

## LITERARY NOTES

A complimentary review of Mr. Thos. O'Hagan's literary work—his poetry, especially—appears in the last number of the *King's College Record*, Windsor, N.S.

Our contributor, Mr. Thomas O'Hagan, M.A., of Walkerton, Ont., has received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Syracuse University, N.Y. *Palmarum qui meruit ferat.*

The latest issue in Mr. J. Theo. Robinson's "Popular Series" is "A Modern Mephistopheles," by Louisa M. Alcott—a fine story, ingenious in plot and displaying considerable power.

Edna Lyall's new story, "Derrick Vaughan—Novelist," which appeared first in *Murray's Magazine*, has been brought out by Messrs. John Lovell & Son as one of their Canadian Copyright Series.

The new Principal of Somerville Hall, in succession to Miss Shaw Lefevre, is Miss Agnes Maitland, of Liverpool, who is not only well known as an authoress, but has taken a leading part in connection with various educational movements.

The *American Bookseller* denounces the writers, publishers and readers of what it characterizes as "Leprous Literature." Some of the works thus classed are mentioned by name. The whole school of fiction in question is, says the *Bookseller*, a stain upon this generation.

The latest issue of "Popular Poets of the Period," edited by F. A. H. Eyles, deals with Algernon Charles Swinburne, Rev. R. Wilton, Mrs. Augusta Webster, Cosmo Monkhouse, and A. P. Graves. A brief biography of each is given, with interesting specimens of their works.

A forthcoming number of the *Cosmopolitan* magazine will contain an article descriptive of the people and doings of our gay capital during the social season. The name of the writer, Mr. W. Blackburn Harte, is familiar to the readers of the *DOMINION ILLUSTRATED* as an occasional and ever welcome contributor to these columns.

Messrs. Hubbard Bros., of Philadelphia, announce the speedy issue of a book of fantastic tales by F. Blake Crofton. It is to be entitled "The Hairbreadth Escapes of Major Mendaxe," and will be highly illustrated by Arthur Bennett, of New York. The price will be \$1.50. Mr. Crofton is sure to do Canada credit in whatever work he undertakes.

The *Home Journal* says that at a dinner party in London recently it was announced that Miss Elizabeth Balch was the writer of "An Author's Love" (the answer to Prosper Mérimée's Letters), the book which has proved the literary sensation of London for several months past. I had the pleasure of reading a letter from Gladstone to Miss Balch, in which he said: "The book exhibits rare powers on every page, is full of charm, provocative of curiosity, and a work executed with immense talent." The relatives and friends of Miss Balch in New York will be pleased to learn of the brilliant success of "An Author's Love."

In the "Songs of the Great Dominion," there is one honoured name whose owner has been contemporary with the three generations of Canadian poetry. He was writing when Adam Kidd published "The Huron Chief"; he was in his prime of mental vigour when Sangster and Heavysege first appealed to the Canadian public, and his intellectual strength is not abated in these days when Roberts and Lampman, Lockhart and Mair and Lighthall, Weir and Martin and Duvar, Mrs. McLean and "Gowan Lea" and Helen Fairbairn are rising higher and higher in our literary firmament. Need we say that we refer to Mr. G. W. Wicksteed, Q.C.?

Mr. Walter Besant was, it appears, the author, whose communication to himself a needy correspondent recently offered for sale to the editor of the *Literary World*. "As we supposed at the time," says that excellent journal, "Mr. Walter Besant had no intention of contributing to the finances of the gentleman dating from Halifax who recently offered us for two guineas an 'autograph communication' he stated he had received from Mr. Besant. The moral of the story seems to be that well-known authors should decline to answer letters from strangers asking their 'opinions.' We are not so sure as Mr. Besant seems to be that no editor would ever give a price for a private letter. If that rule had been strictly observed in the past, there would probably have been no need for a 'Parnell Commission.'"

Of the sudden death of Mr. Thorndike Rice, editor of the *North American Review*, the *New York Churchman* says: "We have nothing to offer upon the manner of his literary management or of his views on public questions. The one fact which stands out was, that a young man of large inherited wealth, instead of spending his means upon fast horses or yachts or society or dissipation, chose to take up a literary and political pursuit, not for the emolument or the notoriety, but for the usefulness which he could find therein. His success we do not measure; we are content to point to the example. With means which might justify almost any amount of frivolity and pleasure-hunting, he used his money in a way which could hardly fail of being of service to his time. And best of all, he deliberately stepped aside from the two paths in which riches in this country almost universally chooses to walk—accumulating more or squandering quickly, and chose that other in which it is greatly to be wished the *jeunesse d'orte* of the age would follow him."

## THE ENEMY UNMASKED.

Far away in the heart of a forest there lived an old man, who was feared and disliked by all who knew him. He made his living by fishing in a large lake near-by, famed for its fish, which he sent to market by his little boy, who had to walk many a weary mile before he reached the place, and woe to him if he should return with any unsold!

The boy was beloved by all. His beauty was so wonderful that none could pass him by without stopping to admire him. There were those who shook their heads when they saw him, and uttered grave doubts of his being the son of the old man, but none dared inquire about him, for their dread of old Paul. One day, as little Pierre was selling his fish, the people noticed a great bruise on his body. They questioned him about it, but his only answer was a sad shake of the head. Loud and fierce were the threats showered upon old Paul, who, they knew, ill-treated the boy.

The last fish was sold and Pierre turned his steps homewards, eating his supper as he went, which had been given him by some kind-hearted peasant. The sun was just sinking behind the mountains, and the whole sky was bathed in rich mellow tints. Pierre stood and watched it with a cry of delight, for he loved the beautiful, and could, for a time, forget his sorrows amid the delights of nature.

