

Literature Notes.

MAGAZINE LITERATURE.

A paper on the Communisms of the Old World which appears in the *Penn Monthly* for January is worthy of no little attention. The writer, in so far as the narrow limits of a magazine article permit him, classifies and analyses the various grades of communism and then proceeds to enumerate, with a few brief remarks on each, the various types of positive socialism in the earlier ages. These types begin with the paternal despotism of China and pass onwards to the Platonist Republic, the intermediate steps being the village system of India, Buddhist monasticism—which undoubtedly is but the antitype of the Jewish, Mohammedan, Catholic, and Protestant monasticism—the Egyptian caste system, the Mosaic legislation in land matters, the Nazirite order, the Essenes of Palestine and the Therapeutics of Egypt, the communistic usages of Crete and Sparta, and finally the great Pythagorean Society of the Greek cities of Southern Italy. The subject is of course beyond the scope of a single article, and will, we are pleased to see, be continued in a future number. It is treated in an unusually intelligent manner, which is the more remarkable as it is by no means a question that too frequently obtains an unprejudiced and impartial consideration. Another article of importance in this issue is a statistical paper by Dr. Stockton Hough on the Relative Influence of City and Country Life, from which we gather out of a mass of statistical information the following facts: That the very noticeable decline in health, fecundity, and longevity of the human race, and of the American people in particular is in great measure due to the too great crowding into cities, in support of which the writer quotes Dr. Parry's belief that "it may yet become a serious question whether the Anglo Saxon race is adapted for life in this country with its variable climate; and it may yet become a very serious question whether the American will become a permanent nation, if immigration is cut off, for it is beyond doubt that though our people are not physically weak, the number of children born to native parents is small and is decreasing every year. This is true not only of those families who have lived in this country for three or four generations, but it is more or less true of the immediate descendants of our Irish and German immigrants." That there is no actual proof of increased longevity in cities, rather on the contrary; that residence in cities develops a nervous temperament, that the mortality of cities is far greater than in the rural districts, and that, lastly, the longevity of females is greater in cities than in the country, while the opposite is the case with males.

Our space does not allow of our dwelling on a literal translation, with comments, of some of the principal verses of the *Niebelungen Lied*. One of the author's remarks in the exordium is however too good to remain unquoted.

"Literalness is surely the chief virtue of a translation, all other points are subordinate. What does the reader care for the poetical gifts of the second-hand? It is the original he wants in all its essence, peculiarities of expression, turn of thought, halt of rhythm, all as near the spirit and letter as the sense allows." And such accordingly does he give it.

The feature of the *Canadian Monthly* is, as every one knows its "Current Events," but as these have already appeared at length in various newspapers, we reserve our remarks for a future number. The present issue opens with a compilation from the last Census Report, by John Costley, Secretary of Statistics, Halifax, who gives us some varied information of the progress of the last ten years. Mr. George Beers has a chatty pleasant article on Wild Duck, at the close of which he delivers the following wholesome homily to the cynical moralists who look at everything in its worst light and denounce true sport as "bare cruelty! barbarian cruelty! protected by act of Parliament!"

"How many, sir, are born for critics and gentlemen, and aren't needed? You put a hard bit in your horse's mouth, and never travel without a whip, you bring up an innocent calf in the way it should go, and knock it on the head with an axe when it becomes a cow. The uproar of a hog on the eve of slaughter, awakens no sympathy in your heart. You ill-treat your dog until he takes French leave, and your very cat must shiver in the garden all night. You even bully your own children until they are afraid of your approach. You take pretty canaries from the freedom of the woods, keep them cooped up to chirp away their lives in a few feet of caged wire, under the delusion that they learn to enjoy it because they sing—as if Bunyan's fished imprisonment because in jail he wrote the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' Open the cage door at your window, and see where your bird prefers to be. Do you imagine a duck, if consulted, wouldn't rather die in the full flush and fervour of health in a competitive race to escape your shot—just as surely as would a soldier rather perish on the field of battle with his face to the foe, than give his last gasp in camp? Wouldn't you rather meet your end, pulse beating at its best—though that's no great shakes—heart and lungs uphysiced and full strung? It's an article of the sportsman's creed that duck, like deer and foxes, enjoy being hunted. I believe they'll meet you half way. Did you ever know an Irishman who didn't from the bottom of his heart enjoy an honourable 'discussion wild sticks?' If immortal Celts are to be found who prefer to risk being shilledahed into eternity, what great stretch of imagination does it need to believe that a duck prefers to be shot? Won't that corollary hold water? Shall I kill my duck as the Inquisitors killed their victims, by a mock prayer for them as I fire? I fancy you don't give your fowl chloroform before you wring their necks; nor even say grace over the flies you slap into flatness in June, or the fish you play with at the end of your rod and line.

