

jumped up and hastened to his boat and loosened the moorings, then he rowed across the lake to the spot where he knew the call had been given.

There he found a troll whose height equalled that of any fir tree, and who asked to be helped on his way home to his wife. Dyré consented to row him home if he would make himself small enough to get into the boat. This he did, and, although as he sat in the boat he was equal in size to any three men, Dyré was not a bit frightened.

By degrees Dyré began to tire of silence, and finally he even dared to make fun of the passenger on account of his size. This the troll did not seem to take kindly to at first, but finding that Dyré was a pretty good sort of a fellow, and did not really mean to be uncivil, or, very likely, having in mind the assistance Dyré was rendering him, and overlooking his words in consequence, he cut off the finger of his glove, and filling it with wool (which is valued very highly among the Norwegian peasants) left it in the bottom of the boat to pay for his passage. The finger was so large that it held three great basketsful, and was likely to be of use on the farm when it was emptied.

Dyré was thus very well repaid for his promptness and daring, for, beside the substantial reward he received from the generous troll, his reputation was so well established that he has been by some compared even to the god Odin for courage and strength, and is held up as an example for Norwegian boys and young men to follow.

Another notable case is that of a man named Knud Sivard, who became an object of great interest on account of his association with the trolls—little fellows in this case—but his experience was very different from that of Dyré Vo. People came from far and near to hear his story. It was somewhat in effect that one Yule evening, about bedtime, Knud heard a faint knock on his door, and, thinking the wind was blowing the twigs against the house, he paid no attention to it; but when the wind had subsided he heard the same tap, tap, tap again, and called out:

"Who's there?"

"Neighbours we be," answered three queer little voices.

On opening the door Knud was surprised to see three little fellows walk in, who looked almost droll enough to make him laugh had he not been a trifle too much frightened.

They were unmistakably trolls, and wore dark, round about coats and knee-breeches and pointed white caps.

The spokesman of the party was as black as a chimney sweep, and had an ugly, long tooth projecting from the front part of his upper jaw. He said, "I'm Torn Hongesind, I am."

"And my name's Harald Blaasind, said another; while the third, stepping forward, and with a wave of his hand, like a military salute, squeaked out:

"And my name's Hundoen Leervig."

Knud Sivard did not quite know what to say, he was non-plussed, and the more so as he had been drinking freely of home-brewed ale all the evening, and was somewhat remiss in his hospitality, quite forgetting to ask them to remove their caps and sit down.

He had not quite recovered from his little scare, and finally managed to gasp:

"Remarkable—I never saw you before. Do you live in this section?"

"Not a great distance away," said Torn Hongesind, "and we're come to enquire how it goes with you this Yule-tide."

The mention of Yule-tide acted like a charm, and brought Knud back to his senses; for not to be hospitable at Yule-tide in Scandinavian countries is the mark of a most despicable miser. Then, too, the little fellows seemed so friendly.

Knud was puzzled not a little; he did not know what to make of it all. However, he brought forward a huge birch-bowl and filled it with ale, and, small though the trolls were, they drank bowl after bowl, so that Knud's heart was touched, and he thought they must have been nearly choked.

The little fellows showed no disposition to stop drinking, and Hongesind, growing merry, jumped on a chair and bit the table with all his might declaring, with a yell of delight, that Sivard would find a mark at all times to remind him of his visit.

Knud's son, who was, after the custom of the country, called Knud Sivardson, lay all this while in his bed in the corner of the room, apparently asleep. He, unlike his father, was a very mean fellow, and feared the trolls would drink up all the ale; so he took down his gun from the wall over the head of his bed, and rising quietly and softly, and taking aim at Hongesind, fired. The ball did not seem to have any effect. Perhaps it did hit. The troll showed no sign of being wounded at any rate, but they were all terribly frightened and disappeared mysteriously in a second; and ever since Sivard's family show the mark of the tooth in the table, and it looks very much like the imprint of a horse's tooth that had been driven in with a hammer, but no one doubts that Sivard's story is absolutely true.—*Christian-at-Work.*

Mr. WEMYSS REID's new weekly is now fairly under way. The *New York Nation*, it is said, will be the model rather than the *Spectator*. The *Nation* is a small quarto, very able, not religious (if anything agnostic), intensely Parnellite, and revoltingly dry. It gives a good deal of space to literary notes. The sale is about 8,000 a week. It has the advantage of a connection with the *New York Evening Post*, of which it is the weekly edition, thus saving a great deal in the literary expenses.

SUMMER NIGHT—A SONNET.

On all the outer world, a holy hush,
A soul-entrancing stillness, steeped in light
Of summer moon-rise, clear and purely bright;
After a day of toil and ceaseless rush,
From pallid morn to evening's fevered flush,
Softly descends the cooling breath of night,
In soothing cadence heard, though hid from sight,
The shallow river runs with rippling gush.

