

The advantages thus gained, it is contended, would more than compensate for the expense incurred in mixing and in the use of additional space.

The Earl of Derby has made a suggestion which ere long will be put into practice. He proposes a grand exhibition of portraits of all ages. The old halls of England teem with likenesses of men famous in history, very many of them painted by masters of the art. To the antiquarian and the student the exhibition will be exceedingly interesting. A preliminary meeting has already been held, and an effort is to be made to secure the exhibition building at Kensington for the purpose named.

Dr. H. G. Ollendorff, the inventor of the royal road to the knowledge of German, French, Latin, and other languages, is dead. It is perhaps a matter of regret that his book will not die with him. It is very much to be questioned whether his system ever helped any one to an accurate knowledge of any tongue; while it is certain that half the labour expended in following faithfully his directions would, if applied to less pretentious though more old fashioned works, have been attended with thoroughly satisfactory results. The deceased Doctor during thirty years of puffing and publishing was very successful commercially, and died worth a large sum of money.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY.

THE following is a report of some observations of Mr. Chas. Lyell at the recent anniversary of the Geological Society:

"In the discussions which I have lately heard, on the propriety of certain writers having openly declared the modifications in their views, to which they had been led by new discoveries in science, I have heard some able scholars of about my own age gravely declare that, while they highly approved of researches in science and Biblical criticism, and were interested in seeing the light which modern researches in physics, languages, ethnology, and antiquities, were shedding on the interpretation of Scripture, and while they were of opinion that questions arising out of these inquiries should be thought out and communicated to the learned—they yet regretted that they were not all published, as they would have been some four centuries ago, in the Latin language, so as to be confined to a circle which could be safely entrusted with such novelties without there being any danger of unsettling the creed of the multitude.

"I cannot help being amused when I try to imagine what would have been the sensations of these friends of mine, if they had happened casually to drop into the theatre in Jermyn Street when Professor Huxley was lecturing on the origin of species and of the various races of mankind, or when Professor Ramsey was giving the course of lectures, which he has just concluded, on geological time—and observed that these discourses, delivered gratis, or for a mere nominal fee, in a Government establishment, were addressed to the working classes—to a large, intelligent, and enthusiastic audience composed of the artisans of London—that they were given, not to a select few and in a dead language, but in the vulgar tongue, in good, impressive, clear, and often eloquent English—what, I say, would have been the reflections of my friends upon the want of judgment shown by the teachers of the present generation, in freely communicating such knowledge to such a class of students? But, if it were possible to limit the communication of new truths to a privileged class, you will, I am sure, agree with me that it is not desirable or right to do so; and that no state of society can be conceived more dangerous than one in which the distance between the opinions of the educated few and the less educated millions is continually becoming wider and wider, in matters in which all must take the deepest interest.

"There is, however, another step in advance, which it is high time for scientific laymen to take, if they would be true to themselves and to science. It is not enough that they should themselves communicate freely, to all the new truths at which they have arrived. They should lend their encouragement, sympathy, and support, to those members of the clergy (a body to whom the education of the millions is mainly entrusted) who boldly come forward to make known such truths as science has established, even when they

necessitate the modification of some of those theological and traditional opinions in which we have all been brought up. They should admire and honour them for the sacrifices they are ready to make in their efforts to reform the popular views of Scripture, and to bring them into harmony with the conclusions deduced from scientific inquiry. Above all, they should protest against the doctrine of those who hold that the moment any one of these teachers, appointed by the nation, has acquired clear knowledge of some of those new truths, he should resign his post, and give place to some other, who, being ignorant, could conscientiously go on teaching the old doctrines, or, not being ignorant, could recede with his sense of duty to teach others what he does not believe himself."

REVIEWS.

Books for review should be forwarded, as soon as published, to the Editor, SATURDAY READER, Montreal.

THE OLD THING.

HAVING a bad memory for names and dates, we are unable to say who wrote the first romance, and, in like manner, we cannot tell our readers the particular day of the week, and year on which it was issued. We are also unable to say whether it was the first, second, or third novel that contained the story of a Secret Love, a Secret Marriage, a Duel and a Wedding. Certain it is that very early in the history of written romance, Secret Loves, Secret Marriages, Secret Duels and Public Weddings became staple commodities in the world of fiction; and with a due respect for ancient custom, Mrs. Leprohon has travelled upon the beaten track with commendable rectitude.