"Were I to keep wild duck, fatten them on outs and peasant for future sacrifice, as you calmly do with tame duck, and then let them fly to sky, only to be brought down with an Eley cartridge, or to escape with a broken leg—that is a sportsman's idea of cruelty. Even the very moral character of wild ducks you deteriorate. You domesticate them, and the drake who when wild was faithful to one spouse, becomes polygamous, and a veritable Brigham Young."

"To father a tame duck as you do, and then cut its throat at Christmas, is the cruelest and unkindest cut of all."

Under the title "A Great Railroad and Its Vanquisher," Stephen Powers gives in the *Lakeside Monthly*, an admirable account of the inception, success and fall of the Central Pacific Railroad. The work on this gigantic line was commenced in 1863, and was for some time held in very bad odour, especially

in San Francisco, where it was known as the Dutch Flat Swindle. Gradually, however, it crept on, waxing more and more powerful, and swallowing down all the rival and independent lines, until it became the immense power it was before Newton Booth rose up to break its back and to set a limit to its ambition. Its line covered 1,222 miles of road, the company owned 56 vessels on all the navigable waters in California, Nevada and much of Utah. Ten thousand men earned their bread at its hands, and were bound to support its ticket, and the numbers of its supporters were swelled by five thousand more merchants, manufacturers, shippers, and hotel-keepers along the line; three subsidized newspapers; a complete line of telegraph across the Plains, with vast ramifications on this side; half the stock of the only Express company on the Pacific coast; a Senator and two Representatives at Washington, and a clear working majority in the California Legislature, these, Mr. Powers tells us, were some of its possessions and the upholders of its might. Speaking of Newton Booth whom he characterizes as a student of politics rather than a politician, the writer defines two arts, only one of which is understood "in this blatant country of ours," viz.: "the great art of How to Get into Office—politics," and "that other neglected art of How to Get out of Office—statesmanship." Apropos of statesmanship we are carried off to another paper in the *Lakeside*—a chippy account of a "Wandering in Saxony and Silesia," by N. S. Dodge, in which a Halle Professor's opinion of Bismarck is quoted. As it will be new to many of our readers we quote in turn:—

"In spite of his brilliancy of talents," said a Halle Professor "to me the other day, 'no one has the remotest confidence in him.'"

"But he must have personal good qualities," I answered, "to make him such fast friends as he has."

"Every rogue of a statesman," he replied bitterly, "in all ages has always been devotedly loved by friends. Pitt was; Fox was; Wyndham was; Calhoun was; Clay and Webster and Andrew Jackson were. All these, though they yielded to Prince Bismarck in roguery as much as they do in ability, had each his blind and bigotted followers and friends. In my judgment it would be better for the interest of Germany, and fortunate for Bismarck himself, if his breaking constitution should remove him from political life for ever. It was said of Wyndham that he would be guilty of any vile action but a lie. I am sorry to say that the remark, without the saving clause, is true of Bismarck, and that everybody believes it."

