

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

TRIBUTES TO THE DEAD POET.

In Memoriam.

FROM purest wells of English undefiled
None deeper drank than he, the New World's child,
Who, in the language of their farm-fields, spoke
The wit and wisdom of New England folk,
Shaming a monstrous wrong. The world-wide laugh
Provoked thereby might well have shaken half
The walls of slavery down ere yet the ball
And mine of battle overthrew them all.

—John Greenleaf Whittier.

James Russell Lowell.

(Horace's Odes, I., 24.)

God gave thee power to make such music as should soothe
Our wounded hearts, Melpomene;
Sing to us now, for, oh! we mourn, without regret or shame,
One most beloved.

Eternal sleep clasps our Quintillus, whose like nor Honour,
Truth, Justice, nor Loyalty shall see again!
By good men wept, he died; Virgil, our friend is gone!
Yet all thy tears are vain—

Thou canst not call him back; nay, had thy lute
A subtler magic than the Thracian's harp
It could not summon from that Yonder Shore
The phantom that has crossed thereto.

Hard—hard is this!
And yet sweet Faith lightens the burthen of the cross
We likewise could not bear.

—Eugene Field, in the Argonaut.

THE INTELLECTUAL MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA.

FROM whence does the deep gloom which predominates over Russian literature proceed? Is it the effect of the long winters, where, as Ladislav Mickiewicz says, a yellow spot seen with difficulty reveals the existence of the sun in the afternoon? Is it an outcome of the political régime which keeps suspended over the heads of the citizens the menace of Siberia? The fact is undeniable that the most pessimistic of our writers do not approach the depths of despair seen in the works of the Russian novelists. The very strange statement is made that the greatest poets and romancers of Russia have had horrible destinies. Pouchkine and Lermontoff suffered violent deaths. Nicolas Gogol died in a state of mind bordering on insanity, tormented by a sickly religious exaltation, and trying in vain to find something earthly to which he could again become attached. Tourgueneff was a prey to profound melancholy; Tolstoi has subjected himself to the accusation of madness; Dostojewski was transported to Siberia early in life, and there lost his health. Perhaps the best reason is the one given by Ladislav Mickiewicz, that the dark pictures spread so lavishly through the Russian romances, comes from the fact that in this kind of literature alone it is lawful for the ardent complaint of the people to voice itself. History and journalism are submitted to a discipline so rigorous that neither one nor the other dare do anything except to interpret the policy of the Government. To read a Russian journal is simply to be informed as to the wishes of the Czar and the orientalizing of his politics. The personal tendencies of the Russian reviews are perceived rather than indicated, and one is reduced to the necessity of reading between the lines; not that which is written, but that which one would like to write. Among the following Russian writers: Joukoffski, Pouchkine, Lermontoff, Nicolas Gogol, Tourgueneff, Tolstoi, Dostojewski, Garchin, Veretchagine and Soltykoff, the latter is the only one who has approximated gaiety by the use of irony. Therefore, says Mr. Mickiewicz, it is well for France to read the Russian novels. The evil in them will be without bad effect, because her conditions are entirely different from those which inspire Russian writers, and she will be benefited by their great originality and depth of feeling.—Translated for Public Opinion from the Paris Revue des Revues.

ERASTUS WIMAN'S LETTER.

THE long letter which Mr. Erastus Wiman has taken the trouble to have cabled to England is, a Canadian correspondent writes, as misleading in its statement of facts as it is insolent in tone. The audacity with which it presumes on public ignorance is extraordinary. The charge that Sir John Macdonald alone was responsible for the tariff wall between the United States and Canada is at once upset by the simplest statements of the facts of the case. The reciprocity trial, which Lord Elgin negotiated in 1854, and which conferred such advantages on both countries, was abrogated in 1886 by the sole action of the United States, and numerous attempts to improve trade relations by repeated delegations to Washington were rejected by American Governments almost with contempt. It was simply when it was quite manifest that only by the surrender of national independence could Canada expect freer trade with the States that the national policy was enunciated by Sir John Macdonald, and the great task was entered upon of making Canada as commercially independent of the United States as was possible under the circumstances. Even Sir John's formally expressed policy has always been to enter new negotiations whenever Canada's neighbours showed any willingness to do so, and his appeal to British loyalty in the last election