In outline clear against the star-lit sky
The high-roofed barn stands dark—the silent trees
Lifting their leafy, shadowy arms on high
Quiver—as dreaming of a swaying breeze;
Cool, dewy fragrance lingers faintly nigh,
A world at peace the lonely gazel sees.

Helen Fairbairn, in The Week.

ITALIAN PROGRESS.

Italy, after centuries of abasement under the dominion of the Papacy, is emerging into somewhat of the relative importance she formerly had among continental kingdoms. This is the result of the unification of the Italian people under the King of Italy with the capital in Rome. Against this the Papacy contended with all its characteristic energy and intrigue. For the restoration of the temporal power it employs the same influences. Notwithstanding this, the kingdom of Italy is steadily advancing in nearly all respects. Her progress since Victor Emanuel was crowned King of united Italy has been remarkable and in strong contrast with the other countries that have remained subject to the Papacy. She has arisen from the depths of priestly absolutism, of social corruption, of ignorance and superstition, of material weakness, into the ranks of the leading powers of Europe. When Napoleon conquered Italy he said that at the close of his campaign he found but two men in the peninsula, the rest were women. The manhood of the people was pressed out of them by the heavy hand of the triple crowned monarch that claimed power over their souls as well as over their bodies. As soon as that hand was removed their manhood began to revive, and though they had been impoverished to support the magnificence of the church and its multitudes of lazy or licentious orders, they have carried on the work of re-construction to a degree and in a manner to astonish the world. The Roman Catholic pulpit and press predicted that the secularization of the government would result in ruin, that its commerce would be destroyed, that its ships would rot on its shores and "grass grow in the streets" of its cities. What is the result? Rome has nearly doubled its population in ten years, and miles of splendid modern buildings have replaced the ruins of centuries. Milan has been imbued with the spirit of enterprise. Naples is fast rising into the importance of a metropolis, Venice, Florence, Genoa and other cities, touched by the hand of the nineteenth century, are awakening from the stupor of ecclesiastical thralldom. United Italy, free and united, has produced a race of men who are resuscitating the spirit of Romans and striving to displace the disgrace of the past with achievements of intelligence and industry. —*New York Observer.*

THE ABUSE OF FICTION.

Although the legitimate end and aim of the novel is not to play upon our emotions by terrifying us or making us weep or laugh, there is surely no reason why, incidentally, it should not do so. Certainly if the novelist is to be of any use at all he must entertain while he informs. He could hardly hope to reveal life if he did not act on the emotions. This is good as a means, but it is unfortunately true that most works of fiction make this the aim and end. The misuse of literature has given being to two abnormal mental types, namely, the literary prig and the literary dram-drinker. With the literary prig we have, on the present occasion, little to do. One of his peculiarities is that he eschews all works of fiction excepting George Eliot's novels. The literary dram-drinker, on the contrary, draws his mental sustenance from fiction alone. For him the majority of novels are written. There are writers of high talent among those who cater to his needs—Miss Braddon, Mrs. Henry Wood, and the Trollopes, for example. He is not averse even to a higher order of fiction, provided it is not too substantial; he can manage William Black and Thomas Hardy, but hardly the three Georges of English fiction—Macdonald, Eliot, and Meredith. Nearly one-fifth of the total literary output of Great Britain consists of works of fiction. Of the 929 such works published last year, it is within the mark to assume that all excepting the odd 29—perhaps all excepting the odd 9—were expressly designed to suit the palate of the habitual novel-reader. They are works that feed the appetite without satisfying it. A confirmed literary dram-drinker can, I believe, commence and finish a full-novel in one day, and he needs little or no rest before proceeding to another. This would be appalling did we not remember how small a portion of what he imbibes is vital and remains. But the truth is that most novels are read only to be forgotten. If the habitual novel-reader did not forget, his mind would soon become dangerously, if not fatally congested. It is customary to blame writers of novels for the frivolous character of their work; but, considering the readers they serve, they do well, for the same reason that to administer diluted rum to a confirmed drunkard is more kind than to offer him pure spirit.—*Walter Lewin, in The Forum.*

British and Foreign.

THE Maharajah of Baroda and his entire court are earnest and total abstainers.

THE new professor of Greek at Glasgow, Mr. Gilbert Murray, is a non-smoker and a total abstainer.

THE Rev. Charles Momet, M.A., Kensington, officiated in the United Presbyterian Church at Oban.

MR. JACK, assistant, St. Matthew's, Glasgow, has been unanimously elected the first minister of Darvel.

ATARU is a little island in the South Seas; its Church includes in its membership the entire adult population.

UPWARDS of \$4,000 has been privately subscribed to procure a manse for Mr. Macdonald, second minister of Cupar.