In the current number of this magazine J. Gilliland Davis commences a series of papers entitled "Professor Josiah Hidebound and his Friends," in which we find many choice bits and clever hits. The character of these papers resembles that of the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," or more closely still, the style of Charles Dudley Warner's "Back Log Studies." The friends with whom the Professor discourses, are six in number; Miss Foomlesum, ex-head of the village academy; a young Banker, a round, jolly bachelor of thirty; a small girl called Betsey; Professor Theorem, a long gaunt man with three or four first class planets—full of wisdom in his face; Miss Lucy, Professor Hidebound's eldest daughter, sixteen years old, and "as pretty a girl as the town contains;" and, lastly, Dr. Dynamix, a judicial minded person, with a fine capacity for catching the sense of the meeting. The discussion turning on honesty, Miss Foomlesum delivers the following startling opinion:—

"What is the use of pretending to be honest, when you can't be if you wanted to ever so much? I used to get my girls into corners and make them lie; and all the time they knew that I knew that they were lying. I believe it is the great first paramount duty of every man and every woman to get on in the world. Those that don't get on will have to answer for 'wasting their talents. I don't believe the Lord likes these squeamish saints that are always falling in life because they are too proud to sb and cheat just as their neighbours do."

And in support of her theory, this energetic lady requests us to "look at Moses and Jacob and David—they were not above deceiving and cheating—and see how the Lord prospered them." A remarkable woman is this Miss Foomlesum. Professor Theorem starts a subscription for the victims of a strike and requests her to contribute. After satisfying herself that the names of subscribers will be published, she replies:

"Then put me down for five dollars. It is worth that as an advertisement of my name. What an admirable provision of Providence it is that one can by giving wisely, get value received for his free gifts. That is what I call having a double blessing in charity. I never see a notice that some person has given a large sum to a good cause, but withholds his name, without feeling that the particular giver is a bad kind of Christian. He cheats himself out of the reward paid by Providence for liberality, and cheats the Lord out of the example. If his neighbours only knew that it was he that gave some of them would be moved to give also."

But it would be unfair to give any more extracts from this excellent paper. Those who wish to know further respecting the Professor and his friends had better subscribe to the *Lakeside*. A better magazine money cannot buy. The articles all bear the trace of earnest thought and honest labour, and there is an entire absence of the padding that too often disfigures magazine literature. Besides the papers already mentioned there are in this number six short stories, two serials (one of these a translation of Julius Grosse's story "A Revolutionist") two very good poems, an account of the Battle of Franklin, and an elementary paper on Protection vs. Free Trade. The latter should be carefully read at the present political juncture in this country.

NEW BOOKS.

A new book from the pen of Mr. Wilkie Collins is always an event of importance to the chronicler of doings in the literary world. The last work by this well-known author is a novelette with the somewhat startling title "The Dead Alive." It is based on the facts of a trial, the author tells us, "which actually took place, early in the present century, in the United States. The published narrative of this strange case is entitled 'The Trial, Confessions, and Conviction of Jesse and Stephen Boorn, for the murder of Russell Colvin, and the Return of the Man supposed to have been Murdered.'" Mr. Collins adds, for the benefit of incredulous readers, that all the "improbable events" in the story are matters of fact, taken from the printed narrative. Anything which "looks like truth" is, in nine cases out of ten, the invention of the author. The plot of the story is briefly as follows: Philip Lefrank, barrister, of the Temple, London, having been order-

"The Dead Alive; a Story. By Wilkie Collins. Cloth 8vo. pp. 107. Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

ed by his medical man to take a rest from his professional labours, visits some relations who had settled in the United States. He finds the family to consist of old Mr. Meadowcroft, farmer; his two sons, Ambrose and Silas; an elderly and particularly disagreeable daughter; Naomi Colebrook, a charming "American cousin," in every way the reverse of Miss Meadowcroft; and one John Jago, over-looker and general superintendent, between whom and 'the boys' a very bitter feeling exists, which is shared by pretty Naomi, probably out of sympathy with Ambrose, to whom she is engaged. A few days after the visitor's arrival there is a scene, and John Jago disappears. The neighbours institute a search which results in the discovery in a neighbouring lime-kiln of some bones, said to be human, the remnant of John Jago's stick, his knife, and two buttons off his coat. Evidently John Jago has been murdered. Ambrose and Silas are arrested, and finally confess, Silas the first, and his brother later on after conviction and sentence. Throughout the period that elapsed between the arrest and the conviction Naomi bears up like a little heroine, and is so aided and cheered by the English visitor that on one occasion she is forced to express her obligation, as follows: "Oh, my! what a good fellow you are! When your time comes to be married, sir, I guess the woman won't repent saying 'Yes' to you!" This in reference to a former saying of hers: "When a man asks anything of a woman, the woman, I find, mostly repents it if she says 'Yes.'" Mr. Lefrank's time to be married duly arrives, and Naomi is the woman who says yes to him. John Jago has turned up unhurt and all is well again. Why he went away, and why he returned the reader will learn by consulting the book. The story is cleverly put together and told in vigorous style, the interest fully sustained throughout, and the recital is scattered with gems of quaintness and feminine prettiness.

