

LITERARY.

MR. WILLIAM BLACK, having been written to in regard to the pronunciation of *Yolande*, sent the following reply:—

"They say the author's spelling was planned
To make the people pronounce Yolande;
And who could think 'twould be found handy
To use the cumbersome form Yolande?
Though those who wished a rhyme for Holland
Were doubtless welcome quite to Yolande:
But now upon us it has dawned
'Twere better far to say Yolande."

BANCROFT AT HOME.

I called on George Bancroft a short time ago, says a writer in the *Cleveland Leader*, and found him working among his roses. The rose is the historian's favorite flower, and he has the finest rose garden on the continent. It is situated back of his house on H street, Washington, D. C., and embraces a greenhouse and an open garden. It contains every known variety of roses, and is devoted to this flower alone. A gardener is kept especially to attend to it, though Mr. Bancroft spends much time in working in it himself, and understands all about rose-culture. The historian came into the house as I entered. He was clad in black broadcloth, and a slouch hat covered his iron-gray hair. A fine specimen of the highest class of intellectual workers is the Hon. George Bancroft. Over eighty-three years of age, he has a frame of iron and a brain as bright as that of a youth. He is of middle height, lean and wiry. His thin, thoughtful face is lengthened by his long silky beard of sable silver, and his thick gray hair is combed back from a broad, high, brawny forehead. He has light blue eyes and a complexion darkened by the winds of his daily horseback rides, for this old man rides daily, and he has one of the best blooded Kentucky steeds in Washington. Among the questions I asked him at this visit was:

"How long can you ride, Mr. Bancroft, without tiring?"

He replied, with a laugh:
"I don't know. All day, I suppose, if I had the time. Riding does not tire, and I generally spend three or four hours a day in the saddle. I believe the secret of good health is in taking care of yourself. I go to bed early and I rise early. I find the morning is the best time for work, and I would advise you to do your literary work then in preference to the evening."

I then looked around the room and remarked:

"Mr. Bancroft, you have a fine library."

"Yes," he replied, and his face lighted up as he did so, and I could see that he was very proud of his books. He arose and took me around the shelves, showing me how the books were two rows deep, and pointed out some of the rarer editions. He then gave me into the hands of his German valet, a bright Berliner, whom he picked up when he was in Prussia and brought him to this country, telling him to show me over the rest of the library. Bancroft's library is one of the finest private collections in the United States: every book of it is valuable, and it contains works in all the modern languages. There are over twelve thousand volumes, and these are closely packed in the four large rooms which comprise the little workshop of their owner. No display is made in the way of expensive cases for the books. They are kept in common shelves running along the wall, without covering of either glass or curtain. Bancroft knows his library perfectly, and could find any of his books in the dark. The bulk of the library is on the second floor. The chief work-room is first entered. It faces the street and is very large and well lighted. In its centre stands a large table covered with books and manuscripts; on one side of this sits the great historian, opposite him a young secretary, and often in addition another, all writing and working together.

The next room serves a two-fold purpose. It is a library and bed-room combined. Its walls are lined with books and in its centre a small single bed covered with a plain green spread is seen. "Here," said my guide, "in that bed sleeps the old gentleman, and on that table," pointing to a little table with two wax candles on it, which stood at the head of the bed, "he keeps pen and paper all night. If a thought strikes him he jots it down. Here," pointing to some elegantly bound books, "is his history in the German language, and here are some very fine engravings—hundreds of them."

"Tell me," said I, "something about Bancroft's habits."

"Mr. Bancroft," replied the German, "goes to bed very early, unless he is out at some entertainment. He is generally asleep about ten o'clock. He wakes very early and works often before daylight. You see the two candles on his night table. He commences work at five o'clock and keeps at it until breakfast time, at half-past eight, when he dresses and comes down stairs and has breakfast. Breakfast with him is a very light meal, consisting of some fruit, a cup of chocolate, an egg and a roll. He eats nothing more until dinner, when he takes a good meal. He does not think a man can do good brain work on a full stomach. After breakfast he goes again to work and continues at it until between one and two, when he receives his visitors. At half-past four he goes out to ride and comes back about seven. At this hour he has dinner, after which he either chats, reads or goes out for the evening."

