

"Dancing wasp and dragon-fly,
Wood-thrush whistling tenderly ;

"Damp, cool breath of moss and mould,
Noon-tide's influence manifold.

"Glimpses of a cloudless sky,—
Soothe me as I resting lie.

"Bubble, bubble, flows the stream,
Like low music through a dream."

As a specimen of what Mr. Thompson can do when he tries to write badly, we offer the following couplet :—

"O Lake, thy beauty inexpressible is
Except by some song-wrought anatholysis."

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By Anthony Trollope. New York: John W. Lovell Co.

As might be expected one of the most interesting of modern biographies is this of the late deceased novelist, written with the author's characteristic vigour of colour. The book is no less a story of the struggle of literature than an account of the man's own life, and it teaches the lesson to those equipped to give a message to their kind that there is a crown for all those that persevere. If only the faltering step and the vacant brain went together, then of great value to mankind would be this autobiography of Trollope, with its record of repeated disappointments, and of mercenary publishers who were better judges of pork than of manuscript ; for it would then keep out of the field those swarms of sensation-mongers who fill the land with their blood and thunder, and defraud public taste. By-and-by when the biography of Bertha M. Clay is written—for the palate that relishes the work of this writer will not refuse the biography—it will not be found that she had any difficulty in getting publishers to take her work, like Trollope had, or to induce the people to buy them. However, this is little to the purpose ; for the author of "Peck's Bad Boy" is the logical and inevitable product of the impure literary atmosphere of his time. Trollope was quite another sort of development. He had in common with so many of the guild to struggle, when a boy, with poverty ; was hated by the schoolmaster and frowned upon by his snobbish desk-mates. He came from Winchester College knowing nothing, so that it required political favouritism to obtain for him an unimportant clerkship in the London post-office service. It seems that when a boy his, then, not over-handsome face and shabby clothes were against him, but in after years he tells us : "I was a very clever person and beautiful young women were fond of me, and I strove to be kind of heart, and open of hand, and noble in thought." For his first three works Mr. Trollope appears received little or nothing till his reputation had been firmly rooted. The first novel was "The Macdermots of Ballycoran," and it fell upon the world without noise ; the second was "The Kellys and the O'Kellys," and this work the *Times* described as resembling a leg of mutton, "substantial, but a little coarse." The *Times* has not always been the best judge of literature in England, but "substantial and a little coarse" most happily phrased the robust, though sometimes crude, and often ungrammatical work of the irrepressible young novelist. He brought his third novel, "The Three Clerks," to the Longmans, and they met his demand for price by pointing out the value of their name upon the title-page. "I did," Mr. Trollope writes, "think much of Mr. Longman's name, but I like it best at the bottom of a cheque." The Longmans did not take this novel, so it went to the successors of Colburn. A foreman of this house treated with the author. He was just such another person as some of the publishers with whom any one concerned in literature must some time become acquainted. He tossed the package of manuscript ; then blew his face out into importance, and said : "I hope it's not historical, Mr. Trollope. Whatever you do, don't be historical ; your historical novel is not worth a damn." After this Mr. Trollope's success was assured ; each book found a larger audience than its predecessor, till at the close the total receipts for his work had amounted to fully \$350,000. Perhaps nothing written by Mr. Trollope is better worth reading than this autobiography.

ANCIENT EGYPT IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN DISCOVERIES. By H. S. Osborn, LL.D. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co.

As Mr. Osborn says in his preface, nearly all authoritative works on Ancient Egypt are beyond the reach of general readers on account of their costliness ; and to some extent beyond their grasp because of their fulness. So true is the earlier statement, that one finds himself looking with suspicion on a volume so small as this which claims to handle so vast a subject. But there appears no ground for suspicion. The work is what it claims to be, an epitome ; and it does what it aims to do, by enabling the reader to follow, by the light of modern discoveries, the researches of eminent

Egyptologists, whose results are here presented in concise and clear order. Mr. Osborn is an earnest student of Egyptian history and archæology ; he has carried on original and careful investigations ; and his judgments seem as admirably free from the arrogant self-assertion of the scholar who thinks himself the only one entitled to speak *ex cathedra*, as they are from the wearisome elevating of molehills into mountains which is the tendency of the hobby-riding pedant. The following quotation will be interesting from its bearing on Biblical history :