THE ENGLAND OF TO-DAY.

On Friday last Mr. Edward Jenkins, the author of "Ginx's Baby" delivered to a Montreal audience his celebrated lecture on the England of To-day—a lecture, a Halifax paper says, full of such interesting and important facts, and delivered with such stirring eloquence, that the reporter forgot his notes, so absorbed was he in the lecturer's statements. Evidently the impression made by Mr. Jenkins in Halifax was much greater than that produced in Montreal, for during the course of the evening he was but feebly applauded and was even met by evident signs of disapproval. Not that his statements were in the main incorrect, but the way in which he made them was very far from pleasant. Speaking of the Church of England, which, he informed his hearers, was allied with the Licensed Victuallers, he was actually offensive. No was he less so, but in another way, in his allusions to the British House of Commons. Such allusions he premised with "in my time." We are aware that Mr. Jenkins endeavoured to obtain a seat for an English constituency, but we were under the impression that he had been defeated. Before commencing the lecture he stated that it was such as he had delivered it in the United States. It was remarked that the following passage, taken from a printed account of the lecture as delivered on the other side of the line, was omitted:

"The action of Parliament in passing a criminal law amendment act, which provided penalties for offences supposed to be peculiar to trades unions was another piece of class legislation. So also was the discouragement of the endeavours made since the passing of the Reform Act to get working class representatives into Parliament. From this and other causes has arisen the Republican movement. That movement is important, but not at present dangerous. It may become so at any critical juncture. In one or two towns the Republicans control the elections. There are about one hundred Republican clubs in the country."

The first half of the lecture was, it must be said, disappointing, but the peroration, in which he traced the progress of Reform in England, was a masterly effort and evoked a burst of well deserved applause. The lecture was delivered under the auspices of the University Literary Society.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"I'LL CROSS IT, THOUGH IT BLAST ME."

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS:

SIR,—To what "law of the Protestant succession" does your correspondent, Thomas D. King, allude, when he cites the marriage of James I. to Anne of Denmark, as a proof that the latter could not have been a Roman Catholic country when the play of "Hamlet" was written? By parity of reason, neither Spain nor France can have been Roman Catholic countries in the days of James, since that King negotiated a marriage between his son Charles and a Spanish Infanta, and actually concluded a marriage between the same Prince and the French Princess Henrietta Maria. Your correspondent mixes up things strangely.

Montreal.

Rochefort is writing an autobiographical novel in the *Rappel*.

George Sand is writing a new novelette in the *Temps, L'Orgue de Titan*.

Victor Hugo's new novel, "93," will be published in the columns of the *London Graphic*, beginning early in February. It is generally understood that Victor Hugo has written a great many novels, although few will be prepared to believe that he has written ninety-three.

François Hugo, the second and only surviving son of Victor Hugo, who lately died in Paris, was born October 22, 1823, at Paris, studied at the Charlemagne Lyceum, and won university honours. When his father was driven from France, in 1851, he and his brother Charles shared the great poet's exile, and during the succeeding seventeen years François never revisited his native land, although at liberty to do so. During this period he resided principally in Jersey and Germany, devoting his time to literary pursuits. He published in 1857 a history of the Island of Jersey, and a French translation of Shakespeare's sonnets, the first made in that language. In the interval from 1860 to 1864 he completed the arduous task of translating into French all Shakespeare's works, which he reclassified and annotated. In 1869 he aided in founding the *Rappel*, the ultra-Radical organ of M. Rochefort, and was in active sympathy with the Republican movement which at that time so much embarrassed Napoleon III.