

The sorriest of all criticisms I read were those which indulged in a comparison of Verdi's "Falstaff" with Nicolais "Merry Wives of Windsor." The German's beautiful and poetic music is as different from the Italian's sparkling and springly humour as the German libretto is different from that of Boito. The entire German conception of the principal character is different from that of the Italian's, for, as is almost natural, because it is national, the German treats "Falstaff" principally as a toper, while the Italian lays the most stress upon his predilection for the fair sex. Boito's verses moreover are vastly superior to the German libretto and are at times exuberantly funny.

### LIBRARY TABLE.

A DEPLORABLE AFFAIR. By W. E. Norris. A DEADLY DILEMMA. By Grant Allen. (Shandon Series.) New York: Tait, Sons and Company.

These tales are included under one cover: they will afford an hour's diversion to the reader, but we have seen much better work by both authors.

STORIES FROM INDIAN WIGWAMS AND NORTHERN CAMP FIRES. By Egerton Ryerson Young. Toronto: William Briggs. Montreal: C. W. Coates. Halifax: S. E. Huestis.

In reading tales of adventures in foreign lands, the thought so often occurs to the intelligent Canadian, what better country can there be than his own to supply material for such stories. From the far northland, whose shores the Arctic Ocean washes, to the Acadian peninsula, and westward to the warm Pacific, what more fruitful soil for the pen of the story writer? Mr. Young, who is a Methodist missionary, in this most readable and enjoyable volume of nearly 300 appropriately illustrated pages, has well told the story of his wanderings in the land of the Hudson Bay Company. Missionary work, sport and adventure, ashore and afloat; description of scenery and of manners and customs of Indian tribes; observations on the country, its past, present and future; anecdote and story of journeyings at all seasons—mainly by dog-sled and canoe—are all told brightly, cheerily and instructively. This book may safely be placed in the hands of boys and girls alike. It is a worthy specimen of a pure, yet exceedingly interesting book of Canadian travel and adventure in our great North-land.

THE CONDITION OF THE WESTERN FARMER. By Arthur F. Bentley. A. B. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1893.

This is another contribution to the Johns Hopkins University Studies in historical and political science, and as an exemplification of the subject, the case of Harrison township, Hall County, Nebraska, is considered. After carefully discussing the question from a variety of standpoints, such as land values; rents; credit; taxes, and markets, and having given a sketch of the colonization and history of the township selected, as well as having detailed the present economic condition of the farmers, Mr. Bentley concludes that, "Any man who undertakes farming in Nebraska at the present day, requires, in order to be assured of success, at least three things,—first, that he have some little capital; second, that he possess good business qualifications, and third, that he escape any extraordinary misfortunes" (meaning possibly grasshopper invasions) and he emphasises the necessity of the possession of these qualifications by "Western agriculturists of the present time." We should be inclined to add—a thorough knowledge of the conditions of Western farming based on practical experience of farm life, and even then, we gather from this pamphlet, his life will be far from rose-coloured.

"THE LIFE OF A BUTTERFLY," and "BRIEF GUIDE TO THE COMMONER BUTTERFLIES OF THE NORTHERN UNITED STATES AND CANADA." By Samuel Hubbard Scudder. New York: Henry Holt and pany. 1893.

Who has not chased a butterfly? To most of us the butterfly is associated with the bright memories of early childhood—the summer hey-day of life, when we gathered wild strawberries and roses in the meadows, and, hat in hand, gave vigorous chase to the eluding butterfly. It remains for the scientific specialist to continue the pursuit through life and to make the world wiser by his knowledge. This is what Mr. Scudder has done in the two excellent handbooks above mentioned. The first is what it professes to be, "A chapter in Natural History for the general reader" and describes the main events in the life of the milkweed butterfly clearly, and at the same time comprehensively. A table of contents, an index, four illustrative plates with an explanatory statement of them, are included. The latter book is more elaborate, and for its size, we doubt whether a similar work can be found in which the subject is more satisfactorily treated. We are satisfied that no one interested in the subject can be otherwise than well pleased with the extent and variety of information, the clearness of statement, the careful classification, and the helpful explanations and instructions for collecting, etc., which its enthusiastic author and compiler have provided for him.

ONTARIO'S PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS; or a Century of Legislature. 1792—1892. A Historical Sketch. By Frank Yeigh. Toronto: The Williamson Book Company, Ltd. 1893.