was coupled with an undertaking to use every endeavour to meet the wish of Canadian people in regard to free trade with the United States. Mr. Wiman is singularly unfortunate in selecting the fishing industries of Canada to illustrate his point. Party exigencies at Washington alone prevented the acceptance of the Washington treaty which Mr. Cleveland's Cabinet had accepted as a fair settlement of the fishery question—a settlement largely due to Sir John Macdonald's wise diplomacy. If Mr. Wiman would devote his energies to denouncing in his own country Mr. McKimley and his tariff he would be better employed than in falsifying facts in connection with the memory of Canada's lost statesman.—Manchester Examiner.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY ON THE IRISH RACE.

MR. ARTHUR BENNETT, author of "John Bull and his other Island," has received the following letter from Professor Huxley: "Dear Sir,—I am very much obliged for your interesting volumes. Years ago I had occasion to visit many parts of Ireland, and my impressions of the country and people accord extremely well with yours. They are the most charming people in the world to have to do with in business, the transaction of which requires neither punctuality, accuracy, nor moral courage, and with all their surface *bonhomie*, they have as keen an eye to the main chance as the children of Israel. The Irish difficulty lies in the nature of the people and the physical character of the country, plus the operations for the Papacy to make Ireland the base of operations for the religious reconquest of Great Britain. The last is probably the key to the present position of affairs. The bishops want to use Home Rule for their own purposes, and the price, I take it, is the endowment of their churches and schools: and it would not surprise me if the assisted Education Act just passed through the House of Commons were made a precedent for legislation on that subject before we are much older. Ever yours, very faithfully, T. H. Huxley."—English Paper.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION.

IT is worthy of remark that the idea of university extension has taken root in other than English-speaking countries. A Danish correspondent writes to the Oxford Gazette in regard to work in Denmark: "About five years ago the undergraduates of the University of Copenhagen undertook to give free instruction to the working classes and others who were in need of such instruction. Courses were given in languages, natural science, and all subjects commonly taught in high schools. The rooms in which the instruction was given were lent free by the schools and other institutions. The movement succeeded, and after three years the organizing committee applied for and got State aid, to which, however, no conditions were attached. It was only an encouragement given to the brave efforts of the students. The undergraduates now give free legal advice through competent men, and the movement is extending in every direction. Branches of the central society in Copenhagen have already been established in the chief towns of Denmark, and it is only a question of time when the whole country will be covered by a network of similar instruction."—Science.

THE O'GORMAN MAHON.

He first went to Paris, and appeared at the Court of Louis Philippe. His handsome face and form and his readiness to fight, and his formidableness when once in a duel, soon won him fame and favour at Court. He became the friend of the King and intimate with Talleyrand. All the brilliant society of the capital of fashion was open to him. Women loved him, men sought and envied him, his enemies feared him, and his fortune rose high. With Paris as a centre of operations, he travelled over all Europe during the next few years. All sorts of wars, great and small, were waging, and The O'Gorman Mahon was in them all, now a captain, now a colonel, now a general. He fought under nearly every flag, and distinguished himself among the brave men around each European monarch. He went over into Africa, he fought under the banners of Oriental princes. At the end of ten years of this exciting life, for which he never lost the keen edge of appetite, he returned to the county Clare, and sat in Parliament for five years. At the end of that time he was beaten by five votes. He left his native country and did not return to it or to England for twenty years. He threw himself into a career of adventure with renewed energy. He was now in the full strength of his manhood. Hardship, restless activity had not impaired his health or strength in the least. He could still drink, ride, shoot and fence with the best and bravest. Women still found him first in attractiveness, with his bold, almost beautiful face, and his record of reckless daring, and his low, sweet voice that could say compliments or deadliest words of anger with equal grace and force. After remaining in France a while he went into Russia and joined the hunting party of the Czar to shoot bears and wolves in Finland. The Czar made him a lieutenant in the international body-guard, which gave him rank above most of the generals. He fought against the Tartars, visited China, India and Farther India, camped with Arabs, fought under the Turkish flag, then took service with Austria, then drifted back to France and joined an expedition to South America. He first fought in the armies of Uruguay and then enlisted

