

"The Vision of the Seasons, and Other Verses." By Dorothy W. Knight. Montreal: The William Drysdale Company, 1898.

We are indebted to R.S.K., who writes a preface to this booklet, for some interesting information about the author. Like Pope, Miss Knight, or Dorothy, as R.S.K. calls her, "lapsed in numbers," and published, before she entered on her teens. Two booklets of hers have been already printed, the first in 1892, when she was eleven years old, which was exhibited at the World's Fair and gained a diploma of Honorable Mention. She has never been sent to any school, and to this, according to R.S.K., is owing, probably, the quality of her first verses. We readily admit that "limitation of environment is, under some conditions, a positive advantage," but we do not admit that the superiority of Longfellow, Emerson and Holmes is due to their Unitarian style of education and their separation from "the influence of the common school." The common or public school is not intended to develop poets or train for "purely literary work," but it will not stifle poetic genius. Indeed, the genuine poet will give voice to the music within him, whatever his environment, as freely as the bird sings. But let us turn from the preface to the poems. There is in them no insipidness, no morbidness, so often characteristic of youthful writers. Their leading note is a buoyant cheerfulness, undisturbed by a line of sadness from beginning to end. They display close observation and a loving familiarity with nature, but little experience and less of that intensity of feeling which generally finds expression in poetry. Most of them are descriptive, as the titles indicate; but occasionally Miss Knight strikes a different chord. In the very pretty verses "I met you in a dream at night," and "A Mother's Song." In "Gathering Blackberries" she gives a little picture of herself when she was a couple of years younger than she is now.

"One of us there is a tall young girl, she has seen but sixteen years,
Gray are her eyes, and her hair is brown,
and health in her cheek appears."

Three of us gathering blackberries, and I was among the three,
I was the girl with the eyes of gray, and happy I was and free."

We have described rather than criticized this little book. Though not without many defects it evinces undoubted talent and gives promise of better things in the future, when the author's experience has been broadened, her judgment matured and her art improved. In the meantime we commend the "Vision of the Seasons" to the consideration of our readers.

Current Magazines

The Hesperian for the first quarter of this year opens with "A Christmas Medley," in which many obsolete and surviving Christmas customs are described. "On Antipathies," is the title of a clever essay containing much interesting matter. The literary criticisms as usual, are frank and pungent. Will Carleton's "alleged" poetry is severely handled; Richard Harding Davis is encouraged by the observation that he has added to the list of his worthless books by the publication of "The King's Jaccal," and the critic hopes that the household affairs of a lady recently married "will engross so much of her time as to leave none of it for the further perpetration of the kind of trash she has been inflicting on a gullible public during the past ten years under the thin veneer of reputed fiction." We may inform the editor that the name of the popular English novelist is Hall Caine, not "Cain," and that he is not "a minister." (Alexander N. De Menel, 7th and Pine streets, St. Louis, Mo., U.S.)

The January Scribner's has for frontispiece a portrait of Theodore Roosevelt, and opens with the first of a series of illustrated papers on "The Rough Riders," by their gallant colonel, which will be continued through six numbers. We may expect a surplus of articles on the late war in all the United States magazines during the present year, and any during the next decade. The letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, edited by Sidney Colvin, are commenced in this number, and will be continued through the year. They promise to be exceedingly interesting. George W. Cable contributes the first part of a three-part story entitled "The Entomologist," and Richard Harding Davis has a short story "On the Fever Ship," suggested, of course, by his recent experiences as a war correspondent. "The British Army Manoeuvres" and "With the Sirdar," will interest military readers and others.

The cry is still they come! Another new magazine, Messrs. Cassell & Co. claim, and we cannot dispute the justice of the claim they make, that with the production of the "New Penny Magazine," the first number of which appeared at the end of last October, they have touched the high-water mark in cheap, popular periodical literature, and they announce that they aim to make it not only the cheapest, but the best popular magazine of its class. It is published weekly; the first number contains an excellent account of the battle of Trafalgar, and the death of the "Hero of the Nile;" its second number opens with an interesting glimpse into the daily life of the Prince of Wales. If subsequent numbers maintain the same standard of excellence as those which have come to our notice already, Messrs. Cassell's new venture should achieve a well-merited success in a field where its competitors are many, and only the fittest are likely to survive the hard and close running.

The Studio for December devotes many pages to Harold Speed, one of the most successful of the younger English artists, and illustrations of his work. "Primitive Art from Benin," is the subject of an illustrated article by H. Ling Roth, and George Mouray contributes an appreciative notice of the late Fuis de Chavannes, the eminent French writer, of whom there is a portrait, specially drawn and cut upon wood for "The Studio." Studio Talk is full, as usual, of criticism, suggestion, foreign art gossip and interesting information.

With a view of affording Colonial artists an opportunity of introducing their work to the notice of the Mother Country, the Editor of "The Studio" is offering prizes for a competition open exclusively to artists and art students residing in the British Colonies and dependencies. Particulars of the conditions of the Competition will be found in this number of the magazine. (5 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, London, Eng.)

In McClure's for January, Simon Lake, inventor of the latest submarine boat, describes its construction, and how he makes long voyages in it at the bottom of the ocean, and while there steps out by an open door into the sea and examines a wreck or any object demanding his attention. Captain Mahan, Hamlin Garland, Rudyard Kipling and Stephen Crane are also contributors to this number. (S. S. McClure Co., New York.)

The Art Amateur has commenced its fortieth volume. Always rich, both in illustrations and reading matter, it easily maintains the high position it has won among art journals. The first number of the new volume has a fine color-plate entitled "Grandpa," by Charles E. Proctor. It represents an old man blowing smoke-rings to the wonderment of a golden-haired little girl. (J. W. Van Nostrand, 23 Union Square, New York.)

In Frank Leslie's Popular Magazine for January we are glad to notice the re-appearance in periodical literature of two such veterans as Bret Harte and Joaquin Miller, the former contributing "Jack Hamlin's Meditation," and the latter, "In a Klondike Cabin." (Frank Leslie Publishing Company, New York.)

The Canadian Almanac, 52nd year of publication, has been received from the publishers, Messrs. Copp Clark Company Toronto. It contains a wonderful fund of information for twenty-five cents.

The usually neat appearance of the Presbyterian Record has been greatly enhanced by the addition of a handsome cover in appropriate blue color. The Record should find an entrance into every Presbyterian home "from ocean to ocean." In this connection it will not be out of place to mention the Youth's Record, the initial number of which has just been published. We commend it heartily to our readers, and wish it a warm welcome from the young people of the church. The Rev. Mr. Scott is sure to make it minister to the highest good of the important constituency he aims to reach.

In rural districts many people use no more than 200 words; the ordinary man can do very well with a vocabulary of 500 words.

The Dominion Presbyterian,

freighted with varied and wholesome reading during the coming year, will make a seasonable present to send an absent member of the family, and it only costs ONE DOLLAR from now till 1st January, 1900.

George N. Morang

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