

# The Rockwood Review.

## LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE AMONG REFORMERS.

[From CENTURY MAGAZINE for  
June].

One of Miss Mary E. Wilkins' delightful heroines remarks, in speaking of certain would-be leaders of social reform in her village: "I don't know that I think they are so much above us, as too far to one side. Sometimes it is longitude, and sometimes it is latitude that separates people. This is true, and it applies quite as much to those who would reform the politics of a large city, or, for that matter, of the whole country, as to those who would reform the society of a hamlet.

There are men who are slightly disordered mentally, or who are cursed with a moral twist which makes them champion reforms less from a desire to do good to others than as a kind of tribute to their own righteousness, for the sake of emphasizing their own superiority.

We must not be misled at any time by the cheap assertion that people get only what they want; that the editor of a degraded news paper is to be excused because the people want the degradation.

No man is justified in doing evil on the ground of expediency. He is bound to do all the good possible. As soon as a politician gets to the point of thinking that in order to be "practical" he has got to be base, he has become a noxious member of the body politic. That species of practicality eats into the moral sense of the people like a cancer, and he who practices it can no more be excused than the editor who debauches public decency in order to sell his paper. We need clean, healthy newspapers, with clean, healthy criticism which shall be fearless and truthful.

There can be no meddling with the laws of righteousness, of decency, of morality. We are in honor bound to put into practice what we preach: to remember that

we are not to be excused if we do not; and that in the last resort no material prosperity, no business acumen, no intellectual development of any kind can atone in the life of a nation for the lack of fundamental qualities of courage, honesty, and common sense."

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## Robert S. Knight.

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Robert Skakel Knight, who was a frequent contributor to the columns of the Rockwood REVIEW died at Lancaster, Ontario, on May 16th, 1900. Mr. Knight was a man of distinguished ability and advanced ideas, but of such retiring disposition that he shrank from the publicity which most men of similar genius would have courted. His style was trenchant and refined and he was a deep and thorough investigator when interested in any particular subject. For years he worked out the theory governing the scientific construction of stringed musical instruments and arrived at some interesting conclusions which he endeavored to give practical expression to. A unique viol of his construction is in the possession of Dr. Clarke, Kingston. Those who knew Mr. Knight intimately had a warm affection for him and his loss is deplored by those who knew him best. His genius has been transmitted to his daughter, Miss Dorothy W. Knight, whose poems have frequently graced the columns of the REVIEW, and to whom no common tribute of praise has been given by many Canadian critics. Robert Skakel Knight, the only child of the Reverend Robert Knight and his wife, Sarah Phillips, was born at Frampton, Dorchester County, Quebec Province, Canada, May 27th, 1841. In 1847, his parents removed with him to England and settled at Atherstone, Warwickshire, where he was sent to an old grammar school. When about twenty years old he passed the University of London Matric-