

British and Foreign.

THE late Lord Mount-Temple wore the blue ribbon in the House of Lords.

ABERDEEN ladies have started a club, the membership of which already numbers fifty-four.

DR. HUTCHINSON STIRLING starts his Gifford lectures this session in Edinburgh University.

THE Rev. C. C. Macdonald, of Aberdeen, has been invited to become a candidate for the town council.

PRINCIPAL RAINY was one of the preachers at the anniversary of Union Street U. P. Church, Greenock.

AT Girvan the ministers of the three Presbyterian Churches have agreed to hold united evening services during the winter.

AN anonymous donor offers \$25,000 to Brechin, to erect a public library and reading room, on condition that the town adopts the free libraries act.

IN the Scottish Universities, which complain so bitterly of their poverty, there are individual professors whose annual incomes reach as much as \$22,500.

MR. TODD, author of "Bits from Blinkbonny," charmed the children of all the Sabbath schools at Keith, recently, by giving them an address in the parish church.

MR. JOHN FRANCIS, the old publisher of the *Athenaeum*, whose biography is looked for with so much interest, was a deacon in Dr. Brook's congregation in Bloomsbury.

IT was from having so often to sign the sentences of dismissal of postmen through drinking habits and temptation, that Sir Arthur Blackwood resolved to become a teetotaler.

MR. MCGILCHRIST, of Ardrossan, gave on Sunday evening the first of a series of lectures in which he proposes during the winter to tell the story of some of the greatest hymns.

PROFESSOR GEORGE BUCHANAN, of Glasgow, says he knows a case in which a medical lady goes out to practice while her husband, who also is a doctor, stays at home to mind the baby!

THE Moravians have been unsuccessful in their endeavour to get certain property vested in trustees for their missions exempted from income tax. The Lord Chief Justice has decided for the crown.

TRINITY Church, Glasgow, of which Rev. J. J. Mackay, M.A., is pastor, received seventy new members into fellowship on Sunday week, forty-five of these being the direct fruit of vigorous evangelistic work.

THE diary of Andrew Hay, of Stone, near Biggar, a zealous Presbyterian and a constant correspondent of Johnstone, of Warriston, will be edited by Mr. A. G. Reid, of Auchtermadar, for the Scottish History Society.

THE *Saturday Review* is glad to see that Dr. Samuel Cox "has done what he could to rescue from oblivion the name of a great but half-forgotten preacher, Thomas Toke Lynch, by dedicating his latest volume to his memory."

DR. BLACK, of Inverness, gave the opening lecture in connection with the Young Men's Literary Association of Trinity Church, Glasgow; his subject was "The Cloister and the Studio," being glimpses at the lives of the men of Florence.

THE Lanarkshire commissioners of supply, whose attention was called to the matter by the Free and United Presbyterian Presbyteries of Hamilton, have instructed the collectors of the county rates to avoid collecting in public houses in future.

THE father of Sir Noel Paton was an enthusiastic collector of articles associated with Mary Queen of Scots. His enthusiasm, indeed, amounted to a mania, illustrated by the remark he once made that he wished it was possible to carry off Lochleven Castle.

AMONG those present at the induction of Rev. G. H. Knight at Bearsden was the venerable Dr. A. N. Somerville, father-in-law of the newly-inducted minister. The keen appreciation of the settlement in the district was indicated by the crowded attendance.

AT a conference of clergy and school managers in the diocese of Carlisle it was proposed to draw up a school catechism of Church history for use in Church schools; but the weight of opinion was against the proposal on the ground that it would alarm the nonconformists.

THE Rev. Robert Hugarth, of Stranraer, whose jubilee will be celebrated on the 18th and 19th inst., is a native of Dalry, and the congregation there will present him with an illuminated address through the hands of their pastor, Mr. Morris, who is to preach the jubilee sermon.

THE Rev. Thomas Ramage, of Stirling, a native of Busby, and formerly Reformed Presbyterian minister at Kilmarnock, where he succeeded Dr. Peter Macindoe, died lately in his fifty-seventh year. His widow is a descendant of John McGeachin, the Covenanted martyr of Cumnock.

GEORGE GILFILLAN's old church in School Wynd, Dundee, was opened on a recent Sunday after extensive alterations. Dr. Baxter of Kirkcaldy and Mr. Smart, the pastor, were the preachers. The pews have been fitted with bronze umbrella stands and seat carved frames, the gift of Mrs. Gilfillan.

THE Y. W. C. A. was originated about thirty years ago by Lady Kinnaird, in a home near Fitzroy Square, London, which had been used by nurses at the time of the Crimean War. Hence has spread far and wide an organization which, in London alone, now numbers 13,500 members and 129 branches.

