

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

THE *pièce de résistance* in October's *Century* is without doubt the paper entitled "Molière and Shakspeare" by the famous actor, Constant Coquelin, of the Comédie Française, who, it may be remarked in passing, is the same great artist and finished gentleman and scholar that played last winter to empty houses in this city. That "Shakspeare teaches us to think and Molière teaches us to live" is the final word of M. Coquelin, with regard to the inherent qualities of both dramatists. The article is cleverly written and valuable, as it shows one standpoint from which to judge of our greatest poet, but it may well be questioned whether the mere attempt at parallelism is not a mistake in the beginning—in this way, that, whereas Molière does not, cannot, in the whole range of his writings include a Shakspeare, it may be said, following in the steps of the truest critics that ever lived, that Shakspeare includes not only a Molière but a Racine and Corneille as well. It may be that the most appreciative of Frenchmen is at fault when he attempts to compare the versatile actor of the French stage with the clumsy Adam or sombre Ghost of the "Globe." Even to compare the two highly-gifted minds as humourists strikes us as difficult. Delightful as "M. Jourdain" undoubtedly is, powerful as the situations in the "Misanthrope," the "Physician in Spite of Himself" are, and scathing as the satirical bent of "Les Precieuses Ridicules" is throughout its amusing little side-light of fashionable society, just as keen a wit, as sly a humour, as close an observation and as brilliant powers of burlesque and parody abound in Shakspeare's comedies—aye, and in his tragedies too. M. Coquelin affirms that it is "because Molière was a greater actor than Shakspeare, that he was a more sure and more complete observer, although in a narrower sphere." We are inclined to argue just in the opposite direction. It is because Shakspeare was so pre-eminently a man of original mind, of profound thought, of concentrated literary aim that he had neither the ambition nor the leisure to make a great actor. At the same time, to the English mind, Molière never seems, to use M. Coquelin's quaint phrase, only a "belated twin" of Shakspeare, he is himself richly gifted and varied in his gifts, intensely true in perception, and terse, vigorous in execution—in a word, he is Molière. Is not this enough without endeavouring to prove that he is also—Shakspeare? He is indeed, in true dramatic force and vigour, second only to the illustrious William.

A capital photograph by Sarony of M. Coquelin in his most entertaining character, that of "Mascarille" in "Les Precieuses Ridicules" accompanies this most interesting article. The initial paper on East Siberian silver mines is of course from the pen of George Kennan. Maurice Thompson apologises for offering, contrary to all his dicta, a dialect story, "Ben and Judas." Two articles on the subject of manual training indicate the importance of this popular craze, "Base-ball," "Abraham Lincoln" and "The Democratic Ideal in Education" are the remaining papers, while a charming piece of writing will be found in some reminiscences of the late Maria Mitchell, accompanied by a portrait. The fiction is respectable, but hardly anything more, and there is a fine poem "To a Dog's Memory" by Louise Imogen Guiney.

HENRY THE SEVENTH. By James Gairdner. "Twelve English Statesmen." London: Macmillan and Co.; Toronto: Williamson and Co.

This excellent sketch of a great and gifted king of England deserves wide reading and a cordial welcome by all lovers of history. It may appear, perhaps, that the series, while excellent in itself, is distinguished rather by general dissertations on topics of the time than by any very acute and original analysis of character and motive—analysis piercing enough to justify the complete delineation of Henry, Earl of Richmond, as one of the leading statesmen England has produced. But we are grateful for the appreciation which includes a king among a host of commoners. It is not very often that a crowned head can enter the ranks of thought and action and take equal place with his inferiors in birth, but we have only to read Bacon's history of the great Prince, Henry the Seventh of England, courteous, reliant, cautious, cool, accomplished and shrewd, to bear willing testimony to his virtues and charms of manner. According to J. W. Gairdner, there is little ground for supposing him to have been either arrogant or surly, though possessed of a stateliness of mien fully capable of developing into frigidity when the occasion seemed to demand it. That he was somewhat tyrannical, specially in later years, after the death of his wife, may be excused on the ground that the king was, above all things, a politician, and one in whom ideas of duty and order easily predominated over any views in which sentiment seemed supreme.

THE HERITAGE OF DEDLOW MARSH, AND OTHER TALES. By Bret Harte. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co.

