

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

A GREETING TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA.

WELCOME! our Royal Masters of the Pen,
To this our Royal city, proud to greet
Our country's Magi, who in council meet,
Bearing—the wealth of your illumined ken—
Such gifts as shall uplift the minds of men,
And lure pale Psyche from her dim retreat
On joyous wings the azure air to beat,
And visit her elysian haunts again.
Here, while you sow the golden seeds of thought,
Whose harvest we shall reap and oft recount,
As if all other heritage were naught;
Here, in the shadow of our Royal Mount,
Let every flower that welcome breathes be brought
To strew the marge of the Pierian fount.

—George Martin.

A FISH POACHER.

TURNING a bend of the stream, a sentinel heron, that had been standing watchful on one leg, rises and flaps languidly away down the river reach. The consumptive figure of the gaunt fisher stands by the stream through all weathers. The heron knows not times nor seasons, and is a great poacher—a poacher of fish rather than of flesh or other fowl. Sometimes, though, when his body is pinched and when the streams are frozen over, he becomes omnivorous in his diet, and will gulp down voles and rats and the smaller waterfowl. In the wind, when taking his lone stand, his loose fluttering feathers look like driftwood caught in the bushes. He reminds one of the consumptive, but, unlike him, has wonderful powers of digestion, and withal an immense capacity for fish. Woe to the luckless mort or trout, or attacking peregrine, that he attempts to impale on his bill. The heron is essentially a wanderer, and, like Wordsworth's immortal leech gatherer, he roams from pond to pond, from moor to moor. Like most poachers, the heron is a night fisher, and there is one equally destructive which carries on its nefarious trade under the full light of day. Over there is an overhanging leafless bow, and upon it has just alighted a kingfisher. At first its form is motionless, soon it assumes more animation, and anon is all eye and ear. Then it darts—hangs for a moment in the air like a kestrel, and returns to its perch. Again it flashes with unerring aim, and secures something. This is tossed, beaten and broken with its formidable beak, and swallowed headforemost. The process is again and again repeated, and you find that the prey is small fish. From watching an hour one is entranced at the beauty of the fluttering, quivering thing, as the sun glints from its green and gold vibrations in mid-air. You gain some estimation, too, of the vast amount of immature fish a pair of kingfishers and their young must destroy in a single season. Later in summer the young brood may be seen, with quivering wings, constantly crying and calling as the parent birds fly to and fro poaching the trout streams. And the kingfisher is a poacher in another respect. It never constructs the hole in which its young are reared, but takes possession of that of some small burrowing rodent, or even that of the little sand-martin.—*Cornhill*.

PARCELS BY POST.

APROPOR of the parcels post treaty with Mexico, Jamaica, Barbadoes, the Bahamas, British Honduras, the Sandwich and Leeward Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Salvador and the Danish West India Islands, which provides that unsealed packages not exceeding eleven pounds in weight and three feet six inches in length may be sent in the mails for 12c. a pound, the *Philadelphia Press* says that "a system of international commerce is developing rapidly, especially with Mexico. A few days ago the upper half of a carriage, divided into twelve separate packages, was sent from St. Louis to Mexico. Over a thousand pounds of merchandise were transmitted by parcel post during the month of March, being four times the value of such business for January. All the security extended by the Government to the regular mails is given to the parcel post system, and packages are delivered where any of the governments above mentioned have post offices, either by rail, coach, horse or foot." This system is about two years old, and will be likely to accommodate itself well to new plans for reciprocity.—*Bradstreet's*.

SQUIRRELS IN WINTER.

SOME interesting remarks on squirrels are made by various writers in the *Zoologist*. It is often said that squirrels are torpid during winter, but there is no really sound evidence for this view. Mr. Masfield, writing from Cheshire, Stafford, Eng., says (*Nature*, March 12): "I have seen squirrels abroad on fine days in, I think I may say, every one of the winter months; and while pheasant-shooting near here on a sunny day (Jan. 6 last), which was about the middle of the most severe frost we have had for many years, with several inches of snow on the ground, I saw a squirrel jumping from tree to tree, before the beaters, in the most lively condition." Mr. Blagg, also writing from Cheshire, has "frequently seen squirrels abroad in the middle of the winter, when there has been deep snow on the ground and a keen frost in the air. I remember," he adds, "once seeing a squirrel abroad during a severe storm