Gossiping in this way we went over the whole of Bancroft's house. At every step the valet had something to say for his master, whom

he admires so greatly, and whom he told me he had served now these past ten years. Mr. Bancroft has a beautiful home. The house is a three-story brick on H street, near that of the millionaire Corcoran, and across the street from General Beale's. It is within a stone's throw of the White House, the Arlington and the Treasury, and is at the foot of fashionable Washington today. A wide hall divides the house, and on each side of this are reception-rooms and parlors, and at the left end is the dining-room. The parlors are full of curious mementoes from the different parts of Europe. There is a magnificent portrait of Kaiser Wilhelm, given to the historian by the German Emperor as a mark of esteem and affection. There below it is a present from Napoleon III., and beside this a little curiosity which has the inscription: "Given by Bismarck as a mark of friendship;" and so it is throughout the several rooms. Another curiosity is Mrs. Bancroft's needlework and embroidery. The old lady—she is nearly the same age as her husband, I understand—has a great talent for this art, and specimens of her handiwork are found in every room. There is a set of chairs cushioned entirely with her embroidery. A beautiful piano-cover shows the evidences of her skill, and embroidered table covers, screens and tidies add beauty to rooms already artistically furnished. One particular feature about this house of Bancroft's is its comfortable, home-like look. It seems as though it was made to be lived in and enjoyed. The elegant pictures on the walls, the plate-glass mirrors here and there, do not give to it the cold and stately look you get from a visit to the house of many a shoddy millionaire. Here everything seems for use, and the little home touches about everything throw a warmth over the whole.

Bancroft's history has been the work of his lifetime, and he told me to-day he was well satisfied with the last edition, just published. He said: "I want my history to be correct in every statement and in every particular, and I am working to that end." He has been working indeed a long time upon it, more by far than the average man's life. Fifty-eight years ago he began it, when he was twenty-five years old, and had been eight years out of college. He has been working at it steadily ever since, and it is now practically completed.

AMERICAN FORESTS AND FORESTRY.

The annual meeting of the Forestry Convention, at St. Paul this year, reminds us of the rise of dangers to our national prosperity through the destruction of our forests. When European settlers began their occupation of this continent, it was a land of great forests. The Indian population was very sparse and scanty; there probably are more Indians now in the United States than at an earlier date. They lived chiefly by hunting and fishing, though the better tribes combined with this a rough horticulture carried on by the squaws in the vicinity of their villages. The purely agricultural Indians were farther South, in the countries occupied by the Spaniards. The Indians of the North waged no war on the forests. He made but slight draughts on their resources for the construction of his canoes and his huts. He left no appreciable marks of his presence, except when his carelessness in handling fire produced a general conflagration. As a consequence, the streams and rivers of those days maintained an equable flow throughout the year; the supply of moisture was abundant, droughts and deluges being alike unknown.

The white man came with a well-marked notion of what his own interest was; and he came as a destroyer. His coming was providentially postponed until he had ridden himself in Europe of many superstitions and ignorances which would have vitiated his social condition in the New World. But he came from a Europe in which science had not mastered the great principles of nature's economy on many points, and in this matter of the uses of trees and forests among others. His only idea was access to the soil; his friend and companion was his axe. For a quarter of a millennium, he has been lifting up his axe upon the thick trees, and no other part of his activity has produced results so tremendous. It has been so great that the appearance of our continent to observers on the sister planets of our system must have changed very materially in the course of those centuries, large spaces appearing lighter in hue than they did.

But the effect of this wholesale clearance has been most deleterious in many respects. Trees are of vast importance in the aqueous circulation of our planet. A tree is a great hydraulic machine in which currents of water move with a surprising energy. The upward rush of water in a teak tree has been sufficient to lift a core of sand an inch in diameter and fifty or sixty feet in length into the heart of the tree, where it has been found when the log was cut in the shipyard. This upward stream carries to the leaves and branches the nutriment drawn from the soil through the root; a downward stream in other lines carries to the stem and root the nutriment of another sort absorbed through the leaves. But much of the moisture thus employed seems to be given off from the leaves, and a tree may be regarded as a vegetable fountain, drawing a water-supply from a recondite source for diffusion through the atmosphere. In a few species, the diffusion is visible in an actual dropping of water from the leaves. Or, again, a tree may be regarded as a reservoir of water, which it absorbs in times of plenty and

