

Holland," is contributed for all art-lovers by George Hitchcock. If another word could be patiently listened to regarding "Realism and the Art of Fiction," we find it in Mr. Arlo Bates' article on that subject, who really seems to know what he is talking about, and why he is talking about it. There is a delightful variety in the fiction of the number: a romantic short story of Germany, "The Lost Rembrandt," by T. R. Sullivan, Harold Frederic's strong dialectic serial "Seth's Brother's Wife," Professor Boyeson's "Perilous Incognito," and a graceful and clever little Spanish sketch by Lizzie W. Champney, "Father Acacio's Little Game."

THE *Atlantic* has a timely and sympathetic article upon "The Spell of the Russian Writers," by Harriet Waters Preston, and a keen and logical word from George Frederic Parsons on "The Growth of Materialism." Dr. Holmes is a privileged person, but we don't like to see him devoting his chronicles to serious criticism of London tailors and bootmakers. Mr. E. H. House, a personal friend of Charles Reade's, gossips pleasantly about the novelist's characteristics. "The Second Son" growth of that curious Oliphant-Aldrich graft leaves its humble heroine in a most thrilling predicament, and the scene of Crawford's "Paul Patoff" changes to the East with great gain to the colour and interest of the story.

THE Lippincotts have given us a *chic* little bit of writing in Sidney Luska's novelette, not such a worthy work as the young New York journalist has put his name to before, but bearing a decided smack of originality and freshness. That prolific writer of short stories, Professor Boyeson, is here with a bit of pathos he calls "Life for Life." Edith Thomas blossoms into poetry in *Lippincott's* as in *Scribner's*, and Edgar Fawcett tells what he believes to be "the truth about Ouida," which is not, however, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

PEOPLE interested in General Guzman Blanco, President of Venezuela, who care to scan his lineaments, will find what seems to be an admirable portrait of him as the frontispiece of *The American Magazine*. The portrait accompanies a pleasant sketch by Dr. W. F. Hutchison, "Along the Caribbean." Julian Hawthorne's name is the most notable in the list of contents, but his "Village Types" is very poorly and weakly written indeed, for Julian Hawthorne.

THE contents of the *Magazine of American History* are, as usual, important and interesting. A very remarkable specimen of the engraver's art forms the frontispiece—a reproduction of the "Presentation of the Resolute to the Queen," the large portrait picture painted at the time by Her Majesty's orders, which now hangs in Sydenham Palace. The accompanying article is written by one who took part in the ceremony, and whose face is on the canvas, Dr. Fessenden Otis. The contribution of the monthly's accomplished editor, Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, is "A Love Romance in History," which deals with the fortunes of the Schuylers.

THE *Forum* opens with an article by Gov. J. B. Foraker, on "The Return of the Republican Party," which contains suggestions that will cause the Democrats to look to the significance of their lightest official act, and seems to point, as many articles do, to the prospect of a political war, strictly between North and South, at the election of 1888. The Rev. Howard Crosby has a sensible word on "The Forgotten Cause of Poverty," which he remembers to be improvidence. Gen. A. W. Greely contributes strong adverse testimony to the use of "Alcohol in High Latitudes," and John D. Champlin explains to us rather unsatisfactorily "Why we Have No Great Artists." *The Forum* has this month, however, a more than ordinarily imposing list of writers, with a rather less than ordinarily satisfactory list of contents.

THE *North American Review* has its usual startling list. A paper which Canadians will appreciate is Moncure D. Conway's "Queen of England," a discussion not of Her Majesty's character or person, but of the history, position, and prerogatives she represents. "Arthur Richmond" is not heard from this month; we hope his (or her) last insult to the Hon. James Russell Lowell choked that brilliant and versatile writer. Dr. Searle tells people of sedentary habits to drink tea or coffee or wine, or smoke tobacco, to prevent dyspepsia and biliousness—advice antipodal to that usually given such people by physicians of their personal acquaintance. Mr. Dion Bouicault rallies once more to the fray in a paper on "Coquelin-Irving," in which he dissects the lately expressed views of both these men of the footlights. The climax of sensationalism is reached perhaps, in Wong Chin Foo's "Why Am I a Heathen?" which completes the list of denominational interrogation points, we hope, unless the enterprising editor should succeed in eliciting a confession of faith from a Mormon or a Mohammedan.

A MUCH idealised portrait of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe forms *The Century's* frontispiece, and in the "Open Letter" department that lady tells us how she came to write the "Battle Hymn of the Republic"—a little thing which it is remarkable the *Century* people did not think of before. The war element is stronger than ever in this number; it must be that the privates are contributing their views individually now. The opening article "Snubbin' Through Jersey," has a flavour of the inimitable *Tile Club* articles of old time, and is charmingly illustrated.

HUGH THOMPSON'S comical illustrations of "Sir Dilberry Diddle," form the most attractive feature of the *English Illustrated*, which has still however, much to learn from its American rivals, if not in execution in choice of subject and design. Mr. Crawford's story, "Marzio's Crucifix," passes through some chapters of very vivid writing, and Miss May Crommelin's "Visit to a Dutch Country House," gives us much entertainment with its light glimpses of foreign domesticity, and promises more.

