

CORRESPONDENCE.

A CORRECTION.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—As I rather pride myself on not misquoting, I should be glad if the error "*callida juvenis*," in "All's Well that Ends Well," in the last issue of THE WEEK, could be noticed. It should, of course, read *callidus juvenis*. My absence from the city and inability to read the proof will explain.

E. A. MEREDITH.

A BUSINESS MEN'S CLUB—A SUGGESTION.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—Some weeks ago there appeared in your columns a letter from Professor Smith, containing a proposal to form a club, recreative and instructive, among the fraternity of arts and letters. The idea brought forth many hearty commendatory letters, and rightly, too. This idea of association of kindred minds into groups, for mutual benefit, has not been carried out, with us at all events, to the extent desirable; and, although to one outside the circle mentioned above, it might be thought the proposal had no interest, the contrary is the case. I beg leave to propose that a business men's club or association be formed on lines similar to the art club, viz.: for mutual intercourse, business interests and discussions, and the establishment of a common club room or headquarters. It will of course be here interjected that the Board of Trade fills the want, but I must object; first, because the membership of that body being limited, the ends are restricted, and, second, the Board of Trade being an official body, cannot with propriety undertake speculative work of any description. It must be apparent to observers that enough scope is not offered to business men of all grades to know more of each other personally, to know more of public affairs by a proper discussion of them, to know more of provident and legitimate business methods, and to acquire that freedom of speech which is so readily obtained by the professions, solely by means of the clubs and debating societies existent during student days.

I hold that there is an opening for a purely business men's club, which would include any and every business man in good standing who should choose to join it—a club with a reading room, open every day and night, having a meeting of members at stated periods for the transaction of necessary business, and the hearing of essays, papers and discussions thereon. Such a club would draw many business men out of their shells, and they would find that, after all, business and the almighty dollar is not everything, but that there is also a sphere of labour for the public weal, to which all may ascend, and within which many may labour with profit to themselves and to the people at large.

I know, Mr. Editor, that there are enough societies already, but surely not too many of the kind I so dimly outline. I commend the idea, however, to public discussion.

RICHARD A. DONALD.

Toronto.

CANADIAN GUIDE BOOKS.*

TRULY the time seems to have arrived when knowledge is increased and many run to and fro, and guide books seem peculiar evidence of these two chief characteristics of these latter days, for their aim is to supply knowledge for those who run to and fro.

Of the two books before us one turns perhaps naturally to that by Professor Charles G. D. Roberts. And for many reasons: there was already a "handbook" to Eastern Canada, that of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Company, one which has reached its eighth edition; Professor Roberts is so well and so very favourably known (to use the language of *Journalese*); lastly this is the first time he has forsaken the post of guide to the heights of Parnassus for that of guide to less visionary scenes. Many will regret this forsaking. Mr. Roberts is one of our pet poets—he will forgive the familiarity of the phrase for its intended kindness; he also now holds a position peculiarly adapted, one would think, for further excursions upon the afore-mentioned Parnassian heights; but, in lieu of devoting all his energies to, and concentrating his mind on, poetry, he writes guide books, or, more accurately, a guide book. What would be said if it were announced that Lord Tennyson was busied with the preparation of a handbook to Ventnor, to Cowes, and to Shanklinbury Chine? A good deal would be said. However all we shall say is that Messrs. Appleton and Company must be congratulated on persuading Mr. Roberts to do what he has done.

That he could do it well and has done it well, and that consequently his work is highly to be recommended, goes without saying; all the more also because here and there he has allowed his poetic vein to outcrop, as it were, and has treated his readers to choice bits of poetry and prose illustrative of the scenes and localities he has described. For this much thanks.

The book contains so much matter that it is difficult to

* 1. The Canadian Guide Book: the Tourist's and Sportsman's guide to Eastern Canada and Newfoundland, etc. By Charles G. D. Roberts. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1891.
2. The Maritime Provinces: a handbook for Travellers. Eighth edition. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1891.

specify particular excellences and more difficult to pick out faults. But we may remark that when dealing with that part of the country called (in the heading to a section) "From Toronto Eastward," all he has to say of the beautiful if somewhat circumscribed lake district north of Peterborough is "The country about [Peterborough] is a tangle of lakes and water ways, a fisherman's paradise, and it all lies at the feet of the skilful canoeist." Those who know Clear Lake, Stoney Lake, Love-Sick, Deer Bay—and since the American Canoe Association once camped there, and in all probability will camp there again, a great many people, American as well as Canadian, know them well—will regret this reticence on a locality as beautiful as even famed Muskoka and certainly more abounding in game.

