

MODERN PHILOSOPHY VER-SIFIED.

The following clever lines are interesting and amusing as giving a clear and almost literal insight into the theories of Comte, Hegel, Spencer, Darwin, Carlyle, Tyndall, Huxley, Stanley Jevons and George Henry Lewes.

"Ours is a wise and earnest age, an age of thought and science, sir;
To error, ignorance, and bliss we fairly bid defiance, sir.
'Professors' everywhere abound, both in and out of colleges,
And all agog to cram our nobs with 'isms' and with 'ologies.'
Philosophy, as you're aware, material and mental, sir,
At one extreme is 'positive,' at t'other 'transcendental,' sir.
And each of us who in these days would speculate 'en règle,'
If he can't run the rig with Comte, must take the tip from Hegel.
The fundamental problem which, debated now for ages, sir,
Is still attacked and still unsolved by all our modern sages, sir,
Is, if an effort I may make a simple form to throw it in,
Just what we know, and why we know, and what's the way we know it in.
We can't assume, (so Comte affirms), a first or final cause, sir,
Phenomena are all we know, their order and their laws, sir;
While Hegel's modest formula a single line to sum in, is
'nothing is and nothing's not, but everything's becomin'.
'Development' is all the go, of course, with Herbert Spencer,
Who cares a little more than Comte about the 'why,' and 'whence,' sir.
Appearances, he seems to think, do not exhaust totality,
But indicate that underneath there's some 'Unknown Reality.'
And Darwin, too, who leads the throng 'in vulgum voces spargere,'
Maintains Humanity is nought except a big menagerie.
The progeny of tailless apes, sharp-eared but puggy-nosed, sir,
Who nightly climbed their 'family trees,' and on the top reposed, sir.
There's Carlyle, on the other hand, whose first and last concern it is
To preach up the 'immensities' and muse on the 'eternities';
But if one credits what one hears, the gist of all his brag is, sir,
That 'Erbwurst,' rightly understood, is transcendental 'Haggis,' sir.
Imaginative sparks, you know, electric currents kindle, sir,
On Alpine heights or at Belfast, within the brain of Tyndall, sir;
His late address, some people hold, is flowery, vague, and vapoury.
And represents the 'classic nude' when stripped of all its 'Draper'-y.
Professor Huxley has essayed to bridge across the chasm, sir,
Twixt matter dead and matter quick by means of 'protoplasm,' sir,
And to his doctrine now subjoins the further 'grand attraction'
That 'consciousness' in man and brute is simply 'reflex action.'
Then Stanley Jevons will contend in words stout and emphatical
The proper mode to treat all things is purely mathematical;
Since we as individual men, communities, and nations, sir,
Are clearly angles, lines, and squares, cubes, circles, and equations, sir.
George Henry Lewes, I'm informed, had 'gone off quite hysterical'
About that feeble, foolish thing, the theory Metempsychical;
And only found relief, 'tis said, from nervous throes and spasms, sir,
By banging straight at Huxley's head a brace of brand-new 'plasma,' sir.
Such are the philosophic views I've ventured now to versify,
And, if I may invent the term, in some degree to 'tersify.'
Among them all, I'm bold to say, fair room for choice you'll find, sir,
And if you don't, why then you won't, and I for one shan't mind, sir."

THE HISTORY OF THE WEEK.

The judgment of Chief Justice RICHARDS delivered on the legal points raised in the Kingston election case is pronounced the most elaborate and important judgment ever yet delivered. It was anxiously looked for as a decisive and clear exposition of the law as regards a candidate's liabilities for the acts of his agents. In consequence Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD's seat is voided, but the charge of personal bribery was dismissed. The friends of the right honourable gentleman speak of raising a testimonial to him. News has been received from the English solicitors employed for the appellants in the GURBORD case before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The judgment was pronounced on the 20th, and the decision, which appears to have been unanimous, though that is not expressly stated, is in favour of the appeal, reversing the judgment of the Court of Review. The full text of the judgment has not yet reached Montreal, but it appears that their lordships have decided that the deceased could not be held to be a public sinner nor to have been excommunicated personally, in such a manner as to give rise to a loss of his status as a member of the Church and of his rights pertaining to that status. The judgment directs the respondents to permit of his being buried in the principal part of the cemetery, and decides that he has not lost his right to the ordinary ecclesiastical ceremonies; but their lordships do not, by their judgment, condemn the curé to perform them.

