

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

OUTGROWTH.

ART so forlorn,  
Sad Brier, because the rose is dead?  
Be comforted!  
Knowest thou not some future morn  
Another flower shall crown instead  
Thy drooping head?

Canst thou believe  
That chance alone did so endow  
Thy random bough?  
Or shall the steadfast year deceive,  
And bud and blossom disavow  
And fail thee now?

Dost not divine  
Thou art the root of thy fair rose  
And her sweet shows?  
Her beauty is not hers, but thine;  
From thine own life the colour flows  
Wherewith she glows.

Take heart and hope!  
Her glory is the growth of thee.  
So shalt thou see  
All beauty that is in her scope,  
As long as thou thyself shalt be,  
Thou hast in fee.

—Kate Putnam Osgood, in *Harper's Bazar*.

AMERICAN SOCIAL AND LITERARY INDEPENDENCE.

I CONFESS that I am not in sympathy with some of the movements that accompany the manifestations of American social and literary independence. I do not like the assumption of titles of Lords and Knights by plain citizens of a country which prides itself on recognizing simple manhood and womanhood as sufficiently entitled to respect without these unnecessary additions. I do not like any better the familiar, and as it seems to me, rude way of speaking of our fellow-citizens who are entitled to the common courtesies of civilized society. I never thought it dignified or even proper for a President of the United States to call himself, or to be called by others, "Frank" Pierce. In the first place, I had to look in a biographical dictionary to find out whether his baptismal name was Franklin, or Francis, or simply Frank, for I think children are sometimes christened with this abbreviated name. But it is too much the style of Cowper's unpleasant acquaintance:—

The man who hails you Tom or Jack,  
And proves by thumping on your back  
How he esteems your merit.

I should not like to hear our past chief magistrate spoken of as Jack Adams or Jim Madison, and it would have been only as a political partisan that I should have recon- ciled myself to "Tom" Jefferson. So, in spite of "Ben" Jonson, "Tom" Moore, and "Jack" Sheppard, I prefer to speak of a fellow-citizen already venerable by his years, entitled to respect by useful services to his country, and recognized by many as the prophet of a new poetical dispensation, with the customary title of adults rather than by the free and easy school-boy abbreviation with which he introduced himself many years ago to the public. As for his rhapsodies, Number Seven, our "Cracked Tea- cup," says they sound to him like "fugues played upon a big organ which has been struck by lightning." So far as concerns literary independence, if we understand by that term the getting rid of our subjection to British criticism, such as it was in the days when the question was asked, "Who reads an American book?" we may consider it pretty well established. If it means dispensing with punctuation, coining words at will, self-revelation unre- strained by a sense of what is decorous, declamations in which everything is glorified without being idealized, "poetry" in which the reader must make the rhythms which the poet has not made for him, then I think we had better continue literary colonists. I shrink from a lawless independence to which all the virile energy and trampling audacity of Mr. Whitman fails to reconcile me. But there is room for everybody and everything in our huge hemis- phere. Young America is like a three-year-old colt with his saddle and bridle just taken off. The first thing he wants to do is to roll. He is a droll object, sprawling in the grass with his four hoofs in the air; but he likes it, and it won't harm us. So let him roll—let him roll!—  
*Oliver Wendell Holmes, in September Atlantic.*

THE PRIVATE INCOMES OF GERMAN AND ENGLISH OFFICERS.

A TRANSLATION of the German Emperor's Rescript, modi- fying the conditions which have hitherto regulated the admission of officers to the army, appeared in a late *Arrow*. The sums laid down in the Order are presumably the result of investigation and enquiry by the august Com- mander from whom they emanate. His marked capacity for business, and his earnest desire to enhance the effi- ciency of his army, alike render it improbable that any excessive frugality has dictated the determination of the amounts, but it must be admitted that the totals are such as would gladden the heart of any British "governor" or guardian, if applicable to sons or wards holding commis- sions under the Empress of India. Custom has to a con- siderable extent established a scale of some sort in the

