

OUR HUNDRED DAYS IN EUROPE. By Oliver Wendell Holmes. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company. Toronto: Williamson and Company.

Admirers of the genial Dr. Holmes—and they are not by any means confined to his native country, but spread all over the English-speaking world—have already welcomed in the *Atlantic Monthly* these witty, graphic, and altogether alluring reminiscences of a delightful pleasure trip to England and France. Much comment at this season is therefore superfluous, though one would fain linger on the enthusiasms and enjoyments, the meetings, feasts, banquets, and receptions that made the Doctor's progress in the mother country little short of a triumphal one. While remaining loyal and leal, as a good citizen should, to the institutions and traditions of his beloved America, he was able to enjoy all he saw in England in a large, generous, and appreciative spirit which testifies much to his charm of mind and character and his inherent nobility. Books of this kind do not as a rule add in any very striking measure to their author's reputation, yet, even in this respect, Dr. Holmes' good angel has pointed his pen and inspired his sentences with the result that his rare gift of investing commonplace subjects with lively and genuine interest has again created a work of much more than mere occasional importance. His keen, correct, and always admirably cultured perceptions were nowhere at fault throughout his residence in London, his appearances in the venerable halls of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh, or his sojourn at Salisbury; and the reader cannot fail to be much impressed with the exquisite tact, the delicate humour, and the ready wit that shine on every page and enhance every topic.

JACK THE FISHERMAN. By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. With illustrations. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company. Toronto: Williamson and Company.

A story which is not strictly speaking a temperance story, but which yet deals very powerfully with the evils of drink and the terrible and ineradicable curse of heredity. The tale is told with that strong and sudden pathos, that wealth of beautiful language, and that irresistible dramatic vigour that characterise Miss Phelps' best work. There is of course always much of the purely ideal in her books, and we therefore accept only in the ideal spirit that sense of fitness which demands that Jack shall have a crucifix tattooed upon his arm, and that he sings in a clear, sweet tenor "Rock of Ages," as he throws himself overboard after murdering his wife. The realists despise all this, and partly with justice. Yet truth has often been proved to be considerably stranger than fiction, and it would be unwise to cast away these nice details which have surely given their creator much trouble to think out and employ. In conclusion, it may be said that everything Miss Phelps writes appeals in the highest sense to the imagination, and *Jack* is no exception to the rule.

THE OLD GARDEN AND OTHER VERSES. By Margaret Deland. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Co. Toronto: Williamson and Company.

Upon the first appearance of this delightful book it received warm commendation from the American press, and has since been circulated freely enough to warrant a second instalment of praise. The dainty binding, in a figured chintz of long ago, the beautiful paper and printing, the charm of rhythmic verse and cultured thought, all combine to make an inexpressibly pleasing little book. Once open the pages, and we are in truth inside an old garden, faint with breath of old-world flowers, poppies, pansies, daffodils, and daisies. Each flower has some tale to tell of love for lovers, of joy for children, of wisdom for old age. Anything more magically sensuous than the fragrant flower-laden atmosphere of these poems would be hard to find.

"THE SWANEE RIBBER." By Stephens Collins Foster. Beautifully Illustrated. Boston: Ticknor and Co., 1888.

We cannot do better than quote the following as an appreciative notice of this pretty gift-book: "The cover has a representation of the blazing fire-place in the old cabin, and, as a frontispiece, a glorious full-page picture of Christine Nilsson, as she appeared when singing this marvellous song. The words of the song are exquisitely drawn and illuminated, amid wreaths of rich Southern flowers and fair Southern landscapes, with many full-page illustrations, representing the Swanee River, the old cabin home, the weary wanderer, the joys of childhood, the banjo-players, etc. The air of the song is also given." Surely it is a happy idea to perpetuate in so beautiful a form a thoroughly American composition, famed for its pathos and truth to nature.

LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON. By Washington Irving. New York: John B. Alden.

All that is required to be said of this well-known American classic is unstinted praise of a new, handsomely bound, and illustrated and exceedingly cheap edition. At a time when numberless compilations from modern sources are being issued upon American subjects, it is well to read once more this brightly written and popular biography, which has always exhibited the gifts of its celebrated author at their best. The touch is always the same, whether the subject be native to his pen and thought or foreign to at least the latter; the brilliancy, the terseness, the sympathy are his in every case, whether the hero be Columbus or Goldsmith or George Washington. The *Life* is complete in four volumes, and contains excellent portraits and illustrations.