under the Chilean Government. There he changed from a soldier to a sailor, and rose to the rank of admiral. The wars in Chili being over, he travelled across the mountains to Brazil and became a colonel in the army of the Emperor of Brazil. When Brazil was quiet, and not a speck of war-cloud was in the horizon of South America, he crossed to France. There were rumours of war in Europe. He found his old friend, Philippe Egalité, departed, and Louis Napoleon governing in his stead. But the change of government had no effect upon the fortunes of the knight-errant. Napoleon gave him a colonelency in a regiment of chasseurs and made him a lion at Paris again. But he remained only a short time and went to visit the German Empire. His fame had gone before him, and he was received with marks of high favour. Count Bismarck and he became bosom friends, and their friendship lasted to the end of his life. He also became a favourite companion of the Crown Prince. For no one could equal The O'Gorman in his graces of conversation. To his natural talents were added the thousand thrilling, strange, unusual experiences of his long, restless life. But age at length began to tell upon him. The customs of the times had changed. Duelling was no longer the fashion, and personal daring was no longer the feature of war. So he returned to Ireland and re-entered politics. He became an intimate friend of Gladstone, and it was to an enquiry from that gentleman that he replied: "I have fought twenty-two serious duels. And in all my life I have never been challenged. I was always the aggressor."—New York Sun.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE.

IT is curious how whole populations of intelligent people jump at conclusions that are flattering to themselves while utterly in contradiction of the best established historical facts. One of the most widely accepted of these pieces of nonsense is the dictum that human energy is effected by climate. Now the fact is that human energy has reached its fullest development in every kind of climate and in every latitude except the frigid zone. The equatorial regions furnish us with the history of Carthage and Egypt, the heated latitudes give us Tyre and Sidon, Troy and Babylon. Then, in those latitudes which are now sneered at as effeminate and enervating, we have the unequalled science of Greece and the matchless mastery of Rome. But, nonsense, say our theorists, do you not see with your own eyes that people will not work at the South, while they will at the North? Is not that the effect of climate? Is not that better than history? On the contrary, we find that in our Southern States an extraordinary amount of energy has developed since the war. We find that a population which under former conditions was charged with indolence and negligence is under the new conditions credited with an energy and an enterprise that have redeemed its country from the desolation of ruin and brought it to the front of progress and prosperity. Then look abroad. In the very same line of climate, everywhere, you will find the two extremes of industry and indolence. The Southern Chinaman, Siamese, East Indian, Egyptian, is laborious and industrious; the West Indian and Central American refuses to work. The enterprising Yankee himself lives in the same climate and region where primitive savages scorned to labour. The hardy, industrious, persevering, enterprising highlander of Scotland, the Swede, the Norwegian, enjoy about the same icy surroundings as the lazy Esquimaux who hibernates like a bear. What, then, is the explanation of this vastly varying experience of human energy that infuses one generation with enterprise and industry, while leaving another in the disgraceful fetters of sloth and indifference? Why, it is simply—motive. The motive makes the man, and the population is the repetition of the man. The greatest of all human motive powers is hunger; the next is ambition. Hunger does not move the West Indian or the Central American because the fruits of nature are for him both plentiful and free. The climate exempts him from the necessity of roof or clothing, while the wild banana forest generally feeds him and his family. He knows no other needs and does not comprehend the philosophy of making himself tired. But if some American natives were transported to Siam or China, where every inch of land is under fence at a high rent, where nature is in slavery and where food implies incessant labour, he would soon find himself working as hard as his neighbours. Contrast the ancient Roman and the modern. The former was consumed with the fires of ambition. Conquest and mastery were his dream day and night. There could be no rest, no repose while something remained to be conquered; no danger, no bodily labour, no intellectual training was avoided that might help to the coveted end. But such fires burn out; modern Rome is but the scorée of the ancient volcano. Is all this climate? Would Vesuvius be more active at the North Pole?—New Orleans Morning Star and Catholic Messenger.

"A Book of Scotch Humour" illustrates anew of a native of Annandale the saying that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country. "I ken them a'," said the rustic, speaking of the Carlyles; "Jock's a doctor about London. Tam's a harem-scarem kind o' chiel, an' wreats book an' that. But Jamie—yon's his farm you see owre yonder—Jamie's the man o' that family, an' I'm proud to say I ken him. Jamie Carlyle, sir, feeds the best swine that come into Dumfries market."