

and French rule; with the story of the American War and the designs and policy of the United States in the country. The story is well and entertainingly told, and the volume will be found a useful if not very valuable addition to the series to which it belongs.

AMERICAN LITERATURE: 1607-1885. By Charles F. Richardson. Vol. ii. American Poetry and Fiction. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Williamson and Company. 1889.

We have here the concluding volume of Mr. Richardson's "Survey of American Literature," a work which fairly earns a place among the critical expositions of the literature of the American people, alongside the more elaborate literary history now appearing from the pen of Professor Moses Coit Tyler, of Cornell University. To the Canadian, as well as to the English reader, Mr. Richardson's more compact work will no doubt be preferred, as it gives all the essential facts, with a fair and moderately restrained estimate of the chief writers in the varied departments of American creative work. Its range is not so extensive as the range of Professor Tyler's work, nor does it profess to give much in the way of illustrative extract. For those who want that, cyclopædias of American literature are available, to which the student can turn for specimens; though the seeker, if he wishes to preserve his respect for the literature of the New World, had better not weary or confuse himself by an eager thirst to explore the mammoth compilations which publishers have put on the market embracing the product of the entire field of American literary activity. We have ourselves an unhallowed memory of the dreary time we had in going through Duyckinck's early "Cyclopædia of American Literature," and the modern works of its class must be of still more appalling proportions. Even in Mr. Richardson's work we find it somewhat tedious to follow his enumeration of minor writers who have contributed little to the enrichment of his country's literature. On the whole, however, we have not much to quarrel with in the work before us, for our author has lightened his craft of the heavier freight to be found in most histories of the nation's literature, with advantage to its sailing as well as to its staying qualities. The volume deals with the poet and the novelist. We have critical estimates of the former from the time of Poe, Bryant, and Emerson to that of Stedman, Aldrich, and Walt Whitman; and of the latter from the time of Hawthorne, Cooper, and Irving to that of James, Cable, and Howells. The ground gone over is considerable when we bear in mind that the writers belong entirely to the present century, and that Mr. Richardson has swept out of his Pantheon many who had expectations of filling a niche in every temple erected to letters in the land. The author does justice to the names entitled to rank among American men-of-letters and his exposition and appraisal of their work may be said to be well and fairly done. He is painstaking and conscientious, and though there are limitations to his powers of criticism and insight, his judgments are, on the whole, to be commended. We get a very intelligent notion of American fiction and its developments from the author, and this is no little praise when we call to mind its vast range, from the early colonial school of Hawthorne and Irving to that of the modern psychological novel. The author's chapter on "Later Movements in American Fiction" is a specially careful and appreciative bit of writing. Mr. Richardson is no less successful in his analysis of the poets, and his estimates are discriminating and, above all, without prejudice or undue laudation. In this department he has had the advantage of the critical work of Mr. Stedman and other safe appraisers of American verse, and if his criticisms are not always either original or profound, they are at least intelligent and just. We should have liked to have made some extracts from the work, but to our readers this will be hardly necessary, as Mr. Richardson may be tolerably sure of finding a place in most Canadian libraries.

The excellent series of monographs, "English Men of Action," which had for its initial issue Colonel Sir Wm. Butler's "Life of General Gordon," has been followed up with two additional volumes. These are "Henry the Fifth," by the Rev. A. J. Church, and "Livingstone," by Thomas Hughes, Q.C., author of "Tom Brown at Oxford." (Macmillan and Company, London and New York.) The volumes are uniform with the "English Men of Letters" series, so favourably known, and are admirable condensations, suited to the wants of a busy age, of biography and history. In "Henry the Fifth" we have all the facts of history essential to a general knowledge of the short but brilliant era of the second of the Lancastrian Kings. The chief event of the reign, as every schoolboy knows, was the Conquest of France, at the time torn by internal factions under the imbecile, Charles VI. The author clearly sets forth the grounds of Henry's claim to the French Crown, the failure of the negotiations, and the invasion of France; and then succinctly narrates the chief incidents in the Battle of Agincourt, and those connected with Henry's later campaigns in France, terminating with the Siege of Meaux and Henry's early death. The Lollard outbreak is also fittingly, though briefly, dealt with; and some space is taken up with an account of Henry's early life, as the "Prince Hal," of Shakespeare, "the reckless, brilliant lad, now bandying jests with bullies and sots in city taverns, now leading his troops to victory on the field of Shrewsbury." The author, of course, does not

