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HOME JOURNAL

Life, Literature and Education

IN THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND ART.

"The Pilgrim's Progress" was played at the Imperial Theatre, London, during Lent, and bids fair to rival "Everyman" as a Lenten entertainment.

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The prize offered by the mayor of Strathcona for the best design for a coat-of-arms for the new city was won by Mrs. B. M. George, Innisfail. The design is in the form of a shield, with a field on the face of it divided into several sections. On the top is a mounted soldier evidently intended to represent Strathcona's Horse. On another section is a prairie lily; on another a maple leaf; on another a boatman on a river; and the last has a miner's pick and shovel.

* * *

There is an interesting story, says the *Westminster Gazette*, connected with Ruskin's fairy-tale of "The King of the Golden River," which Mr. Stead has just added to his "Books for the Bairns." Mr. Stead tells it in his preface to the little book: When Ruskin was a young man some Scotch friends of the family, who lived in Perth, sent their daughter to stay with the Ruskins at Herne Hill, London. This young lady was a pretty and lively girl, and one day she challenged Ruskin, who was anything but a lively young man, to write a fairy-tale, for she believed that such a task was the least likely one that he would undertake. In this she was mistaken, for in two sittings John Ruskin completed "The King of the Golden River."

For nine years the story remained in manuscript, for it was only written for the amusement of the young lady from Perth, and not for publication. At length, however, it was printed in a book, and the story was illustrated by Mr. Richard Doyle. When it first appeared it was often given as a prize in schools, and copies of the first edition are very rare—so rare, indeed, that for one copy of that first edition much money has been paid. The girl for whom it was written afterwards married John Ruskin.

* * *

Japan is forming a vast circulating library of books in every language of the world for the benefit of students anxious to acquire the ideas of Western civilization. No fewer than 53,000 volumes of scientific and educational literature and wholesome fiction in 24 languages have already reached Tokio as a nucleus.

The library was really started by an English woman, Mrs. Gordon, who gives the following interesting account of the origin:

"About two and one-half years ago I met Professor Takakusu, of Tokio University," she said, by way of explanation. "Professor Takakusu was a pupil of the late Professor Max Muller, and director of the College of Foreign Languages at Tokio. The valuable library of Professor Muller was offered for sale, and among the bidders were the German Emperor and the British Museum. Professor Takakusu fortunately found a wealthy Japanese nobleman who was willing to pay the price required for the whole collection intact, and so secured it. This led to a request by Professor Takakusu for more books to form a circulating library. I willingly agreed to make my house a depot for the receipt of books for such a purpose and I have received books for this purpose from all parts of the world."

* * *

Preparations for the publication in book form of the correspondence of the late Queen Victoria are almost concluded, and Mr. John Murray, who

is to publish this important book, is able to announce that it will be issued in October.

* * *

At the sale of the collection of a well-known philatelist, a Canada stamp of 1851, twelve pence, black, brought £50; a Newfoundland stamp of 1857, rare, unused, two pence, scarlet, brought £20; a Nova Scotia, 1851, three-shilling gold violet, apparently used, £20; a scarce unused shilling, purple, £19 10s.

THE POET OF THE HABITANT.

The death of Dr. W. H. Drummond occurred at Cobalt, Ontario, on Saturday, April 7th, the result of paralysis. He did not regain consciousness after the stroke.

Dr. Drummond occupied a unique place in Canadian literary life. He was an Irishman born in County Leitrim in 1854, but had lived for over forty years in Quebec. So keen was his observation and his ability to depict character in detail, that in his pictures of French-Canadian life and in the use of that dialect it would be impossible to tell that he was not one of the people whom he presents in such true coloring. It seems incredible that an outsider could picture so accurately their light heartedness, their love of family and church, the humor and pathos of their lives.

Though his increasing popularity as a lecturer and reciter of his poems made inroads upon his time, he never gave up his medical practice in Montreal. He has not left many books, but quality counted more with him than quantity, so instead of a new book every year, hurriedly written and carelessly put together, we have two or three small volumes of verse showing careful, skilful workmanship. "The Habitant" won him immediate popularity. Then came "Philorum's Canoe and Johnnie Corteau"; and last year "The Voyageur" appeared and was given as hearty a welcome. In recognition of his work he received the degree of L. L. D. from Toronto University, and belonged to the Royal Society of Literature, England, and the Royal Society of Canada.