of sleet and rain in winter-time, and he appeared to be not at all inconvenienced by the rough weather." Mr. Blagg's idea is that the squirrel probably does sleep a good deal more in winter-time than in summer, as do many other wild animals, but that he has to be continually waking up and taking nourishment. The period of reproduction is unfavourable to the notion of an almost complete state of torpidity. The editor of the *Zoologist* records that he has notes of "finding newly-born squirrels on March 21 (three young), April 9 (three young), April 26 (four young), and April 29 (two young). Those found at the end of March and beginning of April were naked and blind; those taken at the end of April were about three-parts grown." According to the editor, "the old squirrels, in case of danger, remove the young from the nest, or 'drey,' to some hole in a tree, whither they carry them one by one in the mouth, just as a cat carries her kitten. One of the prettiest sights in the world is to see an old squirrel teaching a young one to jump."—*Science*.

THE INTERIOR OF THE EARTH.

ONE of the most interesting questions relating to our planet, says Professor G. P. Serviss, is that of its interior constitution. Observations made in deep mines and borings indicate that the temperature increases as we go downward at the average rate of one degree Fahr. for every fifty-five feet of descent, so that if this rate of increase continued, the temperature at the depth of a mile would be more than 100 degrees higher than at the surface, and, at the depth of forty miles, would be so high that everything, including the metals, would be in a fluid condition. This view of the condition of the earth's interior has been adopted by many, who hold that the crust of the earth on which we dwell is like a shell surrounding the molten interior. But calculations based upon the tidal effects that the attraction of the sun and moon would have upon a globe with a liquid interior have led Sir Wm. Thomson and others to assert that such a condition is impossible, and that the interior of the earth must be solid and exceedingly rigid to its very centre. To the objections that the phenomena of volcanoes contradict the assumption of a solid interior, it is replied that unquestionably the heat is very great deep beneath the surface, and that reservoirs of molten rock exist under volcanic districts, but that, taking the earth's interior as a whole, the pressure is so great that the tendency to liquefaction caused by the heat is over-balanced thereby. The whole question, however, is yet an open one.

RED and rosy cheeks follow the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. They are nature's remedy for driving out all diseases resulting from poor and watery blood enriching that vital fluid, building up the nerves, and promptly correcting irregularities, suppressions and the ills peculiar to females. Sold by all dealers, or sent post paid on receipt of price—50c. per box, or five boxes for \$2—by addressing The Dr. Williams Med. Co., Brockville, Ont.

THE Dominion Building and Loan Association held its annual meeting on Wednesday, May 27. The statement of the Trusts Corporation of Ontario, in whose hands the funds and securities of this Association are deposited, shows a balance in favour of the Association of \$15,354.58. The mortgages on which loans had been advanced represented \$104,200. The amount of cash available for loans was \$16,784.76. The speeches of the president, Dr. Burns, and Mr. W. A. Stratton were of the most encouraging character. The Hon. G. W. Ross, for the directorate, spoke in the same strain.

AN instrument called the "hematokrit" has been invented by Herr von Hedin. It is for determining the volume of corpuscles present in blood, and is based on centrifugal action. As described in *London Nature*, a volume of blood and one of Moller's liquid (which prevents coagulation) are mixed together, and the mixture is poured into small, thick walled glass tubes, graduated in fifty parts. The tubes rest on a brass holder which is fixed on the axis of a rotation-apparatus. After some eight thousand rotations, in five to seven minutes, the process is complete. The separation between the corpuscles and the salt-plasma is more distinct, in that a narrow band of leucocytes appears between them. The instrument is useful in comparing the blood of different individuals. With a little practice the total error is not more than one volume per cent.

THE Ontario Mutual Life Assurance Company held its twenty-first annual meeting in the Town Hall at Waterloo on the 28th of May last. The Directors' report for the year ending 31st December, 1890, was of most satisfactory character. The amount of assurance effected by this enterprising company has reached the very large sum of \$13,710,800. Its income for 1890 was \$489,858; its assets \$1,711,686; its surplus over liabilities was \$134,066. Another notable feature was the decreased mortality and expense account. The report must have been very pleasing to all interested in this progressive Canadian Company. We observe the well-known names of the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, B. M. Britton, Q.C., and I. E. Bowman, M.P., on the directorate. A large measure of the Company's success may fairly be attributed to its popular methods, its able management and the excellent judgment and business energy of its secretary, Mr. W. H. Riddell.

