

illegitimate. In the lawsuit in which the question arises he makes the Courts uphold the validity of this clause; but he tells us that while the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, whom he consulted, agree that the words were intended to convey the meaning that the "worldly goods" become the joint property of husband and wife, an eminent Queen's Counsel, to whom the question was submitted, gave an opinion diametrically opposed to that of the distinguished prelates. The arguments addressed by the plaintiff's eloquent young counsel are certainly very ingenious, and if the law is not what the Court is said to have declared it to be, the reader will be inclined to think that it should be made so, or that the objectionable clause should be expunged from the marriage ritual.

But the lawsuit is merely an incident in which the principal characters have no very special concern, that of the hero being chiefly professional, although his personal feelings are warmly aroused and give a strong impulse to his professional zeal. Other incidents are the rescue of an English officer from the Arabs of the Soudan, a love-lorn lady from a convent, and a little boy, the heir of an earldom from gypsies who had stolen him. The story does not concern itself merely with one pair of lovers. The last chapter tells of the marriage of no less than three happy couples at the same time, one of them being an old gentleman of seventy-one, and an old lady nearly the same age. Although possessing many elements of interest, the story is clumsily developed and, as a "novel" we must regard it as unsatisfactory. The love-making is described in somewhat hackneyed phrases, and the lovers' talk is, in some instances, decidedly stilted: when Ernest Aldan went to visit his betrothed "the lovers met in rapturous embrace. Ernest clasped her to his manly breast and kissed her dear lips with passionate eagerness, while each read in the other's eyes the blissful story of unalterable affection," and when Helena enquires, "But why did you come?" Ernest replies, "Need you enquire, dearest? Does not your own love answer the question it prompts you to ask? Your affection for me, Helena, is the light of my existence, irradiating with its beauty life's darkest days; and as the humblest plant turns to the light for its very life, so my whole being longs for your presence and lives but in your smile;" to which he adds some sixteen lines of, presumably, original verse.

THE *Queries Magazine* seems to improve under the new name it assumed last month. The February number has portraits of Louis Agassiz and Humboldt; and the reading matter is varied, interesting and instructive; the Question department being still vigorously kept up.

MR. JOHN B. ALDEN, New York, has recently brought out a new edition of "Constance Aylmer," by Helen Fitch Parker, first published some ten or twelve years ago by the Scribners. It is an interesting historical tale of Gravesend, an English settlement in the New Netherlands, in the days of Peter Stuyvesant.

THE distinguishing feature of the *Overland Monthly* for February is the number of short sketchy stories it contains, most of them of considerable merit. There are two political papers, "The Personal Equation in American Politics," by Wilbur Larremore, and "The Power of Congress over Rates of Inter-state Carriers," by John Tottl.

WE have received from the Publication Agency of the Johns-Hopkins University the first number of the "Beginnings of American Nationality," by Albion W. Small, Ph. D., President of Colby University. This is a study of the constitutional relations between the Continental Congress and the Colonies and States, and will be the first volume in the Eighth Series of the valuable "Johns-Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science," of which Herbert B. Adams is the editor.

WE have received two very readable novels from Messrs. Lovell and Son, Montreal. "The Bondman," by Hall Caine, in the "Star Series," is an unusually good story, the scene of which is laid partly in the Isle of Man and partly in Ireland. "The Wynn's Mystery," by George Manville Fenn is ingenious in plot and rich in incident; but when Mr. Fenn wishes to make one of his characters, who seems to be killed dead enough, reappear afterward in perfect health, he should not inflict on him such terrible injuries as happened to George Harrington, who, after his treacherous comrade had dealt him a crushing blow on the head with his clubbed rifle, fell two hundred feet down a sheer precipice to the rocks below and was then scalped; and as if to banish utterly any possible lingering doubt in the reader's mind, he is led to infer that the body of poor Harrington was subsequently devoured by a grizzly.

THE opening paper in the *Fortnightly* is "The Portuguese in East Africa," by Daniel F. Rankin, in which the writer draws a very dark picture of the moral results of Portuguese influence on the native population. "The Portuguese morality," he says, "in these dark regions is appreciably lower than that of the brute beast." Another Anglo-African question discussed in this number is "The Swaziland Question," by Sir Hercules Robinson. Mr. Labouchere is brought sharply to task by Mr. W. H. Mallock for his recent *Forum* article entitled "Democracy in England;" and under "Correspondence," Mr. Carl Blind severely criticises Mr. Gladstone for having alleged in one of his "multifarious utterances" that the epoch of German literature "may be said to lie within the years embraced by the life of Goethe." There is an unusual feature in this number of the *Fortnightly*—a story, "Was it a Crime?" by Amélie Rives Chanler.

