

## RECENT MISCELLANY.

A PAMPHLET recently submitted to us by the author, the Hon. Pierre J. O. Chauveau, deals with the history of the famous Latin hymn, *Dies Iræ*,\* and deserves the careful perusal and appreciation of all intelligent readers. The honourable gentleman's reputation, which is already that of a scholar and *prosateur* of merit, will be further enhanced by the research and acumen displayed in this pamphlet. M. Chauveau has also written some charming verse, and must be regarded as one of the most popular authors the Lower Province has produced. The *brochure* in question contains an account of the best translations known of the well-worn hymn, including those by Crashaw, Dryden, Lord Roscommon, and Walter Scott among the English, and an important French one from the pen of Père Clair, published at Paris with very interesting notes and comments, and very handsomely bound and printed. M. Chauveau is of the opinion, in which most people will agree with him, that those translations are best which in any language follow the original text most closely, and in this respect it certainly appears that the English tongue has the best of it. The best English translations however seem each to possess a few supremely bad rhymes which go far to injure the artistic effect, such as the opening verse as it stands in "Hymns Ancient and Modern" where *mourning*, *warning*, and *burning* constitute the first rhyme. M. Chauveau, who is a member of the Royal Society of Canada, has placed his most interesting little work at Messrs. Dawson Brothers, St. James Street, Montreal, for sale, where it can be had for twenty-five cents.

ONE of the most useful text-books that has ever come under our notice is that recently issued by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, entitled "An Introduction to Greek Sculpture."† The author, L. E. Upcott, M.A., is late scholar of Corpus Christi, Oxford,—present assistant master of Marlborough College—who eight years ago set on foot a small collection of casts and photographs from the antique adapted to the use of a school. The present little volume has grown out of the collection, having been originally compiled as a somewhat elaborate guide-book to the examples thus gathered together. Mr. Upcott acknowledges his great indebtedness to the larger works of such painstaking and detail-loving Germans as Brunn, Overbeck, and Müller, and to many other foreign and English writers on the subject of ancient sculpture. We are, however, also in our turn justly indebted to him for having concentrated and focussed so much important information in so small a space. The book contains positively no illustrations, for which the student will be sincerely grateful, as it is very seldom in such cases that the illustrations give anything but crude perversions and distortions of the truth. The Epoch of Phœdias, the Different Attic Monuments of the Fifth Century, Contemporary Peloponnesian Sculpture, and the Age of Alexander furnish divisions for the chapters, which are only nine in number, but which deal fully and concisely with the various subjects treated of. Lists of art photographers, galleries of casts, and of the chief monuments illustrating the history of Greek sculpture testify to the author's genius for classification, without which no such attempt at compiling a thoroughly useful art guide-book could be at all successful.

In a charming little book bearing the title of the "Pleasures of Life,"‡ and which is *not* by some new aspirant to the Laureateship, a modern Rogers or Campbell, but by our old friend Sir John Lubbock of scientific fame, we have some highly elevating moral reflections upon life and conduct in general which originally were addressed to various institutes and colleges throughout Great Britain. The subjects are not particularly new, we have heard something before about the "Choice of Books" and the "Delights of Travel," the "Pleasures of Home" and the "Blessing of Friends." Still because many of us possess these things we are apt to underrate them, since they are always with us. According to Walter Pater, "Simple gifts and others quite trivial, bread and wine, fruit and milk, might regain that poetic and as it were moral significance which surely belongs to all the means of our daily life, could we but break through the veil of our familiarity with things by no means vulgar in themselves." As a moral essayist Sir John Lubbock is sure to be successful, because, being a great scientist, he is sure to be in earnest in everything he does and says, whether the habits of the ants in his front garden or the spiritual condition of a college of working men be the matter he is considering. Earnestness amounting to gravity, which is yet compatible with a perfect sense of humour and appreciation of purely mundane affairs is perhaps the distinguishing trait of our modern scientists, and Sir John is no exception to the rule. The little essays are literally choked with quotations from every imaginable source, so that it is rather curious that the chapter on the "Happiness of Duty" contains no reference to Wordsworth's strong and noble "Ode to Duty," one of his finest poems, which is singularly neglected by compilers of books for youth and children, but which should rank high as a piece to be committed to memory and ever after to be enshrined in the heart. It is pleasant to see that Sir John eminently desires as a foundation for genuine literary taste, a knowledge of the noble literatures of Greece and Rome, and even a smattering of the Eastern writers of Persia and ancient India, without which, as he wisely declares, our modern superstructure must be useless and unstable indeed.