Antoinette de Mirecourt is a historical romance. It is purely Canadian, treating of Canadian persons and places, appealing to Canadian sentiment and sympathy. We forbear discussing two general remarks about such works. Firstly, the difficulty the writer has to encounter in getting heroes who shall be natural and fit characters—and of securing that romantic setting, that atmosphere other than our own everyday one, which is so necessary to romance. Secondly, there has been so much done already in romances,—Halwer, James, and a host of others, that even a Canadian author must suffer by comparison. Briefly the plot is this. Antoinette de Mirecourt is the daughter of a Seigneur, whose seigneurie (Valmont) is not on the map. She has a cousin M^{me}. D'Aulnay, who incidentally possesses a husband who lets her work her own sweet will, provided he is not disturbed in his library. The scene is, we may say, in Montreal, in 1762. Miss de Mirecourt goes to Montreal to dissipate much as any one would in 1862. She falls desperately in love with one Audley Sternfield, an officer in the English army. He is irresistibly handsome, of course. He has thus two things against him.—his name and his nature. Audley is completely played out. Irresistible young fops, such as the Assyrian Bull in "Maud," and with whom the heroine always falls in love are really getting too common. The full soul loatheth the honey-comb. With this young man Antoinette falls in love, and by a concatenation of circumstances is forced to marry him secretly. She becomes his wife in nothing but in so much that the ceremony has been performed. He also acquires the right of hectoring about her flirtations, and of himself flirting monstrously without reproof. But the plot thickens. A Mr. Louis Beaucheno was previously introduced upon the stage. Papas appear on the whole to have been much the same in 1762 that they are in 1862. He kindly announced that she would marry Beaucheno in four weeks. The lady demurred, being married already. Whereupon a lively scene occurred. Miss de Mirecourt prevails upon Mr. Louis Beaucheno to assist her in, we may say, humbugging her papa. Mr. Louis Beaucheno pretends to be engaged to her, and postpones the ceremony for six months. Being very much in love and not showing it, appears to be his forte. This convenient decoy duck, Mr. Louis Beaucheno, staves off the imagery (so bold) discovery for some time. Captain A. Sternfield declines to publish his marriage, kindly assigning as a reason to his bride that he only waits her coming of

* ANTOINETTE DE MIRECOURT, traduit de l'anglais par J. A. GENAND, Montreal, Beauchemin et Valois, 1865.

ago so that he may secure her fortune. This is candid. Just now Miss de Mirecourt discovers that she does not love Audley. The man in question is Colonel Cecil (Cecil of all names, how sweet), Evelyn (Evelyn of all names how original!) a stolen member of the British aristocracy, who was disappointed in love. He loves her, and she loves him. He discovers her love for Mr. Sternfield, and cuts her acquaintance. All the characters drive madly to Laclue, where they lunch on provisions carried out in a hamper. Every one races from Montreal to Valmont, and is detained by the roads. Miss de Mirecourt has a confirmed habit of crying herself to sleep. Mr. Louis Beaucheno and Captain A. Sternfield meet at a ball. Miss de Mirecourt is about to dance with Mr. Louis Beaucheno. Sternfield insists on her dancing with himself—she does so. Well, Mr. Louis Beaucheno challenges Captain Sternfield, and kills him. This is the last we hear of Mr. Louis Beaucheno. He flies to France, and consistently marries some one else. Miss de Mirecourt—we beg pardon, Mrs. Sternfield—waits upon her husband's dying couch. He swears and sighs, and finally dies forgiven. Mrs. Sternfield has an attack of brain fever, and marries Colonel Evelyn,—and that's all.

Briefly the book is good for Canada. It faithfully tells its story without episodes and digressions. It sticks to Canadian accuracy and to Canadian character. The plot is ingenious enough, particularly as regards L. C. Beaucheno and his collateral; by killing Captain Sternfield, he puts himself out of the way. Mr. Evelyn marries a maiden-widow, and we thus overcome the natural repugnance to the true love wedding the scoundrel's widow. The book is not strong in incidental descriptions of the characters or scenery. Still we can confidently call it our best Canadian novel, *en attendant mieux*.

Mr. Genand has translated it with the fidelity and spirit of a scholar and translator. Such reciprocity among authors tends to a better acquaintance with our national literature in both languages, by those who do not possess another tongue than their own.

We may briefly cite (page 273) one little error. The man whose last state was worse than his first, is mentioned by the Evangelists, and not by St. Paul, as the author states.

To conclude. Mr. Genand's book is intended as a lesson against foolish and inexperienced young girls forming senseless attachments with any handsome young fop they may meet. It teaches the folly of undertaking obligations whose performance entails troubles which were not anticipated and provided for. It shows us that a woman by such a *liaison* forfeits the love of one that is true and manly. It teaches the imprudence ofilly match-making, but we cannot help regretting that the author has thought it necessary to deface these good morals by throwing such a halo of romance around the close of her heroine's career. This may be necessary in writing an attractive novel, but, if it is so, it is a necessary evil. The lesson of Miss de Mirecourt's misery and sufferings, brought on by foolish and imprudent conduct, will be totally lost on the romantic young reader, when she learns that the said Miss de Mirecourt's misfortunes ultimately resolve themselves into a happy union with the man she loves and by whom she is beloved. **ALLIÉ.**

HAPPY IDEA.—We understand that a society is about to be organized on this continent, for the purpose of securing from the various Railway companies, and the present contractors, the sole privilege of selling newspapers, periodicals, magazines, books, &c., on the Railway cars and at the stations. The object in view is to use this important medium, through which such an enormous quantity of pernicious and trashy sensation literature is circulated, for the diffusion of periodical books, magazines, &c., which tend to the improvement of the public morals. It is certainly a happy idea, and if found practicable and judiciously managed, we have no doubt but a large amount of real good may be accomplished. It would be an undoubted boon to the travelling public if nine-tenths of the current literature were entirely banished from the cars, and replaced by something of a more healthy description. The sale of this trashy stuff, combined with the prize package system of cozenage forms one of the chief bores with which the traveller meets. We learn that the committee which has been formed for the organization of the society referred to, has met three times; once in California, once in the Eastern States, and once in the house of a respected citizen of Montreal who takes an active interest in such matters.