The gunboat "Parana," of the Argentine revolutionists, has been voluntarily surrendered

to the Government fleet. Her crew landed at Montevideo. The Government of the Argentine Republic has stopped the mails from Buenos Ayres for Europe.

The editors of *La Presa*, *La Bandera*, and *El Espanol*, newspapers published in Madrid, have been arrested and sent to prison for violating the press laws, established under the state of siege. Large reinforcements are going forward to Miranda, where the Spanish Republican army is massing for active operations in Navarre, and for the relief of Pampeluna. The Carlists are concentrating around Estella under the command of General MORIONES. The Basque battalions, with DON CARLOS and General ELIO, are on the point of leaving Vera for Puenta La Reyna.

No perceptible change in the 'Longshoremen's strike in New York is visible. All outward steamers were ready for sailing at the appointed time, and none of the companies have succumbed to the strike. Gatherings of strikers, who were around the docks in the early part of the week, have now disappeared, and no further trouble is apprehended. Stevedores state they will employ no strikers on any terms, but will transact their work henceforward with new hands.

The Republican candidates were generally successful in the municipal elections held at Lille, Nancy, Grenoble, Havre, Cambrai, Perigueux, Angers, and Limoges. The Minister of Public Instruction will probably be obliged to resign because he conferred the decoration of the Legion of Honour on CHAUFFARD, son of the unpopular professor of that name.

It is rumoured that a treaty will shortly be concluded between the Governments of Germany and Morocco, by which a part of Morocco will be ceded to Germany.

The Pope has written to Cardinal CULLEN thanking him and the Irish bishops for their condemnation of the address delivered by Professor TYNDALL at Belfast, and declaring nothing is to be so dreaded.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

MOTHER GOOSE'S MELODIES. * We have received from the enterprising firm of Hill's, a charming holiday book under the above title. It is essentially a work for the young, and as we take the greatest interest in the cultivation of juvenile taste, we cordially recommend it to our boy and girl readers. The title itself is suggestive of pleasant reminiscences. The book contains all the old familiar nursery rhymes, and professes to be the only correct edition of the same. These rhymes are constantly quoted in current literature and hence a complete edition of them is useful for reference even to the literary man. The volume is profusely illustrated, and in and appendix, there are several pages of music set to the most popular of the stories. Of late years, juvenile literature has taken a decided upward movement in England and the United States, and the Boston firm of Tilton's has made it quite a specialty. Where these books are so put forth as to come within the means of the middle classes, they are a decided advantage, and deserve all the encouragement which they receive.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE. † The Dominion Evangelical Alliance which met in Montreal, on the 1st October of this year, and continued its sittings for about a week, has been justly regarded as one of the most notable ecclesiastical events of the past twelve months. It was attended by some of the leading men of the day, such as Drs. McCosh and Hall, of Princeton and New York; Dr. Donald Fraser, of London; Dr. Schaff of Constantinople; Lord Cavan; Henry Varley, the butcher evangelist; Mr. Thane Miller, of Cincinnati; as well as such Canadians as Dr. Dawson of Montreal; Dr. Wilson, of Toronto; Mr. Grant, of Halifax; Mr. Gibson, of Chicago, and others. Many of the papers read were of unusual interest, and altogether, the proceedings may be deemed fruitful in the best results. The Messrs. Dougall, of this city, have collected all the minutes and documents in a handsome quarto volume, printed on tinted paper, and decorated with the portraits of the principal members. These gentlemen have thus creditably done for our Dominion Alliance what the Harpers did for the Evangelical Alliance held in New York last year. And the credit of their work is enhanced by the fact that they sell the book at the nominal price of twenty-five cents.

SCRIBNER'S. This splendid magazine closes the year with a full and useful number. The remarkable papers on the Great South are brought to a conclusion, and we learn with pleasure, that they are to be issued in book form. Among other important papers in the present issue, we may point to the review of Browning's position among Victorian poets, from the appreciative pen of Stedman, and to a popular scientific explanation of the Transit of Venus, quite appropriate in this month, when this astronomical phenomenon will be observed. The poetry of the number is excellent, as are also the short stories. Saxe Holm's "My Tourmaline" is up to the best standard of that able analyst.

