

Deeply across the sky
Mingles the gloom ;
Fast fading glim'rings fly
On to their doom.

Night now her vigil keeps,
Darkness o'er all ;
Earth cold in silence sleeps,
Down drops the pall.

—H.R.

THE FUTURE.

Who would not look into the future
To read what is written there,
In the uncut leaves of the book of Fate,
Of victory and despair ?

Yet, who does not shrink from the future ?
For the dread of approaching ill
Would draw the veil on the time to come,
And leave it a secret still.

There is joy for some in the future,
Who shall triumph in this wild strife,
And guide their course with a steady hand
O'er the dangerous frith of life.

And some shall be sad in the future,
For the hopes of their youth are gone,
All faded away, like the fragile dreams
That flee the approach of dawn.

Who knows what is hid in the future
Of knowledge as yet unknown ?
What secrets may science's busy hands
Uncover and claim as her own ?

At the rising dawn of the future
The darkness of errors must fly,
And these stubborn problems that puzzle us now
Shall be solved in the bye and bye.

Yes, we'll know all that's hid in the future
When we've passed that final exam.,
And the veil shall fall from the face of Truth
At the word of the great " I Am."

—ARTHUR T. BARNARD.

THE BACK NUMBERS.

The bald-headed man in his family pew
Leaned back on the cushions and slumbered,
And he dreamed that the preacher these words had pro-
claimed :

"The hairs of your head are all numbered."

The bald-headed man awoke with a start
From his weekly devotional slumbers,
Then sunk on his knees and fervently prayed :
" O Lord, send me down the back numbers."

—*Columbia Spectator.***LITERATURE.****RUDYARD KIPLING AS A POET.**

I.

NEVER since critics began to blunder have they made wilder statements than the present race of American critics is doing on Kipling. No doubt the most surprised man is Mr. Kipling himself. He knows the value of his own work, and the critics would have done well to have tempered their words by a few of the phrases in the closing stanza of his introductory poem in his new volume, " The Seven Seas."*

" Hear now a song—a song of broken interludes—
A song of little cunning ; of a singer nothing worth.

Through the naked words and mean
May ye see the truth between,

As the singer knew and touched it in the ends of all the earth !"

With this stanza before us we are able to accept and enjoy to the full much of Mr. Kipling's poetry, and would be loath to say a word in dispraise, but the utter lack of judgment on the part of such critics as Stedman, Howells, Lanier and Charles Eliot Norton demands attention from any one who would attempt to speak on Kipling's verse.

Edmund Clarence Stedman is a critic whose words should always have the most careful consideration, and when he says of " The Seven Seas," " How imaginative it is, how impassioned, how superbly rhythmic and sonorous. . . The ring and diction of this verse add new elements to our song. . . The true laureate of Greater Britain " —when he writes thus we are compelled to turn to Kipling, and, if we can, see for ourselves the truth of these words. But we meet with disappointment. " Superbly rhythmic and sonorous"—such are the phrases we would use in describing the music of Milton and Tennyson; and we very naturally, with these words before us, begin to read with the music of the masters in our brain, but instead of epic sonority we find ballad rapidity on every page, and that, too, not in the fine ballad manner, but in a vigorous "trip-hammer strain"—to use a phrase from " The Seven Seas."

W. D. Howells, who has written some wretched verse himself and some careful novels, speaks with even greater finality than Stedman. He has definitely located Mr. Kipling as the successor of Tennyson, and opens an article in the current number of *McClure's* with the words, " If Mr. Rudyard Kipling should remain the chief poet of his race in his time." " Should remain !" It would be amusing to read such an utterance were it not that such words only

*" The Seven Seas." By Rudyard Kipling. Toronto: The Copp Clark Co.