We think it will be conceded, after reading these four short stories, that the fame, won years ago by this master of brilliant and pathetic fiction—a romancist and realist in one—has little to fear from the ripening—not weakening—of age. The "Heritage of Dedlow Marsh," which appeared, if we mistake not, originally in the *Graphic*, is as true to life, and at the same time as much intensified by the rich imagination of a prose-poet as any of the author's

earlier works. Bret Harte has no dearer friends than the English reading public, which saw, some years ago now, his power and originality. It was Charles Dickens who supplied his manner—a fact that the great novelist noted himself with eagerness and delight—the matter was wholly and thoroughly his own. Time has gone on, and brought no American writer to surpass him in character-painting, in knowledge of the wild and savage in nature, and in the fine and eloquent diction with which he describes a scene, landscape or interior, while, as for his dialect, it is now common property. Like Tennyson's "Weed," the Bret Harte style has had so many imitations that people are prone to forget who was the originator.

All four stories reflect, more or less successfully, the scenery and characters of California and Western America, but the "Heritage of Dedlow Marsh" is perhaps the most interesting, and the one which can boast of a well-defined plot or scheme of action, no small achievement in a "short story." The volume is in the excellent taste uniformly exhibited by this well-known firm.

CHARACTERS AND EPISODES OF THE GREAT REBELLION.

Selected from the State biography of Edward, Earl of Clarendon; and edited, with short notes, by the Very Rev. G. D. Boyle, M.A., Dean of Salisbury. Oxford: The Clarendon Press; Toronto: Williamson and Company.

The issue of this specially attractive volume confers a boon on busy men with reading tastes. Admirable as are Clarendon's portraits of the men and his descriptions of the striking events in the most picturesque period of English history, there are many who cannot command the time and the leisure to plod through the massive volumes in their original shape. In this volume the leading actors in the struggles that preceded and followed the Commonwealth are briefly yet graphically sketched by a man of keen insight and praiseworthy fairness. He was, according to modern estimates, a man of moderate views; but in his own time he was accounted as lacking in zeal, and therefore not entirely to the liking of the Royalist party to which he was most sincerely attached. He died in exile. The historical sketches are all of them very interesting, though he had no overweening ideas of the dignity of history. In consequence there are occasional touches a more severe and sedate historian would have refrained from adding to a portrait or sketch, which render them all the more life-like and natural. The selections have been made with admirable judgment, and the notes appended by the editor greatly enhance the value of a work which will be highly prized by all who know how to relish a good book.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

THE two youngest daughters of the Prince of Wales are contributors to magazines.

LORD TENNYSON asserts that his forthcoming volume of poems will be his last contribution to literature.

WE reprint from the *Popular Science Monthly* in this issue an interesting paper by an authority on education.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL is mentioned for the new lectureship on poetry at Johns Hopkins University the coming year.

"A COLLECTION of the Letters of Dickens, 1813-1870," compiled from already published materials, is the title of a book which will be issued by the Scribners in uniform style with the 16mo. edition of recently-published Thackeray letters.

THE entire two first editions of cloth and paper of Robt. Louis Stevenson's novel, "The Master of Ballantrae," were exhausted several days before publication. Second editions of each were immediately printed by the Scribners.

THE success of Marshall P. Wilder's book, "The People I have Smiled With," Cassell and Company, has surprised no one more than that amiable little fellow, its author. He knew that he had a great many good friends, who would buy and read it, but he did not know that they were to be counted by the thousands.

ONE of the most interesting as well as one of the most important announcements of fall publications is that of a volume of "Orations and After-Dinner Speeches," by Chauncey M. Depew, which Cassell and Company, Limited, have in preparation. There is no more pleasantly familiar name in this country than that of Mr. Depew, and it is by his speeches that he is best known.

THE welcome announcement is made by the Scribners of a new book by "Ik Marvel," shortly to be issued. It has the title of "English Lands, Letters, and Kings." England's most gifted and brilliant heroes in literature and monarchy, from Celt to Tudor, are made to live again in the pages—the places and haunts they made famous, the towns, castles, and taverns associated with their names.

THE *National Magazine* is the name of a new literary venture of Chicago, which begins with the October number. It is published under the auspices of the new "National University," which opens October 1st, of which it is the organ. The first number will contain articles on literary, educational and scientific subjects, and a prospectus of the University which has extensive non-resident courses, teaching many subjects by mail. Published at 182 Clark Street.