THE ATLANTIC. While it is needless to say that the new proprietors of this old favourite have not only maintained, but considerably enhanced its reputation, and that the number for this month is quite equal to any of its predecessors, we may be permitted to announce that the publishers have taken measures to enter upon a new

* Mrs. Partington's edition of Mother Goose's Melodies edited by Uncle Willis. Illustrated with over 100 engravings. Tilton & Co., Boston. Hill's Library 666 Dorchester St., Montreal. 12mo. Paper. pp. 144.

† Montreal Witness Evangelical Alliance Extra.—Being a record of the first Conference of the Dominion Evangelical Alliance. John Dougall & Son. 4mo. Paper. pp. 101.

volume with renewed literary and artistic strength. With such regular contributors as Longfellow, Lowell, Bryant, Holmes, Mark Twain, Bayard Taylor, Howells, Aldrich, Warner, Parkman, and Dale Owen, the magazine must sustain its old stand among American periodicals.

ST. NICHOLAS. We can never tire in our admiration of this delightful juvenile. Its bright scarlet cover is of itself an invitation. The editor assumed a high standard from the initial number, and has maintained it steadily ever since. She has succeeded in publishing the best magazine for boys and girls which has ever appeared in any country. The present number is a fit pendant to its predecessors. It glows with beautiful illustrations and teems with a variety of appropriate letter press. The bound volume in red and gold, which we have not yet seen, must become one of the best holiday books of the season, bringing together the separate numbers into a continuous and harmonious whole.

OLD AND NEW. The paper on a Life of Letters read by the editor at Vassar and Cornell, is worth the price of the present number. Mr. Hale is always direct and original. He aims at the medium mind and his object is practical improvement. He has infused this spirit into his magazine, which is different from all others of its class, and exercises an influence peculiarly its own. The present number, besides a series of interesting articles, contains a copious College Directory, very valuable for reference.

A MARRIAGE ON SPECULATION.

The French entered Amsterdam on the 20th of January, 1815. The soldiers stacked their arms on the pavement, and waited anxiously for their billets for quarters.

Despite the severity of the weather, the citizens turned out in large numbers to welcome and admire the veterans in their rags. There was general rejoicing throughout the city, which for the most part was illuminated. At the extreme end of the town there was a single house, whose dark, forbidding aspect was in strong contrast to the brilliant appearance of the neighboring buildings. It was the residence of the rich merchant, Meister Woerden. He was completely absorbed in his commercial operations, and neither knew nor cared to know what was going on in the political world; and, then, he was too familiar with the rules of economy to think of squandering candles on an illumination.

At this moment, when all was joy and enthusiasm throughout Amsterdam, Meister Woerden sat quietly in his big armchair, beside the fire. On the table there was a little brass lamp, a mug of beer, and a big clay pipe. On the other side of the fire sat an old maid-servant, whose rotundity betrayed her Flemish origin. She was occupied in shoving back the coals that had fallen out on the hearth, when there came a loud knock at the street-door.

"Who can that be? Go and see," said the old merchant to the maid, who had risen to her feet.

A few moments later a stalwart young man entered the room. He threw off his mantle and approached the fire.

"Good evening, father," said he.

"How? Is it you, William? I did not expect you back so soon."

"I left Broek this morning, but the roads have been made so bad by the army trains that we have been the whole day on the way."

"Well, did you see Van Elburg?"

"Yes," said the young man, seating himself before the fire. "Meister Van Elburg consents to the marriage, but he adheres to his determination to give his daughter a dowry of only four thousand ducats."

"Well, then, he may keep his daughter and his dowry," replied Woerden, with a frown.

"But, father—"

"Not a word, my son. At your age we have no more sense than to sacrifice everything for love and to despise riches."

"But Herr van Elburg is the richest merchant in Holland, and what he does not give now will be ours at his death."

"Nonsense!" replied Meister Woerden. "Am I, too, not rich? Listen, my son. You will soon follow me in my business. Never forget these two rules: never give more than you receive, and never further another man's interest to the detriment of your own. Guided by these principles, one will better his condition in marriage as well as in trade."

"But father—"

"Not another word, my son—not another word!"

William knew his father too well to say anything more, but he could not avoid evincing his displeasure by his manner. To this, however, the old man paid no attention; he calmly filled his pipe, lighted it, and began to smoke.

Again there was a loud rap at the street-door, while at the same time the dogs began to bark.

"Aha!" said Master Woerden, "it must be a stranger, or the dogs wouldn't bark so. Go and see who it is, William."

The young man went to the window.

"It is one of the militia horsemen," said William.

