

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

WEDDED.

LOVE her? As the light!
Honour? To earth's bound!
Cherish? As the night
In her deeps profound!

Then, come joy or pain,
Wreck or treasure, come!
God shall weld ye twain
To Himself as one!

—M. S. Brooks, in Springfield Republican.

A MEXICAN ARCHEOLOGIST.

GENERAL MEXIA was one of the Mexican delegation that attended the Pan-American Congress. The General is regarded as the greatest living authority on the ruins and prehistoric monuments of Mexico, and the customs and history of the aboriginal races who built them. In the course of his investigations he has visited and explored all the ruined cities within the bounds of the sister Republic, and has collected a mass of information and other material, comprising plans and drawings, which will be invaluable to scientific enquirers on these subjects. The extent of the labour involved in acquiring this knowledge may be estimated by the fact that the ruins of Aztec times are numbered by the hundreds, and that one deserted city is something like sixteen miles square in extent.—*Boston Star.*

THE ADVANCE OF THE PHONOGRAPH.

SHORTHAND writing will soon be a thing of the past. Heads of firms and confidential clerks now talk their letters to the phonograph, which re-dictates them to the type writer. The waxen cylinders can be stored away, and are more reliable in case of dispute than shorthand notes. Indeed, it will not be long before the phonograph pushes stenography completely into the background. An important meeting was recently reported at Chicago by the use of two phonographs. The reporter stood a few yards from the speakers, and repeated the speeches into one of the machines until the cylinder was covered by the mystic indentations. Then the operator turned to the other machine and talked into that while the first cylinder was removed and placed in the hands of the typewriter. The experiment was so successful that a phonographic reporting company has been formed, which advertises its ability to report law trials, conventions, and meetings at much cheaper rates and with greater accuracy than under the old system. No annoyance is caused by this application of the phonograph, as the operator can follow the speaker in almost a whisper. It will become a great boon to young ladies in view of breach of promise cases if the question of identification can be got over.—*The Colonies and India.*

VANCOUVER.

VANCOUVER has progressed at the rate of about 5,000 a year since fairly being established as a city. For the first year or two there was a considerable floating population which did not become permanent, so that the actual increase may be represented as follows:—

Population at beginning of	1888	3,000
"	1889	8,000
"	1890	13,000
"	1891	18,000

Of course, at the present time, a good many argue that the population is 20,000, and that the population increased this year, or during 1890, more rapidly than during any previous year. Undoubtedly that is true of the latter half of the year, but it is something which can only be determined by the actual census-taking. From this out the increase is likely to be proportionately larger, but even if it be no greater, the familiar prediction of 50,000 in ten years will be verified. During 1890 the progress of the city has excelled that of any previous year, notwithstanding that it started out most inauspiciously. The hard and unusual winter of 1889-90, by which nearly all the activities were limited, produced a depression that was severely felt throughout the city, although it was only temporary. However, with the opening of the spring and the resumption of active operations in all lines, shipping, trade and industry, fortune seemed to smile brighter than ever, and Vancouver was never so prosperous before as it is to-day. Legitimate business all around is good, the volume of trade large, building active and employment plentiful.—*Vancouver Daily Telegram.*

REMARKABLE MEMORIES.

THERE was a Corsican boy who could rehearse 40,000 words, whether sense or nonsense, as they were dictated, and then repeat them in the reversed order without making a single mistake. A physician, about sixty years ago, could repeat the whole of "Paradise Lost," without a mistake, although he had not read it for twenty years. Euler, the great mathematician, when he became blind, could repeat the whole of Virgil's "Æneid," and could remember the first line and the last line in every page of the particular edition which he had been accustomed to read before he became blind. One kind of retentive memory may be considered as the result of sheer work, a determination towards one particular achievement without reference

THE *Book World* is a clever little bookish English journal which presents matter that might be considered dry reading in an attractive and instructive form. The January number has a capital poem, by R. H. Stoddard called "Companions."

COLONEL DODGE will shortly publish "Hannibal." As Colonel Dodge has been time and again over the various battlefields and marches of Hannibal, and has made an exceedingly careful study of the subject, his work cannot fail to be of great interest.