undertake to give us any portrait of Henry at this time less sober or more consonant with history than we have in Shakespeare's sketch of him, "as the Prince Hal, who spoils Falstaff of his ill-gotten booty at Gadshill, and laughs at him and with him over his cups in Eastcheap." He admits a laxity in the young prince's life during the years that preceded his accession to the throne; but there is, he affirms, "absolutely no evidence to show that Henry was accustomed to the society of vicious and disreputable companions." The sketch of the career of David Livingstone, though exceedingly brief, has the merit of being graphically told in terse and vivid language. The subject could hardly have fallen into better hands than those of Mr. Thomas Hughes, himself a fine type of the muscular Christian. Within the compass of a couple of hundred pages, the author not only sets before the reader the main facts in the life work of that lonely yet resolute explorer and missionary in the Dark Continent, but also enables us to grasp the springs and motives of Livingstone's devotion to the cause he had so nobly and self-sacrificingly espoused. In his closing chapter Mr. Hughes devotes some space to the consideration of the grave aspect of affairs in the scene of Livingstone's labours in East Central Africa, where the success of missionary work is imperilled by the recent active hostility of those interested in the slave trade. "A great change," Mr. Hughes remarks, "has occurred in the situation during the last year, and a crisis has arisen which has brought to a head the Central and East African controversy between cross and crescent, the slave trade and free industry. No Englishman," he adds, "will doubt the final issue; but it is equally certain that the victory has yet to be won, and will not be won easily. It is well that this should be known and taken to heart as widely as possible." Mr. Hughes, however, looks hopefully to co-operation on the seaboard with Germany to defeat the machinations of those who are openly conniving at the slave trade and delaying the redemption of Africa.

#### LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

D. LOTHROP COMPANY have issued a collection of short stories by Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, entitled "Vagabond Tales."

THE Canadian volume of the "Windsor Poets" series is announced by Walter Scott, the publisher, as soon to be issued.

THE venerable historian, George Bancroft, has been compelled by his waning mental powers to entirely cease his literary work.

AMONG the recent publications by Cassell & Co. of New York, is a novel entitled "Rented—A Husband," which already promises to have a large sale.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & Co. are to bring out, toward the close of this month, John Fiske's book entitled "The War of Independence," which will follow close on the publication of his "Beginnings of New England."

A VOLUME of Arctic travels, by Herbert L. Aldrich, will be published in Chicago by Rand, McNally, and Company, in a few months. It will relate largely to Siberia and Alaska, including incidents of whaling operations.

THE standard miscellaneous books formerly published by Ticknor & Co., of Boston, are hereafter to be published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. This will add not a few popular and valuable publications to a catalogue already remarkably rich.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, after a long abstinence from literary labour, owing to ill health, is now taking to the pen with renewed vigour. He has an article in the current *Nineteenth Century*, and other magazine papers by him are announced.

MR. W. BERNARD SAUNDERS, of Peterborough, England, is about to edit a new local antiquarian quarterly to be termed *Notes and Queries*. The *Athenæum* thinks the Fen country should be able to supply a large store of hitherto unrecorded folk-lore.

MESSRS. S. W. PARTRIDGE & Co. announce in connection with their series of "Popular Biographies," the following two volumes: "John Bright, the Man of the People," by Jesse Page, and "Henry M. Stanley, the African Explorer," by Arthur Montefiore, F.R.G.S.

MR. F. MARION CRAWFORD is trying his hand at biography. He is writing a volume for the series of "English Men of Action" on Sir John Hawkwood. The series, by the way, promises very well. Walter Besant, Clarke Russell, and Archibald Forbes are writing for it.

MR. BRIGHT's last literary work was the revision of the preface to a reprint of Jonathan Dymond's "Inquiry into the Accordancy of War with the Principles of Christianity." The book embodies the uncompromising condemnation of war that is associated with Bright's name. Its author was a linen-draper.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY will soon publish the first volumes of an Illustrated Library Edition of Thackeray. It will be printed from large type, and will contain twenty-two volumes, illustrated with over 1,600 pictures from designs by Thackeray and various artists. It will be more complete than any edition yet published.

DOUGLAS SLADEN is to return to Canada, early in June, and pass the month at Quebec. He then, with his family, joins Roberts at Windsor, N. S., where an assembly of

Maritime Province *litterateurs* will probably take place. In the autumn he returns to England. Meanwhile he is putting together his American poetical anthology in New York.

