



## Our Homes.

**PURE AIR.**—When the weather admits of it, windows should be opened freely that the wind may blow through the rooms, and the oftener the better. But constant ventilation is indispensable to health. To warm the outer air when it comes in will of course require extra fuel, but better to pay a coal bill than a doctor's bill, or even, in this essential, than a butcher's bill.

**ROSES FOR THE HOUSE.**—We will suppose you would like six roses for your window garden, this winter; allow me to choose for you. First, I would select a fine old variety known as the Monthly Cabbage. Its flowers are so full that it has been called the rose of one hundred leaves, very fragrant, and of a bright rose-pink colour. Very likely your mother had one in her girlhood. I have one growing vigorously and it budded so young that I picked them off. Next, you will choose a snow-white one, and in Marie Guillott you will find that. It is very large and has a sweet tea scent. Next, I suggest a William Francis Bennett, which will give you beautiful buds. Fourthly, get a Marquise de Vivens, the colour which is a novel shade of rich violet crimson, with centre and base of petals creamy yellow, exquisitely tinted with salmon and fawn, large full flowers, very sweet, and a constant and profuse bloomer; the Perle des Jardins and a lovely miniature Polyantha will close the list. Now you must pot them in good, rich soil, water, and set in the shade for a day or two, then expose to the sunlight.

**THE BEST EXERCISE FOR CHILDREN.**—Instinctive gymnastics is, from the hygienic point of view, the best adapted to the regular development of the child. It is not liable to any of the objections we have brought against gymnastics with apparatus. It cannot deform the body, for it is made up of spontaneous movements, and conformed to the natural office of each limb. It does not localize the work in a particular region of the body, for all the limbs are instinctively invited to take their quota of exercise; and it does not seduce the child into efforts touching upon the limits of his strength. Instinct also invites him to the kind of work which is best adapted to his particular aptitudes for resisting fatigue. He has a natural disposition to perform light but frequently recurring acts, quick motions, which put him out of breath, while exercises with apparatus rather exact, slow and intense efforts, that bring on local fatigue. Now, all observers have noticed the wonderful facility with which a child recovers his breath, and his impatience of local fatigue. Finally, natural exercise, being the satisfaction of a want, is by that very fact a pleasure; and joy shines in the face of the child who is playing freely.—*Popular Science Monthly* for February.

## BOOKS OF 1888.

The past year has been very prolific in books, not good books particularly—just books. The editor of the *Publishers' Weekly* writes to us that his incomplete list for 1888 already exceeds that of 1887 by several hundred titles, which means, we should say, a total of about 5,000 books for the year. This means the issue of a book every two hours during the year. An imposing procession, but how preposterous in retrospect! Of this brave array, stretching from the first to the last day of 1888, how many that are new have forced a way to our literary table; how many will gain entrance to our book shelves? Perhaps a score.

Of course, the special student has not been idle. Of the making of his books there is no end. He has enriched in this twelvemonth the myriad departments of science with a thousand monographs. In belles lettres he has been especially busy with contributions to the dozen and one popular series of brief biographies. But the best of these are

still written in England, and for Mr. Gosse's "Congreve" and Mrs. Green's "Henry II." we are this year devoutly grateful. Frenchmen, following suit with their *Grands Ecrivains*, have written admirably in this field, and translations of their works (chiefly fiction) are among the year's books. We have had considerable of Tolstoi and the Russian realists, another volume from Renan, several from Galdos, one each from Daudet and Zola, two from Pierre Loti, and the masterpiece of Bjornson. But of all the translations Dr. Crawford's "Kalevala" is the most noteworthy. Miss Wormeley's fine rendering of Balzac's "Comedie Humaine" has progressed towards completion, and a half dozen houses have issued handsome editions of Hugo.

No living master poet or novelist has written a masterpiece. Tennyson and Browning have been virtually mute; Swinburne sang a little in a minor key; Sir Edwin Arnold was lyrically delightful "With Sadi in the Garden;" Lowell and Holmes published each a volume of rather fugitive verse; the complete edition of the writings of Whittier is still in course of publication, and Walt Whitman has doubtless said his last word in November Boughs. In fiction it is only quality we have missed. Stevenson, Black, Besant, Shorthouse and Payne abroad, and Cable, Howells and James at home, have been fecund enough, but saving, perhaps, Mr. Cable's "Bonaventure," and reserving judgment on Mr. Stevenson's unfinished "Master of Ballantrae," hardly equal to their best.

It has been a great year for women. We should have said this at the beginning, for 1888 will be remembered in the publishing trade and by the readers of books, through "Robert Elsmere," "John Ward," and "The Quick or the Dead?" We should really include "The Story of an African Farm," though written five years ago.

## THE WINTER SPARROW.

Poor little ball of feathery fluff,  
Perching high in the leafless trees!  
Little grey coats, all ruffled and rough,  
Blown about by the frosty breeze.

"Cheap! Cheap!"

Bread is cheap, and there's plenty there.  
Flutter down to your frugal fare.

"Quick! Quick!"