THE portrait of Talleyrand, by the famous French artist Greuze, forms the frontispiece to the forthcoming February *Century*. The instalment of the Talleyrand Memoirs in that number deals almost entirely with Talleyrand's relations with Napoleon Bonaparte.

A NOVEL feature, and one of the leading attractions of *Harper's Magazine* for February, will be an album of twelve original drawings by W. M. Thackeray, illustrating "The Heroic Adventures of M. Boudin," published with Comment by Anne Thackeray Ritchie.

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING's description of his gunning expedition in British Columbia and in the U. S. will be published two or three months hence; and the author, it is said, will hunt again in those regions in the spring, preparatory to his journey to India next summer with his parents.

FRANCIS COPPEE, the French writer, is now in his fiftieth year, and lives with his sister Annette in a secluded street of Paris. Coppee's first name is frequently written "Francois," but that is improper. He writes it "Francis," and most of the cyclopædias and biographical dictionaries give it that way, expressing correctly the popular error.

THE *Summerside Journal*, of Prince Edward Island, is to be commended for its patriotic zeal in devoting space in its editorial columns to a series of thoughtful articles on Canadian literature. Were its example generally followed, a healthy and progressive stimulus would be given to the literary life of the various provinces which compose our great Dominion.

A NEW book, in certain features of the same general class with "Looking Backward," will soon be published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company. It is entitled "The Crystal Button," and is written by Mr. Chauncey Thomas, of Boston, who describes in this story the possible achievements of science which may be made in the next three thousand years, and the results in the comfort and convenience of mankind.

GRANT ALLEN, who, as our readers are aware, is a Canadian by birth, has won the prize of £1,000 for the best novel, in the competition recently announced by a member of Parliament, George Newnes. Several hundred novels were in competition. Mr. Allen's "What's Bred in the Bone" won. It is doubtless only a coincidence that its title suggests Mr. James Payn's famous novel of twenty years ago.

WE are glad to observe that Mr. Davin is, from reports of meetings which we have seen, held in high estimation by his constituents. Our Dominion Parliament can ill afford to lose a member with such broad culture and refined literary tastes as Mr. Davin possesses. He is also well versed in public affairs at home or abroad, and brings to the discussion of prominent public questions the results of his knowledge and scholarship, which are presented with the warmth and grace of the forceful orator.

A NEW poem by Sir Elwin Arnold, entitled "The Musmee," will appear in his third "Japanica" article, in the February *Scribner's*. The following is a stanza:—

The Musmee has a small brown face—
Musk-melon seed its perfect shape—
Arched, jetty eyebrows; nose to grace
The rosy mouth beneath; a nape,
And neck and chin; and smooth, soft cheeks,
Carved out of sun-burned ivory;
With teeth, which, when she smiles or speaks,
Pearl merchants might come leagues to see!

PROFESSOR GEORGE COUTELLIER, who recently delivered a lecture in French in Toronto, purposes delivering similar lectures during the month of February in Ottawa and Montreal. This mode of lecturing is, we understand, in keeping with the method of teaching used at the Ingres-Coutellier Institute, where languages are taught directly, without the aid of English either in writing or speaking. Such a method cannot fail to interest and instruct. It seems to offer the advantage for the time being of living and conversing with the people whose language you desire to learn, with the advantage, of such people being skilled instructors of the language.

WE have much pleasure in stating, on the information of a friend of Miss Machar (Fidelis), that the thoughtful, discriminating and ably written articles contributed by that well-known Canadian writer to the *Andover Review*, on "Thomas Erskine," have called forth from the poet Whittier and the Rev. Dr. Munger, who is recognized as one of the first Christian thinkers in the United States, warm letters of personal approbation. Dr. Munger writes: "Will you allow me to thank you for your articles on 'Thomas Erskine,' which I have just read with intense interest. I have long been familiar with Erskine's thought, and it is delightful to have so true a picture of the man and so intelligent a presentation of his thought." This is another indication of the fact that we have in Canada, thinkers and writers, who are capable of attracting the attention and winning the praise of some of the foremost minds of the day.

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with notable events, which have been well and judiciously selected. The various departments of work—Missions, Home and Foreign, Colleges, prominent Churches, comparative and other statistics, Synods and Presbyteries, Ministers, etc.—all receive clear and adequate treatment. The historical and biographical sketches are an important feature of the work, and the illustrations are excellent. The letter press, though fine, is clean and sharp. We may well congratulate the editor on the successful result of his long, painstaking and accurate investigation of data, and the skill which he has shown in their satisfactory presentation.