The book is decidedly well got up from all bibliopegic points of view. It is professedly a copy of the well-known Baedekers in arrangement and classification of matter, and in system of treatment. The illustrations are numerous and good, maps abound, and a practically useful appendix for sportsmen is added.

Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Company's book must by this time be too well known to require description or criticism. It also follows Baedeker. It contains one item which its compeer lacks, namely, a good index. Professor Roberts should see that this is added to the next edition of his own work.

T. A. H.

A PLAY-GROUND FOR GIANTS.

ABOVE, a blue sky and sparkling sunshine; below, wide stretches of level gravel, marked out here and there by shady trees, edged and bordered by low buildings. To right and to left, as far as the eye throws, lies the encamping place of the British army, where for a time, as each regiment goes abroad, it comes for its final polishing. Aldershot itself, to an outsider, is an incomprehensible mystery, so silent in the mid-day hour, so full of bustle on review days. Everything here—and we stand in the midst of three infantry brigades—is so well ordered, spick and span; it might be keeping a fête day.

Far away to northward lies the Long Valley stretching eastward to the hills, with Hungry Hill for background and wavy grass and field. At its very entrance stands the great statue you and I have seen in London, which now gazes on different scenes: those the "Great Duke" would have loved! Here we can stand and look at it, unmoved by passing traffic, and wonder if this huge, big camp will hold another Wellington!

Behind it, and facing away to the eastward, a militia regiment is encamped in bell tents, pitched in the exact order so dear to the eye of a civilian. Flags wave over the Officers' Mess, and swell and flutter in the wind; at intervals a sound of bugles is borne across the breeze. A thick dust rises down the high road, where a fatigue party is coming in; farther away in dim distance are the stables of the Cavalry Brigade. But just now, if we had so willed, we could have witnessed a Royal Inspection: an occasion here so often repeated; few outsiders had gathered for it. Indeed, as we passed, a squad of horsemen rode by to form the Royal Escort, and drew up in line, their horses fretting, and chafing and stamping with impatience. In a minute there was immovable silence, and then a flash of swords, and some forty shining weapons had leapt from their scabbards. Then came another huge pause, and a Royal Lady stepped on the Barrack Square, and a cheer went up, a quiet cheer, but none the less welcome. Said I not 'twas a play-ground? Now came another part of the day's play and a big brown bear came on the scene, which the Royal Lady stooped to caress, and which two small drummers held between them. (Have all the regiments, you and I wonder, pets with which to play; or is it only here and there a regimental pet is seen?) Then came another pause, and the horsemen vanished, springing to guard a Royal carriage, and bands played and Aldershot gamins cheered and threw caps in the air. Here and there soldiers stood at attention, and gravely saluted the party guest, not a smile, and I watched their faces, diverted their eyes for one instant.

Playing at war was it I wonder? or was it to be a memory which on some hardly-fought field should give strength and victory?

Passing away from the Cavalry Brigade we mingled again in the big camp, where very soon you will search in vain for some of the things I have seen. You will find gone the old wooden huts, so rapidly they are disappearing, and in their stead brick buildings, which are growing and budding between them. In many of the lines the old huts are now clean swept away, and smart "officers' quarters," with flowered windows, have reared themselves in their stead. There was something home-like—speaking of flowers—in the efforts made everywhere to grow them. Few were the "lines" that did not own their small bordered patches of flowers; and where flowers were missing stones took their place, whitewashed with absolute purity. Not a square, so it seemed to me, but was surrounded by bordered stone-ways or rough seats.

It would have needed a special cyclopædia to understand all the directions, which were scattered broadcast on all the official buildings. To know the way about here must need a special education. Letters seem to stand for names, in confusing and tantalizing significance. How, for instance, should we find "No. 35, H house, C. I. B.?" Here it is, in our very midst; but how should we have found it? Or again, "F. O. hut, E. lines, S. C." What

does that stand for? Play-ground again? or is this, too, part of the science of war?