THE GIFT AND THE GIVER.

Human consciousness is being more and more impressed with the fact that the gift without the giver is bare and that the true philanthropist is the man who gives himself, regarding the material things he bestows as of no greater importance than the wealth of his personality bestowed with them.

Those who heard General Booth, founder and head of the Salvation Army, on his recent journey across Canada, may congratulate themselves on the privilege of listening to one of the greatest men in the world to-day. Somewhat enfeebled physically by advancing years, he yet possesses and is sustained by an indomitable spirit, enabling him to carry on the work of his heart with his old time vigor. And that is the secret of his success—it is the work of his heart and to it he has devoted, not money, but his whole life.

Possessed of business ability and talent for finance of which a Carnegie or a Rockefeller need not be ashamed, he has yet made no money for himself, nor a great deal for any one else. He has been too busy putting men in a position where they could make money for themselves. And in this he differs from the millionaires noted for their money gifts. They used their powers to satisfy their own desire for money making, and hand a part of the result to a board of trustees to give away so as to leave room for new profits, and incidentally, to do the de-

gree of good money by itself is capable of doing. He had powers equally great but was not satisfied to use them in such narrow fashion.

They gave money, millions of it—made largely from one class of people, and that class most needing help—to institutions beyond the means of that class to benefit very largely from the donations. Large benefactions to universities enables them to add to their equipment and teaching forces but, so far at least, has not materially reduced the cost of a four-year's course to the student. Fifty millions to inculcate Chinese mandarins with Western civilization looks about as practicable as supplying Hottentots with moral pocket handkerchiefs, *a la* Mrs. Jellyby.

But the man whom kings have delighted to honor began his philanthropic work with no money, and, according to all accounts, has very little more now, after paying increasing expenses, than he had then. He might have had millions if he had given his mind to it. Instead, he placed *himself* at the disposal of the neediest—the poor, the sad, the miserable, the degraded. He said by his life, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee," and he gave "such as he had" in abundance—help, encouragement, cheer and sympathy, all drawn from a great heart of love.

When the work grew too big for a single pair of hands he used his splendid powers of organization to form, not a trust or a combine, but a mighty band of men and women imbued with his spirit and in accord with his creed that the only true charity is to bring the helped into close contact with the helper. And wherever the plain uniform of the army is seen, thousands rise up to call him blessed, and to testify to the efficiency of methods inspired by love of God and men.

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

For the fourth time the Premiers of Britain's Colonies will meet in London to discuss the Empire's business. The members will assemble first on April 15th and the Conference promises to be the most important yet held. Among the members are Sir Wilfred Laurier, Canada; Sir Robert Bond, Newfoundland; General Botha, Transvaal; Dr. Jameson, of the Transvaal Raid fame, now Premier of Cape Colony; Alfred Deakin, Australia; Sir Joseph Ward, New Zealand; Frederick Moor, Natal. Rooms have been reserved for them in the Hotel Cecil, and preparations have been made to entertain them royally.

The questions that will be discussed vary in importance from preferential trade to patent laws. The former is easily first, and the question of Imperial Defence is a close second. The general opinion of the Premiers has been expressed by Dr. Jameson of Cape Colony, who proposes to introduce the following resolution: "This Conference, while adhering to the principle of preferential treatment for products and manufactures of the United Kingdom, desires to impress upon His Majesty's Government the opinion that the continuance of such preferential treatment to British producers and manufacturers is largely dependent upon the granting of some reciprocal privileges to British Colonies."

At present the question of Imperial Defence is one not likely to be settled, as opinions regarding it vary considerably among the members of the Conference. The Colonies do not feel called upon to bind themselves to help the United Kingdom in the event of a war with a European power arising out of difficulties with the Islands alone, yet they are willing to do their share when it is a matter affecting the interests of the whole Empire. On the other hand, if any one of these Colonies should be attacked by another power, nothing could be done to save it without the assistance of Great Britain. Other matters to be discussed include the exclusion of Asiatics, penny postage and immigration and naturalization laws.