From the inscription on the temple of Karnak, translated by M. de Rouge, although excepted to by Renouf and Brugsch, but fully adopted by Lenormant, we find a curious, and, at that time, a fearful array of the Libyans and Mashuash who formed the majority, with the Pelasgian Tyrrhenians from Italy, ancestors of the Etruscans, the Sardinians, Sicilians, Achæans of the Peloponnesus, and Laconians. To these were added another tribe of northern Africa, called Kehak. Merenptah "beloved of Phtah" had moved his royal seat to Memphis. From this place he retired to Shebes, evidently from the invaders, whom he feared so much that he declined to go to battle at the head of his army. But the invaders were defeated, and more than 16,000 left dead upon the field, and nearly 10,000 taken prisoners, many of whom had to be allowed to settle in the Delta, because there was no other method of disposing of them, for some had come to the war with their wives and children and their goods, evidently intending to stay. Various coincidences show that it was soon after this great battle that the exodus of the Israelites took place, when 600,000 men, slaves, belonging to the Hebrew race, left Egypt at one time. There is no record of this humiliating event, as there never was of any humiliation, except when there was a recovery from the effects of national misfortune. So we cannot expect a record of this ; but some very curious items appear in the history of Moses as recorded in the Book of Exodus, which prove that the author of that book was certainly acquainted with the events transpiring in Egypt as well as with the customs and habits of the people and their surroundings. For, in the first place, Moses, at the age of 40, having killed an Egyptian, and being threatened by Pharaoh, flies to the Sinaitic region. He remains there 40 years, when he is told that the king, who had sought his life, was dead, and he is now ordered to report himself at the court of the new Pharaoh, on an embassy which conveys the order for an entire release of the Hebrew slaves from their servitude in Egypt. Now, if the general opinion is correct, that Ramses II. was the Pharaoh of this history, he should have reigned more than 40 years, should have associated his name, Ramses, with Tanis, and, thirdly, the court of the Pharaoh, before whom Moses appeared, may have been at a city outside of the district of Goshen, in which region the Israelites were working. These three conditions are singularly appropriate to the reigns of Ramses II. and of his son.

The work is effectively illustrated with drawings from original material and actual photographs, and is accompanied by a valuable map of Egypt and Ethiopia.

THE PERIODICALS.

St. Nicholas for December is quite up to its own standard : and it is hard to think of a more emphatic way of praising it than to say just this. *St. Nicholas* is easily at the head of the magazines published for young folks. In the present number begins the last work of Captain Mayne Reid, a serial story entitled "The Land of Fire," which is like all this author's work, wholesome, exciting, and full of information. There is also a brilliantly fanciful story by Julian Hawthorne, and part of a Christmas story by Miss Louisa Alcott. The inimitable humourist, Frank R. Stockton, contributes a fairy tale, which is as piquantly amusing for older readers as it is for the children. Charles Dudley Warner writes a fresh and racy paper called "Fare in a Street Car." Whittier gives an Indian legend in verse ; Professor Boyesen the first of his "Tales of Two Continents." An admirably illustrated poem is E. Vinton Blake's "How Sir Athol Came to His Kingdom." Mrs. Lizzie W. Champney furnishes a paper of that delightful sort which has come to be a characteristic of this periodical. It is called "Edouard Frere and His Child Pictures." We quote a selection from a most amusing story by Tudor Jenks, and shall make no apology for its length unless one be demanded by the young folks :

A DUEL IN A DESERT.

A lazy magician, tired of work, left Damascus and went into a sandy desert, seeking quiet and solitude. Finding a lonely place, he filled his pipe, and, after smoking it out, fell fast asleep.

An indolent wizard, looking for rest, came riding across the desert upon a magic camel, which he had made out of an old rug that morning, and, not seeing the sleeping magician, ran over him.

Now, magical creations cannot touch magicians without vanishing. So the wizard's camel vanished, the wizard fell plump down on top of the magician, and the baggage which the camel carried was scattered on the sand.

The wizard was the first to collect his senses, and asked, in a fierce voice : "Where is my camel ?"

The magician replied, with some anger : "Don't you think you'd better ask some one who was awake while your camel was getting away ?"

"You are the only man I have met."

"Perhaps," resumed the magician, "your camel may have climbed one of the trees with which you see the desert is covered ; if you think I've got him you can search me."

"I made that camel only this morning," said the wizard, complainingly.

"You are then a magician ?" asked the other.

"No ; I'm only a wizard," replied the first.

"Well, I'm a magician, and I should think you would know better than to drive your camel up against me."

"It was careless, I admit," replied the wizard. "But let that go. I hope I didn't hurt you ?"

"Oh ! not at all ; I was lying down there on purpose ; that is why I came to the desert, where there are so many passing," remarked the magician.

"I cannot regret an accident which brings me so agreeable a companion," replied the wizard, with a low bow ; and so entering into conversation, it was not unnatural that the wizard should propose a trial of skill, hoping thereby to gain some points from his more skilful acquaintance.

"I will, on one condition," assented the other.