THE Rev. Alex. Macpherson of Singapore, preached on Sunday week at Fort William, of which place he is a native.

THE Scots Church in Melbourne is about to erect a new mission hall and Mr. Marshall appeals for fifty lady workers.

PROF. CHRISTLIEB of Bonn, died suddenly on 15th ult. through the bursting of a blood-vessel in the brain.

A MOVEMENT is on foot in Dunedin for the institution of a students' home in connection with the Presbyterian college.

THE Rev. Mr. Patrick, of Kirkintilloch, is spoken of as a possible successor to Dr. Marcus Dods in the pulpit of Benfield Church.

AN anonymous donor offers \$50,000 towards the new bishopric in South Wales, conditional on its headquarters being fixed at Swansea.

SIR GEORGE DOUGLAS laid the memorial stone of the parish church at Ancrum, which is to cost \$8,450. The Earl of Minto was present.

THE call from Kilmoy, Arran, to Mr. M'Millan, of Iona, having now been signed by eighty-seven communicants, has been sustained by Kintyre Presbytery.

MR. SHAW, of Mull, died suddenly of heart disease on a recent Friday at Lybster, whither he had gone on a preaching mission to the fishermen.

GEORGE ELIOT's grave in Highgate Cemetery is unattended and thickly overgrown with grass. It is marked alone by a simple headstone.

IN the Punjab within the last six years the consumption of ardent spirits has doubled itself. The people of Lahore are demanding local option.

THE Rev. David Lillie, assistant in Bowen parish, Cathness, son of the late Dr. Lillie, parish minister of Wick, has been elected to the parish of Eday.

MR. DAVID DRIMMIE, J.P., of Dublin, an office-bearer in Rutland Square Church, who died recently in New York, was interred at Dublin. He was a native of Scotland.

MRS. M'WHINNEY, widow of Rev. James M'Whinney, for many years pastor at Athlone, has presented the congregation there with a dwelling house and garden as a manse.

DR. STUBBS has not allowed his elevation to the episcopate to put a total stop to his work as a historian. He has just finished the second volume of "William of Malmesbury."

ONE of Archdeacon Farrar's daughters, the wife of the headmaster of a public school, has been preaching to large audiences in a barn in a rural neighbourhood in the south of England.

THE Rev. Sydney J. Long reports that there are signs of a great awakening in Coimbatore, South India. He has had more inquiries in two or three months than in the previous four and a half years.

THE Rev. Neil Taylor, of Dornoch, who was seized with illness during the Assembly, and had to be removed first to Glasgow and afterwards home to Dornoch, died in his manse recently, in his fifty-ninth year.

THE Rev. R. Fisher, of St. Boswell's, in the absence of Dr. Macleod, officiated at the marriage recently in St. Columba Church, Chelsea, of Mr. Anstruther, M.P., to the eldest daughter of Lord Sudeley.

THE vicar of West Haddon, Northamptonshire, has ordered that in future the bell is not to toll at the funeral of dissenters, or for any funeral that is not conducted with the church service.

FANNY CROSBY, authoress of the hymns "Rescue the Perishing" and "All the way my Saviour leads Me," has been totally blind from her birth. In spite of this she is said to be one of the most joyous of Christians.

THE total raised by the Scottish Episcopal Church this year is \$96,495, an increase of \$8,360 on the previous year, and a very much larger sum than has been raised since the inception of the representative church council.

M. JARRY, a young Frenchman in his 23rd year, has just published a massive volume, which is declared by competent judges to be the soundest piece of history yet written on the political life of Louis of Orleans.

MR. A. F. MORDAUNT SMITH, London, has been appointed travelling secretary for England for the Sterling Tract Enterprise. He is favourably known as a hearty worker in many mission and philanthropic circles in the metropolis.

THE Rev. A. M. Thomson, licensed in May of last year and assistant in the Steeple Church, Dundee, has been elected by a large majority to St. John's Parish, Hawick, in succession to the late Rev. John Thomson, its first minister.

AT the meeting of Dunoon Free Church Presbytery a letter was read from Mr. Salmond, of Rothesay, asking that the call from South Morningside should not be further prosecuted, and the Edinburgh commission intimated their compliance with this request.

THE Rev. Anthony Yeoman, for many years a missionary in the Falkland Islands, went out at Langholm for a walk lately and not returning an alarm was raised and searchers sent out who found him lying dead in Old Whithiels Wood, about a mile from the town. He had apparently fallen down ill and been suffocated. He was about seventy years of age.

AT the anniversary services of Stonehaven Church, conducted by Mr. Robertson, both sermons of the departing pastor were listened to by overflowing congregations. Mr. Robertson preached twice lately at the anniversary services in Trinity Church, Glasgow, where he was formerly one of Mr. Mackay's assistants; and on Tuesday evening he spoke at the soiree.