BACK FROM THE GRAVE.

A WELL KNOWN HAMILTONIAN SNATCHED FROM DEATH'S JAWS—HAD BEEN GIVEN UP BY THE DOCTORS AND HIS CASE WAS CONSIDERED HOPELESS—BUT HE RECOVERED IN A MIRACULOUS MANNER AND IS NOW AS WELL AND STRONG AS EVER.

Hamilton Herald, May 27th, 1891.

Although the age of miracles is generally supposed to be past, the case of John Marshall, of 25 Little William Street, is about as nearly miraculous as anything that can be imagined. For three years and a half Mr. Marshall has been a victim of a disease known as locomotor ataxy, a spinal affection which deprived him of all feeling from his waist down-wards, and left him a helpless cripple, given up by his physicians as incurable. To-day he is restored to health, and apart from the weakness natural to a man who has wrestled so long with a terrible disease, he may be said to be as well as ever. The story of his wonderful recovery has been heard with amazement by his many friends, for Mr. Marshall is well known in Hamilton, having lived here for nearly thirty years, and for twenty years before his illness having been manager for the Canadian Oil Company here.

One of the *Herald's* young men heard of the case and hunted up Mr. Marshall to get his story, which he was not unwilling to tell, in the hope that his experience might be of benefit to others who are affected similarly.

"I was taken ill in August 1887," said Mr. Marshall, "and for three years and a half I was scarcely able to leave my room. My illness, I believe, was the result of a fall I had a year before, and it left me helpless. I had absolutely no sensation in my body below the waist, could not feel pins stuck in me, and was deprived of the use of my limbs. For more than three years I was not able to leave the house, any more than on very fine days I might go as far as the corner, and during all that time I was never down town. I had the best medical assistance, but the doctors all agreed that I could not recover. I tried all kinds of patent medicines, but none of them did me any good. I also tried electricity, having as many as three batteries on me at once, but it was all of no avail."

"How did you come to recover?"
"In February last some one threw in a circular about Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I laid it aside, thinking it was like all the others I had tried—no good. But on April 14 I decided to give them a trial, and got a box of the Pills. Within three days I noticed an improvement, and it has continued ever since, until I am as well as you see me. I considered it nothing short of a miracle, and my friends who know me can scarcely credit it. Why, last week, I got up one morning, took my bath, dressed myself, went to the station, took the train for Toronto and walked to my brother-in-law's, and he would not believe it was myself."

"You say you were given up by the doctors?"
"Yes, I spent hundreds of dollars in medical advice and in the purchase of all sorts of quack remedies. My physicians said my disease was incurable and that I would never be able to use my limbs again. I am a member of the Royal Templars, and I have been passed by the society's doctors as past recovery, receiving from it the total disability benefit of \$1,000. That is the best possible proof to me that my case was considered hopeless."

"How many boxes of the Pills have you taken?"
"I am now on my seventh box, but, as I told you, I got relief from the start. I consider my recovery to be wonderful, and I am recommending the remedy to every one who is afflicted as I was."

The proprietors of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, which have accomplished such a miraculous cure in Mr. Marshall's case, say the remedy is compound from the formula of a well-known physician, and is unsurpassed for the treatment of all diseases arising from impoverished blood or loss of vital force.

The remarkable case noted in the above article from the *Hamilton Herald* conclusively proves that the proprietors of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have in no way overstated the merits of their remedy. Pink Pills are a never failing blood builder and nerve tonic, and are equally valuable for men or women young or old. They cure all forms of debility, female weaknesses, suppressions, chronic constipation, headache, St. Vitus dance, loss of memory, premature decay, etc., and by their marvellous action on the blood, build up the system anew and restore the glow of health to pale and sallow complexions. These pills are sold by all dealers or will be sent post paid on receipt of price (50 cents a box) by addressing the Dr. Williams Medical Co., Brockville, Ont.

Most of sterling worth is what

Our own experience teaches.—*Tennyson*.

WHAT it costs must be carefully considered by the great majority of people, in buying even necessities of life. Hood's Sarsaparilla commends itself with special force to the great middle classes, because it combines positive economy with great medicinal power. It is the only medicine of which can truly be said "100 Doses One Dollar," and a bottle taken according to directions will average to last a month.

If you decide from what you have heard or read, that you will take Hood's Sarsaparilla, do not be induced to buy any substitute instead.