Mr. Yeigh has gathered within the 170 pages of this interesting volume a large amount of information appropriate to, or associated with, the history of the Parliament buildings of our Province. "The first parliament of Canada," says Mr. Yeigh, "is supposed by some to have been held under an oak tree which is still standing—with but few of its sturdy old branches left—at the southern limit of the beautiful property known as the Anchorage. The same tree is also pointed out as the one on which two American spies were hung during the war of 1812. Others hold to the opinion that the upper room in a Freemasons' hall had this honour, while others claim that it met in a camp tent, and that Simcoe took his seat on a camp stool when he delivered his address. Still another writer claims that Navy Hall was not only Simcoe's official residence, but that it was the original meeting-place of the Legislature." The locality was then called Newark, later it became the old town of Niagara, and it is now known as "Niagara." The village then had, says Mr. Yeigh, about fifty houses, and the population of Upper Canada was only about ten thousand whites and as many Indians. On the 17th September, 1792, the first Parliament of Upper Canada was called together, and was composed of the following persons: John White, Attorney-General; John Macdonell, Speaker; Angus Macdonnell, Clerk; George Law, Sergeant-at-Arms; Rev. Mr. Addison, Addison; John Booth, Baby, Alexander Campbell, Peter Vanalstine, Nathaniel Pettit, Hazleton Spencer, Young, Jeremiah French, Ephraim Jones, William Macomb, Hugh Macdonell, Benjamin Rawling, David William Smith, and Isaac Swazy. Governor Simcoe having decided to move the seat of government to York in 1796, a new house of Parliament was completed, "on a small piece of cleared land, but a stone's throw from the waters of the bay to the south, and the forest to the north and east, while not far to the west there stood a grove of fine oak trees—a remnant of the original forest, and an irregular road led to

it from Castle Frank, on the banks of the Don. This road now forms Parliament street." As to the condition of York (now Toronto) at that date we are told that "a few new buildings had been erected in addition to the twelve log houses and the barracks that first formed the settlement. Vessels approaching the banks threw out a gang plank to the muddy shore. To the north, the Governor's soldiers had hewn out a roadway to Lake Simcoe, a distance of 30 miles. Old settlers who passed away during the 'fifties,' were wont to tell thrilling stories of the bears shot on King street, and the howling of the wolves at night in the vicinity of the Parliament Buildings and the market." But we must not linger over interesting details. The above buildings were burnt by United States invaders in April, 1813, together with the library, state papers and records. In February, 1814, Parliament was held in the "ball room" of Jordan's York hotel which stood on King street, near Berkeley street, and we learn that several succeeding sessions were held in a residence occupied in after years by Chief Justice Draper, known as "The Lawn," and which stood at the north-west corner of Wellington and York streets. In 1818 the foundation of a new Parliament house was laid which was completed in two years: this building was brick, and occupied the site of the old gaol, near the corner of King and Berkeley streets, and in 1824 was destroyed by a fire, caused by an overheated flue. The sessions of 1825-6, 1827 and 1828 were held in the old general hospital which stood between King street and Hospital—now Richmond street. From the hospital the vagrant Parliament journeyed to the old court house which stood in the block bordered by King, Church, Court and Toronto streets; here as well as in the old hospital, many a stormy debate took place as the spirit of reform moved on the waters and such men as John Rolph, William Lyon Mackenzie and Robert Baldwin made their weight felt. In 1832, the old familiar buildings on Front street, between Simcoe, Wellington and John streets were occupied, and during the years of their chequered history, have been used from time to time as a court house, university and medical school; an insane asylum; and a barracks. In 1892, the new buildings which stand in the Queen's Park, Toronto, were completed, and for long years to come will be the home of our provincial legislation. Of these buildings like most things political, opinions vary. They were built at great cost from plans of a United States architect. In many respects they are admirably suited to the purpose, but we by no means deem the pile to be as impressive, noble or as worthy of the province as Mr. Yeigh represents. Lists of Governors and Lieutenant Governors and Members of Provincial Legislature and United Parliament from 1792 to 1892, are provided, and anecdote, story, speech, germane to the subject-matter, enliven the pages of this creditable and servicable compilation—which, we may add, is also abundantly illustrated.

### PERIODICALS.

"New Occasions" is the title of a new magazine published in Chicago by Charles H. Kerr & Co., and edited by Mr. B. F. Underwood. The July number contains a number of papers dealing with social and industrial questions.

A welcome and useful periodical is "The Journal of Hygiene and Herald of Health." Every month it brings to its readers wise and able advice on matters of health. The July number continues the excellent notes of the editor on Hygienic Treatment of Indigestion. There are valuable notes concerning health. The hygienic series for women, is continued by Jennie Chandler, and other seasonable matter completes the number.

Cassell's Family Magazine for July has a pleasing frontispiece portrait of the