DR. GRAY, Moderator of Assembly, has been presiding in Edinburgh at one of the farewell seances of Mr. Stuart Cumberland, the thought-reader. The unspoken wish of a lady in the audience was successfully guessed by Mr. Cumberland when he removed a hat with brilliant red trimmings from the head of a young lady and placed it, amid laughter, upon the head of the Moderator.

articles, entitled "A Spanish Romanticist," was a review of the life, works and influence of Gustave Becquer, with a prefatory sketch of Spanish politics, which was essential for a right understanding of the subject. This was signed, "Mrs. Humphrey Ward." Since then, however, Mrs. Ward's contributions to *Macmillan's* have been signed "M. A. W."

THE ORIGIN OF TEA.

The tea-plant grew for endless centuries in Central Asia, and the guileless celestials blandly assert that the drink was invented by Chin Nong some five thousand years ago. A poetic version makes it sixteen hundred years ago, and gives the following account of its earliest appearance: "In the reign of Yuen Ty in the dynasty of Tsin, an old woman was accustomed to proceed every morning at daybreak to the market-place, carrying a cup of tea in her hand. The people bought it eagerly, and yet from the break of day to the close of evening the cup was never exhausted. The money received was distributed among orphans and beggars. The people seized and confined her to prison. At night she flew through the prison window with her little vase in her hands. If you care to do so you can read this story and enjoy it in the original Chinese of the 'Cha Pu,' or 'Ancient History of Tea,' and will no doubt find the translation exact."

Tea was not heard of in China again for three centuries and a half, when a "Fo hi" priest is said to have advised its use as a medicine. In the ninth century an old beggar from Japan took some of the seeds and plants back with him to his native land. The Japanese relished the new drink, and built at Osaka a temple to the memory of those who introduced it. This temple is still standing, though now almost seven hundred years old. Gradually the people of Tartary and Persia also learned to love the drink, and serve it at all hours of the day.

The honour of introducing the herb into Europe may be considered due equally to the Dutch and Portuguese. Early in the seventeenth century tea became known among "persons of quality" in Europe, and in 1602 some Dutch traders carried a quantity of sage (which was then used to make a drink popular in Europe) to China, and by some ingenious device succeeded in making the almond-eyed tea-drinkers think it a fair exchange for an equal quantity of very good tea, which was brought home in safety and without the loss of a single Dutchman.—*E. H. Libby, in St. Nicholas for October.*

WATERING PLANTS.

I have taken your *Magazine* for a number of years, ever since its birth, in fact, and it is always a pleasure to me to look over its pages. I find so much that is interesting, and besides, I receive many valuable hints in regard to the care of my plants. In my opinion, your periodical takes the lead of the publications of its class.

I am one of many who love flowers and are limited in accommodation for them, and so have to struggle against some obstacles in their culture, particularly through cold weather. One of the things which troubled me most was the watering—it was so easy to splash water and mud over the sides of the pots and down on whatever might be below or around, unless I was exceedingly careful. But now I have a more excellent way. I cut out strips of tin, which is supplied by *passé* tin cans, and bend them into the form of cones, varying from one to two and a half inches in diameter at the mouth, and in length being two-thirds the depth of the pots, the larger sizes, of course, being for the larger pots. I plant these cones, one in a pot, at the side, a little distance from the edge, with the seam turned toward the root of the plant, and the top sunk to a level with the earth. It is an easy matter to introduce water from the nozzle of a sprinkler, with no danger of slopping, and the earth is not hardened as it is where moisture is applied externally.

Of course it is a little trouble, but who begrudges that when the plants are concerned? The cones do not rust out for some time, and when one is potting the plants it takes only a second to insert them.

I rejoice in your success in the past, and wish that you may be prospered in the future far more.—*Vick's Magazine for November.*

We notice the following in the September 8 issue of *Australian Town and Country Journal*:

NEW PATENT.—The Attorney General of Victoria has granted letters patent to Mr. J. B. Armstrong, of Guelph, Canada, for six different inventions.

The first consists of an improved buggy and carriage pole, the object of which is to improve the appearance of the buggy or carriage by dispensing with the following parts heretofore used in poles, viz: The bent wooden cross-bar in the rear, and the bent end of the wooden pole itself. The effect of this is to produce a vehicle which is light, neat, durable, and cheap.

The second relates to gig running gears; and its object is to make the body low and easy of access, to so arrange the springs as to secure a steady and easy movement of the body.

The third relates to single plate carriage springs. Its object is to obtain a cheap, light, low-setting spring, formed from a single plate of tempered steel.

The fourth relates to steel buggy or carriage gears. Its object is to make them adaptable to various kinds of bodies, and to various sizes of vehicles.

The fifth relates to sulky gears; its object being to enable a light, handsome, strong, and easy riding sulky to be constructed at a cheap rate.

The sixth relates to two-plate carriage springs, the object of which is to combine the lightness, strength, quick action, symmetry of a single-plate spring with the carrying capacity of an ordinary laminated spring.