gives off in those of greater scarcity. A forest is such a reservoir in a larger sense, as it receives and retains the rain-fall, allowing it to pass off in gradual and gentle flow through underground channels, for the refreshment of the open country. The forest saves the moisture by checking the force of parching winds and breaking the evaporating energy of the sun's heat. In all these ways, the forests serve as checks upon the rapidity of the aqueous circulation. They do not permit the rain-fall to be evaporated at once into the atmosphere, to return in devastating torrents with the next storm. The equalize the supply in all directions, and preserve that evenness in the circulation which accords best with the needs of human agriculture.

But American settlement generally has been conducted in ignorant defiance of these principles. The first settlers took the thinner soil of the open places, to save themselves from the work of cutting down trees. When the forest had to be taken, the natural growths were regarded merely as obstacles. To destroy them without restraint or exception, was the work of the agriculturist. Vast hemlocks, oaks and maples were cut down and piled upon each other, and went up in flame or smoke. People said: "I guess there will always be wood enough in this region. At least, it will last my time." By and by, it began to run out. The few who had left any were paid for the privilege of cutting it for firewood. The new demand finished the work. There are districts in Ohio which were overgrown with great trees in the memory of people now living, but whose people now buy from Wisconsin every stick they use. Wisconsin is running the same wasteful course; so is Minnesota, and every other well wooded district in the Mississippi Valley. In the Ohio districts to which we refer, the streams once ran full the year round. Large fish were caught in them; great mills were turned by them. Now they are dribbles except when a great rain-storm has fallen, and then they become torrents. On the hillsides, these storms have cut great gulches where no such gulches were known before. And every rain washes away more of the soil than was lost in a year before the forests went. It is wonderful that the Ohio River becomes with every generation more of a vibration between a drought and a deluge.

In our time, a new impulse to destruction has come with the increased demand for timber. The first settlers burned the trees to get rid of them. Their children would be glad to buy them now. Some kind of timber are nearly exhausted by mercantile demand. The black walnut for furniture is on the verge of exhaustion. The staves for French wine-casks, once cut all along the Mississippi and the Ohio, are now obtainable only in Arkansas, and the supply is limited. White pine, the most serviceable of all forest woods, is so seriously diminished that nothing but prompt care will prevent a pine famine in the next generation. Above all the railroads of the country are wearing out the forests. The life of a railroad tie is from three to five years. The annual consumption is enough to destroy a large forest, and the demand does not distribute itself equally over the whole country. Long lines of railroad—two of the Pacific railroads, for instance,—run through areas destitute of timber, and every mile represents a constant drain on some distant forest for its maintenance.

The Scotch say that always taking out of the meal-tub and never putting in soon comes to the bottom. Our meal-tub in this matter has been a large one; but we cannot be far from the bottom. We have trusted too long to the enlightened selfishness of individuals. The time has come for Government action on the lines indicated by European precedent. America is the only country which leaves the matter to luck. Some of our states have done a little by "arbor days" and tax-exemptions to stimulate wholesome action. But this is far from being enough. The time has come for a national supervision of timber resources, so far as the national authority can be extended to their protection.

In Canada, the Government of Ontario (once Upper Canada), has been moving, and none too early. From a special report by Mr. R. W. Phipps, of Toronto, we derive many of the facts we have presented, and we can recommend this report to all who are interested in the subject.—*The American*.

ECHOES FROM PARIS.

PARIS, August 4.

QUEEN ELIZABETH of Roumania ("Carmen Sylva") has been elected a member of the Académie des Jeux Floraux, of Toulouse.

THE death of Cetewayo is cited by the Bonapartist journals in Paris as a providential vengeance for the slaughter of the young Prince Imperial.

THE Knight Templars of Chicago, seventy-one in number, accompanied by twenty-six ladies and eighteen invited guests, are now staying in Paris.

THE German law courts are not over polite to the fair sex. A French lady witness in a Strasbourg court, who had sworn to the ownership of only twenty-six summers, when in reality she was the happy possessor of twice that number, was indicted for perjury.