A NEW edition of "A Book of Verses," by William Ernest Henley, is just about to be issued by Messrs. Scribner and Welford. This edition has been revised by the author, and is issued directly under his authority. It will also contain an additional poem. It will be remembered that Robert Louis Stevenson dedicated "Virginibus Puerisque" to Mr. Henley.

WILLIAM SHARP, the English critic and poet, collector of "Sonnets of This Century," and general editor of the "Canterbury Poets" series, etc., is coming to Canada next October and will remain a few days between Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, then proceeding to Boston and New York. The Society of Canadian Literature at Montreal will probably receive him there.

THE Emperor of China, says the *Athenæum*, has just issued orders for the preparation of a history of the Mohammedan rebellions in Yunnan, Kansuh, Shensi, and Turkestan, and five members of the Grand Council have been named as the committee to whom the work is intrusted. Similar official histories have already been written of the Taeping and Nienfei revolts.

A SMALL quarto volume containing nine plays, five of them by Shakespeare, but not first editions, was recently sold in London, by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson, and Hodge, at the enormous price of £590. In the same sale a copy of Audubon's "Birds of America" realized £315; "Prymer after the use of Sarum in English," 1555, £32 10s.; Burns's poems, first edition, soiled, £60.

SPEAKING of the plaintive pessimism which is the prevailing tone of the minor poets of the present day, the *Athenæum* calls them a lot of "golden-mouthed but lugubrious singers" whose "banefumes" are "redolent of cultured melancholy." Amid all the brightest scenes of earth with laughter rippling around them and sunlight glinting upon their yellow curls, they persist in being wretchedly miserable.

A WORK will shortly appear on Sir John Franklin's fate, claiming to show that its discovery was through a revelation made to a little child seven years of age, to whom was revealed the locality where the ships would be found, and how they could be reached; and that after the great expeditions of the Government, extending over a period of seven years, had proved fruitless, the efforts of Lady Franklin, guided solely by the revelation of the little child, were crowned with complete success.

UNDER the title of "Further Reminiscences," a second volume of "My Autobiography and Reminiscences," by W. P. Frith, the distinguished Royal Academician, is published by Harper & Bros. The people who figure in it are, among others, Charles Dickens, Sir Edwin Landseer, Mrs. Maxwell, M. E. Braddon, Robert Browning, John Ruskin, Thomas Hardy, Mrs. Lynn Linton, F. Anstey, Anthony Trollope, Du Maurier, and Tenniel.

ALMOST the only new English poet who has won a way into American magazines in the past two or three years is Mrs. Graham R. Tomson, a collection of whose verse is about to be issued by Longmans, Green & Co., almost at the same time that they publish Col. Higginson's poems. Mrs. Tomson's book is called "The Bird Bride; a Volume of Ballads and Sonnets." The title ballad is of interest to Americans in that it is an Esquimau legend.

AT a recent sale in London of volumes from the library of the Duke of Buccleuch, the following prices were obtained: Boccaccio's "Il Decamerone," the Giunta edition, 1527, bound in variegated leathers, by Padeloup, 1857; Juliana Barnes, "Treatyses Perteyning to Hawkyng and Huntynge, etc.," printed by Wynkynde de Worde, in 1496 (imperfect), 44l; Caxton, "The Chronicles of England," 1480, 470l; another copy (imperfect), second edition, 1482, 45l; "Les Grands Chroniques de St. Denis," an illuminated manuscript on vellum of the Fifteenth Century, 98l; Caxton, "Dictes and Sayengis of the Philosophers," first edition, Westminster, 1477, 650l; Caxton, "Higden, Discreicion of Britayne," 1480 (repaired), 195l; Caxton, "Ryal Book, or Book for a King," translated from the French, and printed by Caxton in the "second yere of the Regne of Kyng Rychard the Thyrd," 365l.

THE overflow of the Nile for the year 1888 has proved a great disaster to the land of Egypt on account of its being insufficient to flood its accustomed areas. The cultivated land of Upper Egypt amounts to 2,331,000 acres, and of this nearly one-seventh is this year lost to agriculture. This also means a corresponding loss of revenue to the Government, as unwatered lands are not taxed. The most serious aspect of the case is the fact that large bodies of the people, varying from one-tenth to one-sixth of the whole population, are deprived of their means of subsistence. Lower Egypt, not so dependent upon the summer flood, is in much better condition. The areas lost to cultivation this year will not be restored until the flood of 1889 begins about July, the highest point being reached between the middle and the end of October. In 1887 the flood was destructive of property on account of its excess, which amounted to a rise of over five feet more than usual, and three feet more than the safe flood limit.