"A militia horseman! What can he want?"

At this moment the maid-servant entered, and handed Woerden a letter. He carefully examined the seal.

"From the Provisional Government," said he.

His hand trembled as he hastily opened the letter and read it, but suddenly the old tradesman's face lighted up with a joyous expression as he cried:

"Good—good! I accept."

The letter contained an order for four hundred thousand herrings for the army, to be delivered within a month.

"William," cried the old man, "I have a capital thought. You would marry Van Elburg's daughter and have a handsome dowry with her!"

"Yes, father, I would; but—"

"Well, leave the matter to me," interrupted the old man. "But see that there are two horses ready for us to-morrow morning early."

The next morning, at sunrise, father and son were on the high-road from Amsterdam to Broek which they reached about midday. They repaired immediately to the residence of Van Elburg, who, when he saw them enter, cried out:

"Ah, good morning, Meister Woerden! Have you fled from the *Parlez-vous*? In any case, you are welcome."

"No; I flee from nobody. You know I have nothing to do with politics. I come to propose a good speculation to you."

"Yes? What is it?"

"I have an order from the Government for four hundred thousand herrings, to be delivered within a month. Can you furnish me with that number in say three weeks?"

"At what price?"

"Ten florins a thousand."

"Ten florins! Yes, I will furnish them."

"Very well, and now to dinner; I am half famished. At table we will talk of another matter."

Woerden introduced the subject of the marriage, but Van Elburg could not be persuaded to increase the dowry he had offered to give his daughter to the amount of a single stiver. They nevertheless decided that the wedding should take place that day week.

The following day Woerden and his son returned home. Hardly had they left Broek when the young man asked:

"Then, father, you have changed your mind?"

"How so?"

"Have you not decided to accept the dowry offered by Meister Van Elburg?"

"Let me manage the matter in my own way, my son, and ask no questions."

When the wedding-day came Woerden and his son returned to Broek. Van Elburg received them kindly, but he was so flurried and nervous that William feared he had some bad news for them. His father, however, had no such misgivings; the old fox knew too well the cause of his colleague's disturbed manner.

"What is the matter, Meister van Elburg?" he asked, with a sardonic smile. "You seem to be worried about something."

"Ah, my friend, I am greatly embarrassed, I must speak with you."

"What is it? Have you changed your mind with regard to the marriage. Speak frankly: it is not yet too late."

"No, no: it is another matter entirely."

"Well, then, let us first proceed with the wedding ceremony. Afterward I shall be quite at your service."

The company, therefore, repaired to a neighboring church, and in a few minutes the young people were husband and wife. When they returned to the house, Van Elburg asked Woerden to go with him into his private room.

"My friend," began Van Elburg, when he had carefully closed the door, "in accordance with our agreement, I should within two weeks from now deliver to you four hundred thousand herrings. Thus far, however, I have not been able to procure a single one. There are none in the market; they have been all bought up."

"Certainly they have. I bought them up myself," replied Woerden, smiling.

"But—but—how about my contract?" stammered Van Elburg.

"You will fulfil it. Listen, friend Van Elburg; you will some day leave your daughter a handsome fortune; I shall leave my son at least as much; it is therefore unnecessary to discuss their future. This, however, is not true of the present. I shall soon give my entire business to my son, while you give your daughter only four thousand ducats. I could not oppose the wishes of the young people; but when I consented to their union I determined to compel you to do your duty towards them. With this object in view I contracted with you for four hundred thousand herrings at ten florins a thousand, although I then had all the herrings in the market. Now in order to comply with the terms of your agreement you must buy from me, and my price is fifty florins a thousand; you have, therefore, only to pay over to me the sum of sixteen thousand florins and we shall be square."

While Meister Woerden was arriving at this mercantile deduction, Van Elburg regained his wonted equanimity.

"I see, I see," said he; "you are a clever tradesman. I am fairly caught, and must bide the consequences."

Their conference ended, the two old merchants rejoined the wedding company, as though nothing unusual had occurred between them.

A week later, Van Elburg went to Amsterdam, ostensibly to see his daughter. Now the tables were turned.

"Ah, meister," cried Woerden, on seeing his colleague from Broek, "I am in a terrible dilemma. The time is approaching when I must deliver the four hundred thousand herrings, and not a cask can I find to put them in!"

"That does not surprise me," answered Van Elburg, smiling; "you bought up all my herrings, and I bought up all your casks!"