In an article entitled "Natural Rights and Political Rights" in the *Nineteenth Century* for February, Professor Huxley vigorously controverts some propositions in Henry George's "Progress and Poverty." In the same number Arminius Vambéry forecasts "The Future of Russia in Asia," and Mr. Henry Blackburn, who, it will be remembered, lectured in this city a couple of years ago, has an interesting article on the "Illustration of Books and Newspapers," "A Chinese View of a Railway in China," by Fung Yee; "Play and Players on the Riviera," by W. Fraser Rae; "The Glut of Junior Officers in the Army," by General Sir John Adye; "The Naturalist on the Pampas," by W. H. Hudson; "The Land and its Owners in Past Times," by Rev. Dr. Jessop; "Crete and the Sphakioti," by Charles Edwards; "Party Prospects," by T. E. Kebbel; "Dante and the New Reformation," by J. W. Cross; and "The Working of the People's Palace," by Sir Edmund Hay Currie, are the other papers in the number.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

JEAN INGELW and George Macdonald are writing serials for the new *Atlanta*.

A NEW Edinburgh journal called *Waverley* is about to be started, conducted by Mr. H. Blythe.

THE *American* for February 22nd contains a paper on "Canadian Americans," signed "W. F. Stockley, Fredrickton, N. B."

MR. WILLIAM MORRIS, the poet, is robust and square-built; he has shaggy hair and he delights in rude apparel. He loves the sea, and nothing pleases him more than to be mistaken for a sailor; in fact, his appearance is somewhat nautical.

MISS BARROWS' "Facts and Fancies about Eggs," E. Vinton Blake's story for young people, "The Dazzles of Daisydown," and Miss Sparhawk's "Chronicle of Conquest," announced by D. Lothrop Company for publication in February, will be issued this week.

PROFESSOR BOYESEN has a story in the March number of the *Cosmopolitan*, entitled "A Candidate for Divorce." It has many realistic scenes from a young ladies boarding school, and aims to show the calamitous results from much of the prevailing feminine education.

MR. THOMAS O'HAGAN, M.A., Ph.D., the well-known Canadian litterateur and elocutionist, is now a resident of the Capital. Dr. O'Hagan is delivering a course of lectures on elocution before the students of Ottawa University, and is also connected with the editorial staff of *United Canada*.

ANOTHER rival to the London *Spectator* is talked of—a weekly journal to be called *The Liberal*, and to be published under the auspices of the Liberal Association. A large section of the English Liberals feel that they have been betrayed by the *Spectator* in its course on Irish matters.

THE Czar's latest fad is to force all members of the Imperial family to wear clothing of only Russian material, made up only by Russian hands. Both the Czar and the Czarina have heretofore obtained their clothing from Paris, and her Majesty has had twenty French dress-makers constantly employed at St. Petersburg.

SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN denounces the story that he and Gilbert have quarrelled as absolutely baseless. "We are on the most cordial terms," he says; "in fact, never in our long experience as partners has more complete harmony existed between us. In the production of 'The Gondoliers' less trouble has arisen than in any of our previous efforts. Gilbert writes me regularly. I cannot comprehend why the papers have fabricated this story, any more than I can understand why the American press has so persistently ill-used us."

EUROPE lost a strikingly picturesque statesman of the second rank, and Prince Bismarck an old, staunch and valued friend, in the death, Feb. 18th, of Count Julius Andrássy, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He was a comrade of Louis Kossuth in the revolution of 1848; prime minister of Hungary in 1867; imperial minister for foreign affairs in 1871; and Austro-Hungarian representative at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. He was one of the best friends the Jews of Hungary ever had, and one of the most distinguished-looking public men of the century.

MRS. PRESIDENT HARRISON holds the position of honour in the March *Ladies' Home Journal* as the subject of an unusually interesting article, "Mrs. Harrison in the White House," by A. J. Halford, brother of the President's private secretary. Mr. Halford certainly presents the best picture of domestic life in the Executive Mansion ever printed. Mrs. Harrison has personally authorized this article, and a new and a most beautiful portrait of her accompanies views of her own room, Mrs. McKee's room and other apartments in the White House not usually photographed.

THE 'holiday gift-book' is apparently doomed. The best specimens of the hybrid that came to us this year fell far short of any known standards of artistic book-making. While our faith in photogravure as one of the best processes for a perfect reproduction of the artist's meaning remains unshaken, the art is either so imperfectly understood in this country, or so badly handled, as to make caricatures almost of some of the more expensive works upon which we have seen it used. If we had never made fine books, if we knew nothing about book illustrations, these faults might be condoned; but in view of a past of

which we may be justly proud, it must candidly be said that the illustrated books of 1889 sink beneath criticism. Whether their badness lessened the demand, or whether they became bad because the demand had ceased, is one of the problems of our publishing trade."