"*Poet Lore* for January is a good number. In "Some Characteristics of Persian Poetry," Mr. James Buckham leads us to a land where "the most familiar objects, the most commonplace associations, are suffused by the tropical glow of Oriental imagination." "Literary Factors in Tennyson's St. Agnes Eve" is an interesting critical study of a somewhat cursory character of that poem. "Solar Myths in a Midsummer Night's Dream" is a short side light from mythology and Folk Lore reflected upon this beautiful play. Miss Anna R. Brown follows with a spirited rendering of a grand old English war song "The Battle of Brunaburgh," of the time of Athelstan. Then follows "Notes on The Tempest," by Dr. J. W. Rolfe; "Romeo and Juliet," in French, by Charles Seymour; "Modern Scandinavian Authors," by C. S. Hartmann; "A Greek Hamlet," by Professor A. H. Smyth. We also note with pleasure the very interesting discovery set out under the caption "Sonnets of Sir Thomas Wyatt," by our clever contributor, Mr. E. B. Brownlow, of Montreal, who is no mean authority on the Sonnet.

THE *Magazine of Poetry* for January is the first number of a new volume. We cannot understand why the prominence of a frontispiece is given in a magazine of poetry, to a poet of such modest dimensions as the one selected for that honour, when a few pages on we find the well-known and popular James Whitcomb Riley, the accomplished and successful Julia C. R. Dorr and then one of the greatest men and most distinguished poets of the century, the late Cardinal Newman, placed in the comparative seclusion of inner pages—*sic transit gloria mundi*—well may the spirit of the illustrious Cardinal murmur from its present height serene. We observe selections from our able contributor, Mr. F. Blake Crofton, preceded by a too short sketch, a model of modest consciousness, by another of our contributors, Prof. MacMechan. Away near the end of the number we find a small portrait, with a comparatively short sketch of, and a few quotations from, a poet, whose face seems to put on a modest blush when brought to light, at the honour of being placed in the rear. The poet's name is Robert Burns. The number contains sketches of the lives of Frederick Locker Lampson, Clement Scott and many others, as well as extracts from their works. The notes are interesting and "The Bibliography of Poetry for 1890" is a useful feature though it is inaccurate and needs revision. By what right does the compiler rank such distinctively Canadian, and therefore British authors as Professor K. L. Jones, Wilfred Skeats or that patriotic compilation "Raise the Flag," whose contents are Canadian and British to the core, as American. He may call United States' poets American, if he please. But Canadian poets are *Canadians*, if you please. Though with less of it than we own he appropriates and applies the name of this continent to United States' poets, and calls them *American*, he has no more right in that sense to call Canadian poets *American* than he would have to call Mexican poets *American* or to call them both, *United States' poets*.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

THE illustrious historian of the United States, George Bancroft, has passed from the scene of his earthly labours, but it may well be said of him that while history lives his name and fame will survive.

FRANCIS PARKMAN, the historian, has taken to gardening, and is as successful at it as was Evelyn. He is particularly fond of roses. He is writing again, having in a great measure recovered his health.

THE Laureate Tennyson possesses the poet's true fondness for old wine. His cellar contains a choice stock of ancient vintages, his favourite among them being a Waterloo sherry—a wine just seventy-five years of age.

By the sudden and regretted death of Mr. James H. Maclean, of the *World*, the press of Toronto sustains the loss of a young journalist of unusual energy, ability and bonhomie, who was a credit to the profession of journalism.

THE January number of the *Harvard Journal of Economics* contains an elaborate article by Prof. Edmund J. James, President of the American Academy of Political and Social Science on the "Reform of Railway Passenger Rates."

THE author of the popular translations from Plato, entitled "Socrates," "A Day in Athens with Socrates," etc., has just completed a new volume of a similar character, "Talks with Athenian Youths," now in press with the Scribners.

JAPAN's literary welfare is looked after by 475 newspapers, magazines, etc. Tokio alone boasts of sixteen daily newspapers. It is imperative that each officer of the Government should subscribe to the Government organ, "Kwampo."