Here is a part of the true science, the well-known uniform of the Buffs, which you and I know so well, in its scarlet tunic and buff facings. Or, if you like, we can look on the Princess Louise's Highlanders. "Stand fast, 93rd," wasn't this once said? Here is the very same orderly we have seen painted by Mrs. Butler: just the same face we have seen together in so many of her battle pictures. Dear me, I wonder was it here she came for nurture and colouring: are all the boys and girls bred here brimfull of military instincts? Just for a while we are patriotic. Don't say it is all "sentiment." We can, if we like, associate famous deeds with all the regiments now here. Down in the south camp, not far off, we can come on the South Wales Borderers, once the ill-fated 24th you and I have both read of. There are the colours, one is faded, both are decked with silver wreaths. Do you associate names and a river and a gallant struggle with that wreath? Eleven years have passed since then, but men and women still remember; and those colours went hence lately to London to greet the German Emperor! Altogether some 10,000 men can be drawn from the Aldershot division. No better place in the world can I think of where more branches of the army can be seen. And how few American or Canadian visitors spare a short while to come here. I don't think even America can produce a second Aldershot. The idea is that the place is ugly; indeed but it is the reverse, whether the beautiful birthday parade ground or the Queen's parade be considered! For there are trees here, lovely trees, and gardens, such as the Officers' Club, and a lesson in neatness such as every one of us civilians can benefit by. Besides, there is much to be learned and studied in the branches of military education. In the Army Signalling School, the bright flags and curious lanterns and instruments, and if lucky a class may be seen reading some twenty words a minute from the fluttering of flags, to you and I undecipherable.

Go to Aldershot, and take with you a fund of inexhaustible admiration. I am sure you will bring away an intense appreciation.

E. K. PEARCE.

THE NEGRO IN AMERICA.

MANY public diseases are called intolerable when they have to be borne, and even when they can more easily be borne than people declare. If something less than the whole truth was told, how intolerable might English socialistic strike society appear, or Irish life in the country of which we not unnaturally sometimes form fantastic notions. To know the whole truth about the Negro in America ought not one to keep in mind such facts as the following?

(1) A year or two ago at Harvard College—and readers know what a constituency of wealth and influence is there represented, and what a feeling after being select—a "class orator" at the commencement was a negro. One cannot imagine a more prominent position to which the students could call a fellow student, unless that mentioned in

(2) The football first fifteen lately had a negro as our player.

(3) A professor in philosophy at the same college has mentioned the fact that one of the clearest-headed students he has had—if not the cleverest of all—was a negro.

(4) Another professor bears witness to the distinguished course of a negro at another college; to his capacity in learning languages; to his accent in modern languages, better and more refined than that of most of his fellows. And his admission to this college was a matter of anxiety; he was afterwards heartily well received and appreciated, and is another example of the real common sense of Charles Lamb's "How could I hate the man if I did know him?"

(5) An Anglican clergyman from the South working in a Northern large town at a mission, pleasantly called Hippo, declared of his negro flock that he did not think they were capable of sinking to the depths of the bad whites. And this Southerner was an utter disbeliever in the negro ever taking an equal position with the white man; he did not, however, think the children quite an intolerable nuisance.

(6) There is an ex-Southern officer now an Anglican clergymen in the North. He feels as strongly now as he did thirty years ago how unjust it is to speak of Southern masters and slaves as all tyrants and slaves in the bad sense. When he recalls kindness on the part of his parents and friends, and devotion and affection on the part of the negroes, is he not, indeed, recalling facts? Have we not been reminded lately about this in the story of the Southern planter and noble-spirited man which Mr. Gladstone has recommended his countrymen to read?

And is the goodness which found expression between master and servant in the old days not there now to show itself in self-reliance and uprightness, in justice and consideration for others? Has not everyone who has moved about in America, without tourist-like saying: "How clever I am, and how funny everybody else is," seen in every negro quarter of large cities the proofs of a people growing in self respect, with just the virtues, faults, or vices that belong to such a people elsewhere—neatness and dandyism, independence and insolence, worship of narrow respectability and striving after self improvement? Europeans ask: do not the Americans hate the negroes? In some such way, in Dr. Johnson's day, people said: do not