RECENT FICTION.*

"MR. INCOUL'S MISADVENTURE" is the title of a novel brought into the world by Mr. Edgar Everett Saltus, a gentleman whose "Philosophy of Disenchantment," and "Anatomy of Negation," are still rippling the waters of literary criticism, though published nearly a year ago. As might be guessed by the titles of his former works, if not known by their contents, Mr. Saltus is a pessimist—in print at least. His novel is written primarily to make a distinct sensation, of which it will not fail; and secondarily to illustrate his theories of life and living, which it also abundantly accomplishes. It is known that Mr. Saltus experienced much difficulty in finding a publisher for his work of fiction, although his theories found a market easily enough. Which shows that one may speculate in a general way as unpleasantly as possible about humanity with impunity, even with credit, but when one embodies such speculations in a set of people, in their ideas, motives, and conduct, it is quite a different thing—a thing to fight shy of and condemn.

Nobody will be surprised after reading "Mr. Incoul's Misadventure" to learn of the author's difficulty. It is a significant comment upon the tolerant moral tone of the time that Mr. Saltus could find anybody willing to shoulder the responsibility of providing him with a vehicle for his insult to his race. Most people will reflect after reading it, upon the extreme points of space the modern literary world swings between. There is Tolstoi in his semi-barbaric country, under all its limitations of ignorance and subservience, writing books to convince people of the sublime practicability of Christian life (in the archaic sense) in this present nineteenth century; here is Saltus, a genius of infinitely smaller and inferior sort to be sure, but still a genius, writing them to show the blackness of human depravity, and the hopelessness of effort to whiten it. The inspiration is of course wholly different—we cannot at all believe in the American's sincerity—yet it is noteworthy that such antipodal doctrines should choose the universal channel of communication with the public of to-day—the novel. Mr. Saltus' story is briefly told—the more briefly the better. Mr. Incoul is a New York widower-millionaire, whose character is depicted from childhood in neutral and unpleasing tints. He meets Miss Maida Barhyte, a Hebe-like damsel, with whom he falls in love—in the covetous sense. Miss Barhyte is poor, has a grasping mother, and a lover, Lenox Leigh, whom she has met at a watering place, the other visitors at which are supremely and reasonably scandalised at their joint behaviour. Lenox Leigh is not a marrying man, and when Mr. Incoul proposes to Maida, suggests flight to Europe *sans ceremonie*, religious or other. When she declines to entertain this suggestion, although circumstances have made it surprising that she does, Lenox consoles himself that even in the event of her marriage he may still be a part of her life. Somewhere in Spain, at a realistic bull fight, a very bad, unnecessary, and inartistic incident which Mr. Saltus might have made his humanity quite gross enough without, Mr. Leigh interrupts the wedding trip. It should have been mentioned that by stipulation Maida is Mr. Incoul's wife in name only until such time as she can learn to love him. In Spain Mr. Incoul discovers his wife's past and the part Leigh is likely to have in their future. Then with diabolical system he cheats at cards so that the suspicion attaches to Leigh, who commits suicide rather than live disgraced, and murders his wife very ingeniously without the possibility of being found out. The story closes with this murder, and the spectacle of Mr. Incoul going over his accounts with his courier.

It will be easily seen that a vast amount of skill would be necessary to make such a story, with all its details and minor characters, which are most harmonious, at all bearable. This skill is in no sense lacking. The people and situations are treated with the truest artistic reticence; there is a beautiful finish in the writing; the characters, with the exception of Mr. Incoul's, cleverly conceived. Mr. Incoul is inconsistent. We are given to understand that he is redeemed by a religion of refinement and what passes in the world for honour. Such a man could never condescend to a dishonest device at cards, to punish another man. Such a man, moreover, could never have had as a boon friend and travelling companion the coarse Blydenburg. The strong points of Mr. Incoul's fiendishness are lost, moreover, by lack of contrast. Mr. Saltus has not let light enough into his picture to see its shadows. The conception is of course false, abnormal, absurd, as a whole; the working out of a grotesque and horrible idea, that could have no parallel in human life or experience. Here and there there is an extravagance, or a sub-affectation, which one welcomes as showing more easily these qualities in the book as a whole—the catalogue of the notorious books in the French villa, for instance, and the very title of the book, in which Mr. Saltus' sarcasm quite overdoes itself. It will be apprehended that there is little reason to congratulate either Mr. Saltus or the public upon this novel—the best wish we can express, in fact, for the author's literary future is that he may live to regret having written it.

"ZURY: THE MEANEST MAN IN SPRING COUNTY," by Joseph Kirkland, surely marks a period in realism. Whether the reader will hope it is a period of progress, or a period of limitation, will depend upon the direction of his literary education in great measure. The liking for realistic literature has been, to a great extent, a recently cultivated growth; while the passion for romance has swayed the human breast ever since the human mind could apprehend it; and, admirable art as is the former it finds no little adverse criticism from those whose favourite motto is, "*De gustibus non est disputandum*."

* "Mr. Incoul's Misadventure," by Edgar Everett Saltus. New York: Benjamin and Bell.
"Zury: The Meanest Man in Spring County," by Joseph Kirkland. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. Toronto: Williamson and Co.
"The Crusade of the Eccelsior," by Bret Harte. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. Toronto: Williamson and Co.
"Victims," by Theo. Gift. New York: Henry Holt and Co. Toronto: Williamson and Co.