AN "historic pageant" similar to the one given in honour of Mrs. Howe at Newport, on Aug. 13, was given in the Opera House at Hartford on Tuesday, in honour of Harriet Beecher Stowe. The plan of the testimonial embraced a series of tableaux picturing the chief events in our national history. It opened with "Columbus at the Court of Queen Isabella"—a reproduction of the familiar painting. During the "Reception of Martha Washington," a company of ladies and gentlemen danced a minuet. The "The Landing of the Pilgrims," "Hiding of the Charter," "Battle of Bunker Hill," "Execution of Nathan Hale," and "Boston Tea Party" were presented by detachments from the Governor's Foot Guard and the Putnam Phalanx.

ELIZA COOK, the English poet, died on Wednesday at Wimbledon, where she had lived in seclusion for many years. She was the daughter of a London merchant and was born in 1818. She began writing for the newspapers and magazines at an early age. Her first volume of poetry was published when she was twenty, under the title of "Melaia, and other Poems." A later volume was called "Diamond Dust." In 1849 she began the publication of *Eliza Cook's Journal*, a weekly, which became immensely popular. "New Echoes" was published in 1864, and since then her collected poems have been issued repeatedly. She was, indeed, among the most widely read of modern English authors. For twenty-five years she has been in the enjoyment of a Civil List pension of £100.

THE rivalry between syndicates in pursuit of attractive literature and prominent names enables editors to present their readers with bright and interesting special articles from the most unexpected quarter. Determined, apparently, not to be outdone by other enterprising purveyors of newspaper literature, the Tillotson Syndicate now announce that early in the new year they will publish a series of signed illustrated interviews with distinguished personages, including Lord Wolseley, Lord Chas. Beresford ("Fighting Charlie"), Sir Morell Mackenzie, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Sir John Millais, Canon Farrar, Cardinal Manning, Rev. Charles Spurgeon, W. E. Gladstone, Holman Hunt, Henry Irving, and Henry Labouchere. Still more august personages are to be approached in due course.

MACMILLAN AND Co.'s announcements include *General Literature*: A new volume of poems by Lord Tennyson; a new volume of essays by Prof. Huxley; "The Elements of Politics," by Prof. Henry Sidgwick; "Problems of Greater Britain," by Sir Charles Dilke; "Wild Beasts and their Ways in Asia, Africa, America, from 1845-1888," by Sir Samuel W. Baker, with illustrations; "On Style: with Other Studies in Literature," by Walter Pater; "Royal Edinburgh: her Saints, Kings, and Scholars," by Mrs. Oliphant, with illustrations by George Reid; "Pen Drawing and Pen Draughtsmanship," by Mr. Joseph Pennell, with photogravures and other illustrations; "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood," by W. Holman Hunt, with illustrations; "Cults and Monuments of Ancient Athens," by Miss Jane Harrison and Mrs. A. W. Verral, with numerous illustrations; "A History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene, A.D. 395-800," by John B. Bury; "The Development and Character of Gothic Architecture," by Prof. Charles H. Moore, with illustrations; "Eminent Women of Our Times," by Mrs. Fawcett; "Letters of Keats," edited by Sidney Colvin; "The Cradle of the Aryans," by G. H. Rendall; "The Makers of Modern Italy: Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi," by J. A. R. Marriott.

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

OLD AND YOUNG.

I.

THEY soon grow old who grope for gold
In marts where all is bought and sold;
Who hire for self and on some shelf
In darkened vaults hoard up their pelf,
Cankered and crusted o'er with mould,
For them their youth itself is old.

II.

THEY ne'er grow old who gather gold
Where Spring awakes and flowers unfold;
Where suns arise in joyous skies,
And fill the soul within their eyes.
For them the immortal bards have sung:
For them old age itself is young.

—C. P. Crunch, in *Magazine of Poetry*.

MODERN VIEWS OF CONSUMPTION.

THE civilized world, medical and lay, is rather apathetic about consumption. It has gotten rid of the plague, and nearly rid of typhus epidemics; leprosy has been driven out of England, and small-pox has been made manageable. But one death in seven from all causes is still due to *tuberculosis pulmonum*, and some part of the remainder is due to other tuberculous diseases. If we feared these diseases as they merit, as we do the cholera or yellow fever, we would in time suffer less from their ravages. But we have strangely grown used to them, and view them with a sort of fatalistic indifference, broken now and then by a ripple of interest awakened by the discovery of some new fetish—a wash-bottle, or an air-tight box, or some ingenious device, the impotent offspring of mechanical skill and ignorance of pathology.—*International Journal*.