Never another bird to be seen,  
Frost and snow have frightened them all  
To southern groves where the leaves are green,  
Only this fluffly brown-grey ball.

"Cheap! Cheap!"

Lodgings ought to be cheap for you,  
Hide in the straw the cold night through.

"Quick! Quick!"

Come, you pretty, blown-about elf,  
With a patch of black on your soft grey breast,  
Perch on my finger and warm yourself,  
Nestle down in my hand for a rest.

"Cheap! Cheap!"

The price of freedom is never cheap.  
Farther away with a fluttering leap.

"Quick! Quick!"

Bright little beady, questioning eyes!  
Frail little feet, that closely cling  
To the swaying branch while the fierce wind flies,  
And sifts the snow on your ruffling wing!

"Cheap! Cheap!"

Brave little bird, not long will it be  
Till spring makes the sunbeams cheap and free.

"Quick! Quick!"

Montreal.

HELEN FAIRBAIRN.

## OUR BIRTHRIGHT.

Go! read the patent of thine heritage,  
Inscribed in glowing words that flash and burn  
With pregnant import. Con it well and learn  
The thrilling tale that lights the storied page.  
See Faith and Valour hand-to-hand engage  
Opposing powers, and by their prowess turn  
The Wild into a puissant Realm, and earn  
A deathless fame, bright to the latest age!  
'Tis thine and mine! Shall we then hold it light—  
Despise our birthright, as some base-born churl,  
And recreant yield it with a nerveless hand,  
Or stain our scutcheon with a Judas blight?  
When traitors hiss do thou, indignant, hurl  
Thy challenge back: "It is my native land!"

Montreal.

SAMUEL M. BAYLIS.

## THE WRAITH OF THE RED SWAN.

### THE LEGEND.

Now, Louis was lithe and tall, more than all the Abenakis, and dearly was he loved in the land of the dwellers under the morning. For there his mother bore him, when the wild black cherry trees were heavy with fruit, and there was his home.

And Louis was the builder of the Red Swan—that long canoe ye hear the old men tell of in early springtime, when the rivers grow blue again, and the sun is very quiet at evening, and all the children are still to listen. Among all the canoes of the Abenakis, of the Micmacs and the Melicetes, since Glosscap went away, there was no canoe like to the Red Swan. One score and twenty span was the length of her—two score span in all—of one bark throughout, from bow to bow. There was no seam in any part of her, and the bark that went to the building of her grew near upon the wells of the Upsalquitch, in the far North, in winter. Very swift she was, and of a ruddy brown colour, red as the dry pine dust—the dust of the fallen pine tree after many summers, where the partridge comes to sun her wings. She was deep, too, and narrow. In rapid and in storm the Red Swan had the wings of the sunset when the wind is strong out of the place of his going down. And this is how she had her name, from her lightness and her swiftness, and all the joy she felt in the courage of her flight abroad. In storm upon the lakes she was brave, light as a thistle fleck upon the air, sinewy as an eagle in the gale's teeth. Yet none but Louis was master of her; none other could bear her a stone's cast. Only Louis had the strength of her swiftness; with one hand he would fondle the spring of her bar, then urge a little, and straightway she would light upon his shoulder, like a bird from the sea. And many an arrow flight he bore her through the streaming sunshine, under the autumn woods, from lake to lake, and grew not old of the burden. Her sail was woven of flax and grained with a crimson grain, and, when north wind came down the reach and filled the belly of it, from clew to clew, it was like a little cloud before the rising sun; so that the sound of the ripple from her side, when the blue flaws kissed it and lapsed and fled away aft, merry and daring with love of her, was sweeter to the Abenakis than the wing of the lonely bank-martin in May fore-running his tribe; sweeter than the flicker's rally and hail when the long thaw has settled down on swamp and hill, and waking beech woods drifted in with sun.

But of all, to see the Red Swan make up against the rush and spume of a rapid was a thing worth far travel. For Louis would set the long white pole with both hands, then lean a little forward where he stood, half way from the middle and the stern, and whisper through his teeth. Presently she would give a tremour; once more the peeled white spruce would go plumb down and lodge among the stones; then she would lift and start and glance away into the fury of it, buffeting the foam-heads, and shouldering aside the quick tawny spume. Little by little and span by span, straining and arrowy and wild, she would gain upon the sweeping hurry of the rapid, between the black ledges and from eddy to eddy, till it made the hair upon your neck creep and chill for gladness at the brave way she fared, and one last bound and plunge sent her rippling safe above the topmost brink of the broken water, up into the brown pool beyond.

The paddle of her master was a span wide in the blade of it, and eight span long, for that was the height of Louis when he stood up in the stern. It was of sugar-maple, very white and hard, and the name of it was Whitehaulm, for it was the helm of the Red Swan, and white like the bills of the snow-birds. No Abenaki could bend it, and no stranger was found could give it spring, but to Louis's hand it was a young willow full of sap. The Red Swan felt him and quivered; her fragrant cedar caught live joy at his hand, and she shot along the water of the stream, devouring the sunroad as she flew.

Then it happened that Louis went down the Welaastook, through the terrible jaws of its mouth,