English army, governing the possibilities of serving in various corps, as influenced by the private means of the officer. It may be roughly estimated that £100 per annum would be the minimum allowance rendering a careful, and albeit rather frugal, existence possible for candi- dates for service in the artillery, engineers and infantry. Twice that sum would possibly enable an officer in the horse artillery to "keep his head above water," his recre- ation and sport being kept within decidedly cramped bounds. Three hundred per annum would enable a subaltern in all cavalry regiments, except a privileged few, to perform that mystic and sometimes superhuman feat known as "making both ends meet." The position of the guards and house- hold cavalry is such that expenses which may be termed "regimental," i. e., entertaining as a regiment, are con- siderably less than might be expected from the prestige of the corps, whereas the prolonged leave attainable, and other special considerations, place possibilities of economy or excess very largely in the hands of individual officers. From the above it appears that our very lowest estimate—and we believe it to be fair and temperate—is slightly in excess of the highest allotment of private means in the table drawn up by the German Emperor. In other words, it is more expensive to live frugally in the British infan- try of the line than in the Prussian cavalry. The Emperor has permitted an exception to his maximum rate "for cer- tain garrisons," which would seem to justify the conclu- sion that all attendant circumstances were well weighed. Happily in our regular army no difficulty exists as to the supply of officers. An occasional reminder is now and again fulminated with a view to checking extravagance, and the expense of life in the cavalry has at times deterred candidates from entering that branch. Nobility of birth has not, perhaps, been so common amongst our com- missioned ranks of late, but seeing that no condition of any sort whatever is imposed in this direction, the social status of our officers leaves little, if anything, to be desired. The zeal and earnestness of the German officers will no doubt lead them to accept loyally the changes initiated by their Emperor and colleague.—*Broad Arrow.*

AN EXCITING EXPERIENCE.

FOR myself, I was "chopped down" once, and once only. It happened in this way: In the midwinter of 1879, I had occasion to visit the chief camp of the Little Madawaska. Coming from the city, and to a camp where I was a stranger to all the men, I was not unnaturally regarded as a pronounced specimen of the greenhorn. I took no pains to tell any one what the boss already well knew, that is, that I had been a frequenter of the camps from my boyhood. Many and many a neat trap was laid for my apparently "tender" feet, but I avoided them all as if by accident. As for climbing a tree, I always laughed at the idea when it was proposed to me. I always suggested that it might spoil my clothes. Before long the men, by putting little things together, came to the con- clusion that I was an old stager; and, rather sheepishly, they gave over their attempts to entrap me. Then I graciously waved my hand, as it were, and was frankly received as a veteran, cleared from every suspicion of being green. At last the day came when I *did* wish to climb a tree. The camp was on a high plateau, and not far off towered a magnificent pine tree, growing out of the summit of a knoll in such a way as to command all the surrounding country. Its branches were phenomenally thick; its girth of trunk was magnificent. And this tree I resolved one day to climb, in order to get a clear idea of the lay of the land. Of course I strolled off surreptitiously, and, as I thought, unwatched. But there I was much mistaken. No sooner was I two thirds of the way up the tree than, with shouts of laughter, the lumbermen rushed out of the surrounding cover and proceeded to chop me down. The chance was too good for them to lose. I con- cealed my annoyance, and made no attempt to descend. On the contrary I thanked them for the little attention, and climbed a few feet further up, to secure a position which I saw would be a safe one for me when the tree should fall. As I did so, I perceived, with a gasp and a tremor, that I was not alone in the tree. There, not ten feet above me, stretched at full length along a large branch, was a huge panther, glaring with rage and terror. From the men below his form was quite concealed. Glancing restlessly from me to my pursuers, the brute seemed uncertain just what to do. As I carefully refrained from climbing any further up, and tried to assume an air of not having observed him, he apparently concluded that I was not his worst enemy. In fact, I dare say he understood what was going on and realized that he and I were fellow- sufferers. I laughed softly to myself as I thought how my tormentors would be taken aback when that panther should come down among them. I decided that, considering their numbers, there would be at least no more danger for them than that to which they were exposing me in their reckless fooling. And, already influenced by that touch of nature which makes us so wondrous kind, I began to hope that the panther would succeed in making his escape. The trunk of the pine was so thick that I might almost have reached the ground before the choppers could cut it through. At last it gave a mighty shudder and sagged to one side. I balanced myself nimbly on the upper side, steadying my- self by a convenient branch. The great mass of foliage, presenting a wide surface to the air, made the fall a com- paratively slow one; but the tremendous sweep of the draught upward, as the tree-top described its gigantic arc, gave me a sickening sensation. Then came the final dull

