

deck; the setting sun peering 'through its ribs, as if through a dungeon-grate;' the water-snakes under the moon-beams, with the 'elfish-light' falling off them 'in hoary flakes' when they reared; the dead crew, who work the ship and 'raise their limbs like lifeless tools'—everything seems to have been actually *seen*, and we believe it all as the story of a truthful eye-witness. The details of the voyage, too, are chronicled with such order and regularity, there is such a diary-like air about the whole thing, that we accept it almost as if it were a series of extracts from the ship's 'log.' Then again the execution—a great thing to be said of so long a poem—is marvellously equal throughout; the story never drags or flags for a moment, its felicities of diction are perpetual, and it is scarcely marred by a single weak line. What could have been better said of the instantaneous descent of the tropical night than :—

'The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out :
At one stride comes the dark ;'

What more weirdly imagined of the 'cracks and growls' of the rending iceberg than that they sounded "like noises in a sward?" And how beautifully steals in the passage that follows upon the cessation of the spirit's song :—

'It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like to a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.'

Then, as the ballad draws to its close, after the ship has drifted over the harbour-bar—

'And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God ;
Or let me sleep away,'

with what consummate art are we left to imagine the physical traces which the mariner's long agony has left behind it, by a method far more

terrible than any direct description—the effect, namely, which the sight of him produces upon others :—

'I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit ;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

'I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

Perfect consistency of plan, in short, and complete equality of execution, brevity, self-restraint, and an unerring sense of artistic propriety—these," Mr. Traill concludes, "are the chief notes of the *Ancient Mariner*, as they are *not*, in my humble judgment, the chief notes of any poem of Coleridge's before or since."

ONTARIO: CONFEDERATION OF COLLEGES.

THIS important scheme for education in Ontario is being carefully considered by the different college boards affected by it, and discussed with much interest by all intelligent persons in the country.

There are three principal propositions to be considered in the scheme now before us : 1. Is it for the benefit of education in Ontario, as matters are at present, to confederate all the higher institutions of learning in one university, having the double duty of teaching and of examining for degrees? 2. This proposition being answered in the affirmative, what compensation, if any, should be given to those colleges, not now in the Queen's park for moving there? and 3. who is to make this compensation? We shall answer the last first. Every one of those engaged in the preparation of the scheme takes it for granted that that is to be the part of the government.