A LADY who recently met Oscar Wilde in London, describes him in the following manner:—"I had been expecting—what had I not been expecting? A valiant figure in black velvet knee breeches and silk stockings, with a sun-flower in his button-hole? I saw a tall, broad shouldered young man in a gray tweed suit, with nothing in his button-hole at all. Alas! for the vanity of human wishes! But it was Oscar, after all, in the flesh, and in a drawing-room in Chelsea; there could be no mistake about it I confess, in spite of the tweed suit, he had an attraction for me, and he certainly has a wonderful smile. As I listened to his musical, low-toned voice, I thought that possibly, had I been a few years younger, I might have fallen a victim to him, and ranked among the 'twenty lovesick maidens.'"

At the Canadian Institute during March the following papers will be read:—Saturday, 1st, "Some Points in the Natural History of Drinking Waters," by P. H. Bryce, M.D.; Monday, 3rd, Meeting of Council at 16.30 o'clock; Saturday, 8th, "Canadian Faunal Lists," by Ernest E. Thompson; Saturday, 15th, Sale of last year's periodicals, T. B. Browning, M.A.; "The Formation of Toronto Island," by L. J. Clark; Saturday, 22nd, "Defective Vision in the Public Schools," by G. S. Ryerson, M.D.; Saturday, 29th, "Ossianic Poetry," by David Spence; Thursday, 13th, "Arsenic and Sulphur as Metallurgical Agents in the Treatment of Canadian Auriferous and Argentiferous Ores," by R. Dewar; Thursday, 27th, "Notes on the Geology of the Jail Hill Cut at the Don," by David Boyle; Tuesday, 11th, "The Study of Gaelic," at Mr. David Spence's, 7 St. Patrick street; Tuesday, 25th, "German Words in English," by A. F. Chamberlain M.A. Meetings commence at 20 o'clock.

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE

"A MODERN HERO."

THE more one studies Henry M. Stanley and his explorations, the more heroic does the man seem. He has conducted four distinct expeditions into and across Africa, encountering perils and overcoming obstacles that would have vanquished any but the most resourceful and determined genius. The first was when he found the missionary Livingstone on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, setting out from Zanzibar and the eastern coast. The second, with a start from the same quarter, comprised a thorough exploration of the above-named body of water, Victoria Nyanza, and a journey down the Congo to the ocean. The third was his founding of the Congo Free State, Stanley's party entering the region by sailing up the great river of the same name, which empties into the Atlantic Ocean. Finally was his recent dash across the continent from west to east, with the rescue of Emin Pasha, governor of the equatorial Soudanese province, as the principal object. All of the narratives of these four enterprises read like romances, so much unique adventure, narrow escapes and sensational situations do they reveal. Has the age of heroism passed? Rather, has it not begun to dawn?—a heroism which seeks not to destroy, but to build up; not to turn vast areas into wreck, but to rescue them from barbarism, and let in the light of Christianity and civilization? If there is a modern hero, it is the explorer, Henry M. Stanley.—*Troy Times*.

FRENCH colonization and development companies are making encouraging progress in creating new oases in the Algerian part of the Desert of Sahara. One company have sunk nine artesian wells, reaching water-bearing strata at a depth of 230 feet, giving a steady flow of about five thousand gallons per minute. The water is brackish, and unfit for drinking, but it answers very well for irrigation. This company have about fifty thousand palm-trees under cultivation, the date-palm being the principal variety. Henna and madder are also cultivated profitably, and experiments are in progress with cotton, flax, tobacco, grape-vines, wheat, and barley. Rye-grass and lucerne grow abundantly, the latter especially flourishing in the palm-tree plantations. This company began operations in 1882, and they now have upwards of nine hundred acres of productive land reclaimed from the desert, watered by twenty-five miles of irrigating canals. These are very interesting experiments, and it is to be hoped they will be commercially successful, if not extremely profitable.

BRITISH AMERICA ASSURANCE COMPANY.—This old and reliable Company held its Fifty-Sixth Annual Meeting on the 19th instant, when the directors were able to present to the shareholders a good account of their stewardship. The net profits for the year amounted to the handsome sum of \$98,028.19; and the statement submitted showed a balance of assets over liabilities amounting to \$589,311.01. The expense ratio is 31.3-10 per cent.; said to be the lowest of any stock company doing a similar business in Canada. On the whole it will be seen, from a glance at the report published in another column, that the British America shows no signs of decrepitude, notwithstanding its business career of more than half a century; and that under the energetic management of Governor Morison, and the directors associated with him it bids fair for a continuously profitable future.