and thunderous crash, and, in an instant, I found myself standing in my place, jarred but unhurt, with the snow threshed up all about me. The next instant there was another roar, or rather a sort of screaming yell, overwhelming the riotous laughter of the woodsmen; and out of the confusion of pine-boughs shot the tawny form of the panther in a whirlwind of fury. One of the choppers was in his path, and was bowled over like a clumsy nine-pin. The next bound brought the beast on the backs of a yoke of oxen, and his cruel claws severely scratched the oxen's necks. As the poor animals bellowed and fell on their knees, the panther paused, with some idea, apparently, of fighting the whole assembled party. But as the men, recovered from their first amazement, rushed with their axes to the rescue of the oxen, the panther saw that the odds were all against him. He turned half around and greeted his enemies with one terrific and strident snarl, then bounded off into the forest at a pace which made it idle to pursue him. The owner of the oxen hurled an axe after him, but the missile flew wide of its mark.—*From "Chopping Him Down," by Charles G. D. Roberts, in September St. Nicholas.*

PUNISHMENTS IN THE FRENCH ARMY.

THE punishments in vogue in the French army are of a very severe nature, more especially when it is considered that the men thus punished are not by any means crimi- nals, but only soldiers who have not behaved so well as they might. These are deported to Algiers under the name of "Camisards," where they are enrolled in the *compagnies de discipline*. Before embarking the man has his boots taken from him, which are replaced by sabots, and on arriving at his destination he receives a uniform of grey wool and a cap with a large brim. The men are farmed out to do work, and are all the time under the supervision of non-commissioned officers, who treat their inferiors with the greatest brutality. It is, however, the punishments to which the men are subjected for the most trifling offences which must excite indignation. A com- mon punishment is to keep them night and day in a hole in the ground with perpendicular walls, so that escape is impossible. Scorching heat by day and cold by night, with rations, reduced to one quarter of their proper quan- tity, make the very common punishment of the *gargouille* extremely trying. The imprisoning of men in the *tombes*, or regulation tents, which are only fifty centimetres broad, and sixty high, is no rarity; and during their incar- ceration the prisoners receive no water, nor wine nor coffee. A little meat and some *bouillon* is their whole nourishment during the day. But those who are punished with cells are incomparably worse off. They are never allowed, under any circumstances, to leave the hole they are kept in either by day or by night. They have no duties or work to pass the time, and only get some warm soup every second day, with a very limited quantity of water daily. This punishment is made still more severe by putting the man into irons on certain occasions. The delinquent has two iron rings round his ankles, which are connected by an iron bar rather more than a foot in length, so that his legs form an isosceles triangle with it. He is forced to lie down on his face, and then his arms are chained on his back, whereupon he is put into his *tombes*. He can only eat his soup like a dog, and if he wants to drink he must seize his bottle with his teeth, and should he let the bottle fall his ration of water is lost for that day. Any complaints are at once stopped by a gag. Only quite recently a punishment was in use called the *crapaudine*. In this posture he was strung up onto an iron bar. The *camisard* is also in use. The soldier is first put into a strait-jacket, his hands are tied on his back, and round his neck an iron collar is fastened, which is attached to an iron bar in the wall. The man has to stand in this position as long as eight days, unable to lie down or to do any thing for himself.—*Vanity Fair.*

A CRITICAL GENIUS.

AMONG Rice's old acquaintances was a leader of the orchestra, one John C—. Quite a musical genius was C—, and a great character. He was a perfect know- all; no subject, either artistic, musical, or scientific, could be broached in his presence on which he did not at once present himself as an authority. If a fast horse was men- tioned C— had a father or an uncle who owned one that could distance the animal in question with ease. Should any one venture to give an account of a remarkable storm, where the hailstones were as large as hens' eggs, the old leader was down on him with goose eggs at once. On a certain Sunday afternoon John Rice and a party of his friends were sitting on the back porch of his house, listen- ing to some of the marvellous experiences of C—, when the host, getting a little tired of these wonders, exclaimed: "C—, you seem to be an authority on most matters; now I want your solution of a curious fact that is staring us in the face. Look at that apple tree over the fence"— pointing to one in the orchard at the back of the house. "You see it has no apples on it and all the rest of the trees are full of fruit; now how do you account for that?" C— ran his eye over the orchard with a profound look, and rising slowly from his seat mounted the fence, let him- self down upon the other side with as scientific an air as the performance would admit of, and going down upon his knees began to examine the roots of the barren tree. The company during all this time were watching the proceed- ing with becoming gravity. C—, having cut off a piece