WHEREAS, ten or fifteen years ago, the reviewer may have felt himself compelled to slightly indicate in deprecatory terms the anomalous position

occupied by Mr. Herbert Spencer, high priest of Evolution, before proceeding to dissect his books, at the present day the absorbing interest centred in so strong and original a mind has subsided into that placid respect and perhaps cold-blooded admiration that inevitably follow the torrents of abuse and the pæns of panegyric that accompany the rise of a great name. To-day, in short, the reviewer has little or nothing to say about Mr. Herbert Spencer. He has won his way to world-wide recognition as a sympathetic philosopher of the highest rank, and as a thinker of great depth and unquestioned originality. Still, it is possible to glean from the collected writings of any *savant* or thinker some special volume or essay, or indeed single paragraphs, which indicate his genius at its high water mark, and which will always be brought forward as specimens of his best style and his most precious inspiration. There can be no question that in the case of Mr. Herbert Spencer this is perfectly possible and legitimate. Huxley, Darwin, Tyndall, Balfour, and Clifford, though mainly interested in the same set of phenomena as Mr. Spencer, are more frequently read for their presentation of arguments bearing upon the purely biological. With Mr. Spencer, while we follow him throughout similar arguments and observe their direct and indirect bearings always with keen and unflagging interest, we yet feel conscious that beyond these phenomena, their description, explanation, and modification, and beyond even our acceptance or rejection of them as doctrine, there is that great fact of human interest. Psychology, Ethics, and Sociology are Mr. Spencer's special—we were about to add exclusive—property, and it is this interest in humanity which has gained for him a reputation so wide-spread, genuine, and steadily increasing. Fascinating as that marvellous book, the "Origin of Species," was, and as the problems of morphology and biology are, as set forth by Mr. Spencer himself, no portion of the vast mass of evolutionary literature which has been slowly but surely accumulating with pertinent significance during the last twenty years is so valuable, so entertaining, and so absolutely novel as that relating to the study of sociological beliefs. "The Factors of Organic Evolution,"§ reprinted with additions from that treasure-house of modern thought, the *Nineteenth Century*, is the latest addition to Spenceriana, and consists of two essays originally published in April and May, 1886. These essays, though not dealing with sociological subjects, and therefore not fulfilling the highest conditions under which Mr. Spencer writes, are nevertheless replete with the greatest interest. The fact that individual evolution is accomplished by successive in-foldings and in-growings is insisted upon, and the principle of natural selection is shown to be subject to differentiation in clusters of units, and to operate only through taking advantage of those structural changes which the given medium and its contents initiated. A phrase of Professor Huxley's, in connexion with the theory of organic evolution, and referred to in the course of the argument, lingers in the mind long after the arguments themselves have faded:—That "Science commits suicide when it adopts a creed" were the words uttered by Professor Huxley, in an address which he delivered before unveiling the statue of Mr. Darwin in the museum at South Kensington.

"COLUMBUS; or, A Hero of the New World,"|| an historical play, by D. S. Preston, and a recent production of the Knickerbocker Press, is, despite some drawbacks, an excellent attempt at dramatic composition. In five acts, the good old regulation number, and with thirty-eight principals, it will be gathered that the author is fairly ambitious, and has endeavoured at least to produce something which shall stand beside Shakespeare. As a literary work the play has certainly very strong points, and the asseverations of Hon. James Russell Lowell and Edwin Booth, which are printed in an appendix, are really quite unnecessary to assist the reader to form some idea of the scope of the drama, its story and its aim. The introduction of the miraculous element is a mistake, and while there are many fine descriptive passages throughout the work, and some attempt at characterisation, the general effect is heavy, and the author makes a great mistake in thinking that it would be effective on the stage. Indeed, it were better for the sake of the book that the appendix be eliminated, as it is only too easy to read between the lines of some letters from various actors, authors, and managers to whom the play has been off-red, and whose well-meant criticisms Mr. Preston publishes in great good faith. Besides, the grand transformation scene bringing up the rear of the fifth act, displaying in fourfold grouping the allegorical impersonations of the States composing the American Union, is hardly in keeping with the literary merit of the lines, and is only equalled by a later postscript of patriotism and blazonry, out of which are supposed to emerge, with sudden vividness, the glorious images of Columbus, Washington, and Lincoln.

ALDEN'S "Manifold Cyclopædia of Knowledge and Language"¶ will be found to be an excellent publication of its kind. Slight and sketchy the articles must be from the size of the volumes, but accurate, concise, and carefully-prepared they still appear to be. The work is illustrated, is beautifully bound and printed, and undertakes to present a survey of the entire circle of knowledge, whether of words or things, thus combining the characteristics both of a cyclopædia and a dictionary. In the specimen number submitted, A to America, there is, by the way, no separate notice of Acadia, or *Acadie*, the word being simply stated to be the original and poetic name of Nova Scotia. For information we are therefore referred to the article Nova Scotia, which seems at least a pity.

\* "Le Dies Iræ: Traduction en vers Français," etc., etc. Mons. P. J. O. Chauveau. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

† "An Introduction to Greek Sculpture." Upcott. Oxford: Clarendon Press; Toronto: Williamson and Co.

‡ "The Pleasures of Life." Sir John Lubbock, F.R.S. London: Macmillan and Co.; Toronto: Williamson and Co.

§ "The Factors of Organic Evolution." By Herbert Spencer. New York: D. Appleton and Co.; Toronto: Williamson and Co.

|| "Columbus; or, A Hero of the New World." D. S. Preston. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Knickerbocker Press. Toronto: Williamson and Co.

¶ "Alden's Manifold Cyclopædia of Knowledge and Language." With Illustrations. New York: John B. Alden.