THE Rev. J. Radford Thomson, M.A., contributes a memoir of Dr. Thomas Guthrie to the new biographical series of the Religious Tract Society.

stooping weavers and shoemakers of Nethermuir as was her beauty, and the evidences which she unconsciously gave of it were much admired and often recounted among them. When "Auld Maggie" fell on the slide which the town laddies had made in the street, and tailor Coats ran to get some one to help to carry her home, "the minister's lass" lifted her in her arms, and had her in her bed with a hot-water bottle at her feet before she came back again. And while every other woman in the street needed to take at least one rest, at a neighbour's door, between the pump and her own, "the minister's lass," turning neither head nor eye, moved on without a pause, till she disappeared round the close that led to her kitchen-door.

"And, for that matter, except for the way her face is turned, ye wud never ken whether her buckets were fir' or toom" (full or empty), said an admiring observer, as he watched her steady and rapid steps along the street.

So poor Allison, for one reason and another, could not be overlooked. Her name—or rather the name which her place gave her—"the minister's lass," was on many lips for a time. Absolutely nothing was known about her except what the kindly and guarded letter of Dr. Fleming had conveyed; yet much was supposed and said concerning her, and some things were repeated till they were believed, which she might have resented had she heard of them. They might have angered her, and so have helped to shake her out of the heaviness and dullness that had fallen upon her. But she "never heeded." She saw neither the hand which was held out to her in friendliness nor the face that turned away in indifference or anger.

And perhaps, on the whole, it was as well that she heeded nothing. For as weeks and months passed on, and other folk came or went, and new events—which would have hardly deserved the name elsewhere—happened to give subject-matter for discussion at proper times and places, Allison became just "the minister's lass," tolerated, if not altogether approved, among the censors of morals and manners in the town, and she still went her way, for the most part, unconscious of them all.

(To be continued.)

NIAGARA.

To wait for sleep lulled by the mighty roar,
And when sleep comes to see in wild grand dreams
The wonder and the majesty. To hear at morn
The sounding thunder in the quiet air
And see the sun rise in the tender sky
With glow of heavenliest promise. Then to watch
With terror new the vast resistless force
Come hurrying to the brink, as if pursued
By fierce battalions. Then the awful leap
Into the abyss below. O, 'tis a sight
To stir the soul, and make the creature shrink
In awe before his Maker's majesty.
And yet, even here, amid the rush and roar,
There dwells deep peace. For yonder sun
Gilding the seething mass, the tossing foam
With rainbow hues of promise, is to me
The smile of God. And so the terror fades,
And joy sings in my heart. The strength of hills,
The rush of wind and tide, the foaming gorge
Are but the deeper breathings of His love.

—Annis S. Swan, in *Christian Leader*.

THE AUTHOR OF "ROBERT ELSMERE."

We take the following from an authorized sketch of Mrs. Humphrey Ward, which, with a very interesting portrait of that lady, appears in the November *Book Buyer*.

Mrs. Ward's literary activity has extended over the last eight or nine years. Her decided taste for letters is without doubt inherited, and she seems from the first to have been the fortunate possessor of a style of extraordinary richness, flexibility, and precision. She is the eldest daughter of Thomas Arnold, M.A., of University College, Oxford, and Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland. The late Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, was her grandfather, and the late Matthew Arnold, her uncle. She was born June 11, 1851, in Hobart, the chief town of the island of Tasmania, which, it is perhaps needless to say, lies about 120 miles south-east of Australia. Her maiden name was Mary Augusta Arnold. In 1872 she was married to Mr. Thomas Humphrey Ward, Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, whose work as the editor of "The English Poets" (four volumes, Macmillan) has made his name favourably known in this country. Her home is at No. 61 Russell Square, London, not far, one may imagine, from the house where Miss Amelia Sedley once lived.

The first book that Mrs. Ward published was a story for children, entitled "Milly and Olly; or, A Holiday Among the Mountains" (1880). In 1884 "Miss Bretherton" appeared, and attracted considerable attention. The heroine of the book is an actress, an elaborate study of whose character is made, with much of the brilliancy of diction and masculine firmness of touch which lift "Robert Elsmere" above the level of contemporaneous fiction. One or two Americans figure in the story, which has a further interest for readers in this country by reason of the report that Miss Mary Anderson was the model from which some of the heroine's characteristics were drawn. In 1885 Mrs. Ward's translation, with an introduction, of "Amiel's Journal" was published, and "Robert Elsmere" completes the brief list of her books.

In other fields, however, Mrs. Ward had meantime been doing considerable work. Her critical articles show the variety of her tastes, as well as her familiarity with the modern literature of the Latin races. With recent Spanish literature she is thoroughly conversant; and the French seem to attract her sympathies almost as much as they did those of her uncle, Matthew Arnold. The *Quarterly Review* has had two papers by her—one on "Modern Spanish Literature," and another on "Modern Geneva." She has also been a frequent contributor to *Macmillan's Magazine* during the last eight or nine years. One of her early