Spellbound, he stood, till the last flickering light went out. And then, with lingering look, he turned and plunged into the gloomy depths of the forest.

Silence everywhere, except for the hooting of owls and the falling of withered branches. But Pierre was used to these sounds and felt no fear.

Presently he came to an open dell, where he was wont to rest. It was one of his favourite spots, for here he could lie on his back and gaze upwards into the sky. Here grew the richest flowers, and at the little stream, which trickled quietly along, came the birds of the forest to drink. But above all, it was famous for being one of the haunts of those wonderful beings called fairies. He never had seen any, but then they only came out at midnight. He liked to sit there and fancy it peopled with them.

This night he sank upon his favourite seat, utterly worn out. Stretching himself upon the soft grass, he gazed upward at the sky, dotted here and there with the stars as they came slowly to view. The dreamy stillness of the place steals upon him so quietly that before he is aware of it he is fast asleep. Sleep on, tired little spirit; thy awakening will be far different!

The moon rises, and the whole dell is flooded in silvery light, and still Pierre sleeps on. Hark! What is that? Ah! surely mortal ear never heard such a strain of melting music as now falls upon the stillness, while up the dell comes a long procession of maidens, headed by one who surpasses them all for beauty and richness of attire.

Fair as the noonday sun is she, with eyes as blue as yon sky. Upon her head she wears a diadem of pearls, which the Shah of Persia might envy; in the centre flashes a diamond of such brilliancy as to dazzle all who behold it. In her hand she carries a shell of peculiar form, which, from time to time, she raises to her lips and sends forth a note of such sweetness that one could liken it to the voice of the nightingale. And now they approach the spot where Pierre is sleeping.

"Ah! my maidens, what have we here?"

Clustering eagerly around their leader, they gaze down upon Pierre, who, all unconscious, sleeps peacefully on.

"Here, Wisdom and Truth, my two trusty advisers, come here and read me what you see written upon this boy's face."

Thereupon the two fairies thus called came and, bending over Pierre, regarded him intently for a few moments. Then, addressing their leader, they said:

"It is with pleasure. Your Most Gracious Majesty, we give the result. Behold! Here lies one in whom are found truth, honesty and virtue."

"Enough," answered their leader. "We have at last found one in whom these three things are to

be found. Bear him away to our kingdom. It may be he is the one to help us in our difficulties. But, lest he escape us, give him to breathe of thine herb, Irene."

Then there stole one from her place and softly held to his nostrils the potent herb. Down the glen they bear him away, till they reach a large rock, upon which their leader taps with her wand. Immediately the rock opens, and, as the last one enters, closes again.

When at last Pierre opens his eyes, he beholds a sight which takes his breath away. In the centre of a room (lined with mother-of-pearl, from which the light is reflected in the most brilliant colours), was a fountain, round which birds of all sizes and colours fluttered about.

Poor Pierre rubbed his eyes again, and again, wondering what it could all mean. He remembered coming home from market, and resting in the dell—and then he must have fallen asleep—and no doubt this was all a dream. But no! he was wide enough awake; to convince himself he got up and began to walk. Scarcely had he done so, before there appeared to him a little maiden of such fairy-like proportions, that he held his breath lest he should blow her away. Making him a low courtesy, she told him she would now bring him to Her Majesty's presence, and so hoped that he felt refreshed after his long sleep.

Pierre made haste to say he was, and would be delighted to see Her Majesty, as he felt anxious to find out what it all meant.

Telling him to follow her, she tripped lightly along through innumerable rooms. When on opening a door there appeared before him a large garden. Pierre uttered a cry of delight at the sight. Flowers, flowers everywhere, while birds of the most gorgeous plumage fluttered about, mingling their joyous songs with the music of the falling waters from the many fountains. Pierre wouldst fain have lingered, but his guide hurried him along.

Pausing at the end of a narrow path, there opened to Pierre's view, a large level plain covered with soft green moss.

And there, seated with her maidens was Pierre's midnight visitor. She advanced to meet him, and in the sweetest of tones bid him welcome to fairyland.

"I am called Queen Mab," she said, and these are my subjects, while all around, as you see, lies my kingdom."

Pierre's heart gave a great bound, so he was really in fairy-land at last. How beautiful it all was—just as he had so many times pictured it in his own mind.

Pierre made the Queen a low bow, and thanked her for the great honour done to him. She smiled, and told him to be seated, and then she related to him all that had happened the night before, how she had found him and brought him away.

"Ah, how happy must your Majesty be, to dwell in such a beautiful place," and Pierre sighed as he thought of his own unhappy lot. "Yes, one would think to look round and see my beautiful home, that sorrow had not entered it, but know, Pierre, that at this very moment I and my maidens are consumed with grief." And thereupon, the Queen fell to weeping, much to Pierre's astonishment.

He begged her to tell him what her trouble was, and assured her he was willing to help her to his uttermost. The Queen smiled and dried her eyes at Pierre's words, and then, dismissing her maidens, she related to him how this great sorrow had come upon her.

"Sometime ago there came a visitor to our court. From the first I mistrusted him. Gay, witty and entertaining though he was, I felt that beneath his pleasing manner there lurked the germs of deadly poison. As time passed on, and still he showed no signs of going, I grew more and more uneasy as I noticed the increasing influence he possessed over my subjects, and especially over the young. At last I held a council with some of my wisest and best subjects, and unfolded to them my fears and begged them to be on their guard. But alas! he had already won them over by his enchantment, and so beguiled their senses that they could see no harm in him. Thus left to my own resources, I determined to watch him closely and find out if possible the secret of his power."