UTOPIA. By Sir Thomas More. New York: John B. Alden.

The use of the word *Utopian* is frequent among hosts of people who have never opened, much less carefully read through, the celebrated work of Henry VIII.'s celebrated Chancellor. Nevertheless, it is one of the most important and readable classics to be found in the early literature of England, first printed in 1516, then appearing again two years later, and finally translated into English (it was originally written in Latin) by Ralph Robinson in 1551. To have written a work of such length in Latin would seem a marvellous thing in itself, but when are added the author's natural gifts, style, perspicacity, and keen knowledge of men and manners, we seem to be in the presence of a universal genius, to whom indeed much has been given. Following are two or three more characteristic of the aphorisms contained in this remarkable work, which is issued in very charming style by the well-known New York house:

"If any man aspires to any office, he is sure never to compass it."

"They have but few laws, and such is their constitution that they need not many. They have no lawyers among them, for they consider them as a sort of people whose profession it is to disguise matters, and to wrest the laws."

"Their priests are men of eminent piety, and therefore they are but few; there are only thirteen in every town—one for every temple."

"None of the magistrates have greater honour paid them than is paid the priests; and if they should happen to commit any crime, they would not be questioned for it. Their punishment is left to God and to their own consciences."

ALDEN'S MANIFOLD CYCLOPEDIA OF KNOWLEDGE AND LANGUAGE. With Illustrations. Vol. II. America, British, to Artemis. New York: John B. Alden.

The previous impression made by the first volume of this very useful work is considerably deepened by our reception of the present instalment, although we note several omissions. The name of Edwin Arnold is, we think, most inexcusably omitted, also Anaphora, a familiar figure of rhetoric. Otherwise the work seems to be one of the most valuable, and at the same time one of the cheapest that has ever been offered to the public. The type and general press-work are delightful, the statistics sound, and its comprehensiveness really astonishing.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

To hell the Thracian Orpheus went,
He went to seek his wife below;
To worse place he could not go,
Nor on a worse errand bent.
He sung before the congregation,
With awe and wonderment he filled them;
Yet, sooth, 'twas not his song that thrilled them,
It was his strange infatuation.
To Pluto's rage it lent the fuel,
And with a vigour most inhuman
He gave him back the wished-for woman,
He knew no punishment more cruel.
Though to his arms he'd not refuse her,
In payment of the grudge he owed him,
Yet for his wondrous song he showed him
A short and easy way to lose her.

—J. G. Gibson (Translation from the Spanish).

MRS. SCOTT SIDDONS.

It is quite like "old times" to see the familiar lithographs of Mrs. Scott Siddons' beautiful face contesting possession of the dead walls with the flaring posters of travelling troupes and startling announcements of sacrificial sales. It is six years since Mrs. Siddons was here, and during that time she might have been residing in another planet, for all the world has heard of her. In fact she has been living quietly with her adopted son, Mr. Henry Waller, in whatever European city his musical studies have kept him. This Mr. Henry Waller is the boy "Seraphael" whose playing aroused some enthusiasm six years ago in London. Mrs. Scott Siddons predicts a brilliant career for him; indeed this is the only subject upon which she talks with enthusiasm.

Mrs. Siddons will not find, in fact she has not found, for she told me so, that it is nearly so easy to arouse appreciative interest now as it was six years ago. Elocution, pure and simple, seems to have lost its charm for the masses. They demand the many-sidedness of the stage. It requires a slight mental effort to enjoy readings, and the crowd would be amused without that. Recognising this, modern comedy prospers, and an *artiste* like Mrs. Scott Siddons is perforce content with diminished receipts.

Mrs. Siddons' beauty has hardly faded perceptibly at all, but a slight huskiness—the result of the bronchial affection on account of which she is making this Canadian tour—was noticeable on the second night of her appearance in Montreal. She gives *The Captain* with all her old dramatic force, interprets Shakespeare as ideally as ever, and is simply delightful in *Anne Hathaway*. In Mark Twain's *Famous French Duel*, however, she makes the mistake of affecting the down-east drawl which her honest English tongue does not circumvent very successfully, and which moreover is by no means necessary to the interpretation of the piece.

Montreal.

SARA J. DUNCAN.