ONE of the gayest fashionable marriages which

have taken place this year in Paris was that, on Monday last, of Mlle. Mathilde Nivière with Comte de Pleumartin. A great many aristocratic people returned to Paris to be present at the ceremony. The marriage unites two highly distinguished families.

DEAUVILLE seems to be the happy hunting-ground of Parisian society this year. The list of great people residing there is a long one, and it appears that life is going on at high pressure. Balls, garden parties, boating parties, picnics, bathing reunions, concert, and grand dinners abound, while men seeking their amusement unaided by beauty find in every way that delights them.

JOURNALISTS are noted for their peppery characters, and probably in France they are more excitable than in any other country. We are constantly hearing of witnesses being sent to this or that writer of an article that has touched the susceptibilities of some thin-skinned gentleman. Then follows the harmless meeting in some out-of-the-way suburb of Paris, or, if very desperate business is meant, across the frontier, and the *procès verbal*, drawn up more or less in an absurdly magnificent vein, completes the affair satisfactorily to the parties concerned. In a recent difficulty, however, the gentleman challenged thought fit to decline to go on, so the challenger "went for him" in a restaurant and boxed his ears. On meeting in the Palais de Justice, upon the adjourned case which had brought about all the bother, the assaulted of the restaurant attempted to retaliate, but his doubtless well-intended blow was intercepted by an unfortunate avocet who chanced to be in the way. The first assailant, nevertheless, did not get off soot free, as the friends of the gentleman whose ears had been boxed waited at the bottom of the staircase for his adversary, and with the most undaunted bravery assailed him with sticks and umbrellas until the officers of the Court came to his assistance and rescued him from their courageous hands.

THERE has been a marked taste in Paris of late for what may be styled ethnographical curiosities. Natives of every outlandish country under the sun have figured *à tour de rôle* in the verdant enclosures set at the Jardin d'Acclimatation for exhibition of this nature. The pleasure-loving Parisians have been able to contemplate Esquimaux, Nubians, Abyssinians, Galibis, Patagonians, Congolese, etc. Nor has the Jardin d'Acclimatation proved large enough to contain all the savages which it has been found advisable to serve up for the Parisian taste, since an *impresario* of burbians has found it necessary to hire the Salle Krieglstein for the purpose of exhibiting African natives bearing the name of "Les Aïscoutas." The special talent of the Aïscoutas lies in eating broken glass, swallowing burning hot iron, and performing other feats of the same nature. Notwithstanding these talents, it must be admitted that they failed to attract very numerous audiences to the Salle Krieglstein, and they have not indeed had the same success in Paris as the Cingalese, whose presence at the Zoological Garden in the Bois de Boulogne has attracted the public considerably.

THE example is set by America in the matter of rapid reduction of the national debt is alleged in England as a reason for moving more quickly in that direction; but the specific proposals are not connected with American examples, as they originated in 1859, since which date the debt has been reduced from seven hundred and eighty-seven million pounds sterling to something like seven hundred million pounds sterling. Of late years the reduction has been at the rate of eight million pounds sterling a year, but for the whole period the average is not half so much. The bill now before Parliament proposes to pay off one hundred and seventy-three million pounds sterling, or a trifle less than a fourth of the debt, in the next twenty years. At this rate, the whole debt would be discharged by 1903.

The British national debt may be said to exist only in the shape of perpetual annuities. As the debt was contracted by accepting bids much below par, the nominal interest is very low,—three per cent., in fact. But the interest on the sums actually received by the Treasury is very considerable. As a consequence, the debt can be discharged only at a loss to the Government, unless at times when the interest of money is very low. If money is worth as much as three and a quarter per cent. a year, it is more profitable to go on paying three pounds sterling a year, to the holder of one hundred pounds sterling in "consols," than to pay him the one hundred pounds sterling and be done with him. But for the bonds which represent this sum the Government received but eighty or ninety pounds sterling at the start. So the English debt is in the worst possible shape for discharge; it bears really a high interest, but its nominal interest is so low that the principal can be paid only at a loss. The English people, however, prefer to take the loss and do something towards the discharge of the debt before the coal mines are exhausted or some other calamity has occurred to put a stop to their national prosperity. They they do in a characteristic fashion. Whoever holds "consols," and wishes to convert a perpetual into a terminable annuity of a proportionally larger amount, can effect the change by an arrangement with the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund.