The ibex lies half asleep in the sun, on a ledge of rock, unsuspecting and confident in his safety, surrounded as he is by his wives, and safe, as he thinks, like a good Persian. The Shah takes aim and fires. The ibex springs high in the air, and falls headlong from his perch. His Majesty gallops rapidly to the spot, and in a few minutes the long, yellowish form of a Persian leopard creeps from among the grass, and canters up the hill. Like lightning the Shah is off his horse, his rifle in hand; the distance is great, but a well-calculated sighting shot gives him the range, and the left-