

AN ESTIMATE OF HOLMES.

From a critical paper by Edmund C. Stedman in the *February Century* we quote the following: "If the question is asked, would the verse of Doctor Holmes be held in so much favour if he had not confirmed his reputation by prose replete with poetic humour and analogy? the fairest answer may be in the negative. Together, his writings surely owe their main success to an approximate exhibition of the author himself. Where the man is even more lively than his work, the public takes kindly to the one and the other. The jester is privileged even in the court of art and letters; yet if one could apply to Holmes—the jester, homilist, and man of feeling—his own process, we should have analysis indeed. Were the theme assigned to himself, we should have an inimitably honest setting forth of his merits and foibles, from this keen anatomist of mind and body, this smile-begetter, this purveyor to so many feasts. As a New Englander he long ago was awarded the highest sectional praise—that of being among all his tribe, the cutest. His cleverness and versatility bewilder outside judges. Is he a genius? By all means. And in what degree? His prose, for the most part, is peculiarly original. His serious poetry scarcely has been the serious work of his life; but in his specialty, verse suited to the frolic or pathos of occasions, he has given us much of the best-delivered in his own time, and has excelled all others in delivery. Both his strength and weakness lie in his genial temper and his brisk, speculative habit of mind. For, though almost the only modern poet who has infused enough spirit into table and rostrum verse to make it worth recording, his poetry has appealed to the present rather than the future; and again, he has too curious and analytic a brain for purely artistic work. Of Holmes as a satirist, which it is not unusual to call him, I have said but little. His metrical satires are of the amiable sort that debars him from kinship with the juveniles of old, or the Papes and Churchills of more recent times. There is more real satire in one of Hosea Biglow's lyrics than in all our laughing philosopher's irony, rhymed, and unrhymed. Yet he is a keen observer of the follies and chances which satire make its food. Give him personages, reminiscences, manners, to touch upon, and he is quite at home. He may not reproduce these imaginatively, in their stronger combinations; but the Autocrat makes no unseemly boast when he says: 'It was in teaching of Li' that we came together. I thought I knew something about that, that I could speak or write about it to some purpose.' Let us consider, then, that if Holmes had died young, we should have missed a choice example of New England fibre which strengthens while it lasts; that he has lived to round a personality that will be traditional for at least the time granted to one or two less characteristic worthies of revolutionary days; that—"twas all he wished"—a few of his lyrics already belong to our select anthology, and one or two of his books must be counted as factors in what twentieth-century chroniclers will term (and here is matter for reflection) the development of 'early' American literature."

THE FORD AT ASSAYE.

It was on this occasion that the Duke of Wellington gave me an instance of the importance of a very ordinary degree of common sense. He described his very critical position on the march before the battle of Assaye, when his small force was threatened by an overwhelming deluge of native cavalry, and his only chance, not of victory only, but of safety, was his getting to the other bank of the river (Kistna) which was a few miles on his right. He had some of the best native guides that could be had, and he made every possible effort to ascertain whether the river was anywhere passable, and all his informants assured him that it was not. He himself could not see the river, and the enemy's cavalry was out in such force that he could not send out to reconnoitre. At last, in extreme anxiety, he resolved to see the river himself, and accordingly, with his most intelligent guides and an escort of, I think he said, all his cavalry, he pushed forward in sight of the river in the neighbourhood of Assaye, which stood on the bank of another stream that ran nearly parallel to that which he wished to cross. When they came there, he again questioned his guides about a passage, which they still asserted not to exist; but he saw through his glass, for the enemy's cavalry were so strong that he could not venture to get closer, one village on the right, or near bank of the river, and another village exactly opposite on the other bank, and "I immediately said to myself that men could not have built two villages so close to one another on opposite sides of a stream without some habitual means of communication, either by boats or a ford—most probably by the latter. On that conjecture, or rather reasoning, in defiance of all my guides and informants, I took the desperate resolution, as it seemed, of marching for the river, and I was right. I found a passage, crossed my army over, had no more to fear from the enemy's cloud of cavalry, as I my army, small as it was, was just enough to fill the space between the two streams, so that both my flanks were secure, and there I fought and won the battle of Assaye, the bloodiest, for the numbers, that I ever saw; and this was all from my having the common sense to guess that men did not build villages on opposite sides of a stream without some means of communication between them. If I had not taken that sudden resolution, we were, I assure you, in a most dangerous predicament.—*Croker's Correspondence.*

CROKER AND MACAULAY.

Macauley, as it clearly appears from his own letters, was irritated beyond measure by Croker: he grew to "detest" him. Then he began casting about for some means of revenge. This would seem incredible if he had not, almost in so many words, revealed the secret. In July, 1831, he wrote this: "That impudent, leering Croker congratulated the House on the proof which I had given of my readiness. He was afraid, he said, that I had been silent so long on account of the many allusions which had been made to Calne. Now that I had risen again he hoped that they should hear me often. See whether I do not dust that valet's jacket for

him in the next number of the *Blue and Yellow*. I detest him more than cold boiled veal." From that time forth he waited impatiently for his opportunity to settle his account with Mr. Croker.

In the previous month of March he had been looking out eagerly for the publication of the "Boswell," "I will certainly review 'Croker's 'Boswell' when it comes out," he wrote to Mr. Napier. He was on the watch for it, not with the object of doing justice to the book, but of "dusting the jacket" of the author. But as his letters had not yet betrayed his malice to the world, he gravely began the dusting process by remarking, "This work has greatly disappointed us." What did he hope for, when he took it up, but precisely such a "disappointment?" "Croker," he wrote, "looks across the House of Commons at me with a leer of hatred, which I repay with a gracious smile of pity." He had cultivated his animosity of Croker until it became a morbid passion. Yet it is conceivable that he did not intend posterity to see him in the picture drawn by his own hand, spending his time in the House of Commons straining his eyes to see if there was a "leer" on Croker's countenance, and returning it with gracious smiles of pity.—*Croker's Correspondence.*

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

PERSIA.

BY MINNIE G. FRASER, ST. ELMO.

Beneath the bounteous Persian sky
A breath of roses fills the air;
Iran's wild peaks are bathed in light,
A land of story wondrous fair.

There streams of pearly water flow
In sylvan glades that charm the sight;
There lurk the warbling nightingales,
That with their love-notes thrill the night.

But hark, at sultry hour of noon,
From minaret there sounds a call,
"To Allah, Allah! bow the knee,"
And prone to earth the Moslems fall.

So are they taught by one who le
Their nation into sin and shame,
And while they mutter "God is great,"
They breathe with awe Mahomet's name.

A name that only breeds a curse
Where'er his impious law is heard,
For all his teaching is a blow
Struck at the truth of God's own Word.

Oh, pray that on that land may rise
The glorious Day-spring from on high,
And Jesus' name alone be praised
By all beneath the Orient sky.

A CANADIAN SNOW-SHOE PARADE.

Their first view of the palace on reaching the Square was enchanting. It was brilliantly illuminated with electric lights, which shone through its sides and gave it the appearance of a large structure of ground glass. A band of music was playing inside, and thousands of people in their warm furs and gayly coloured head-dresses were crowding about it. A slight snow was falling, the air was cold, but dry, and the whole scene made us think of pictures we had seen of winter sights in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Soon there was a cry of "Here they come," and then at the northern end of the Square the torches of the snow shoe clubs were seen approaching. On they came, and several hundred had filed by, and their torches had surrounded three sides of the Square with a line of light; at a given signal a shower of rockets ascended from the middle of the Square, Roman-candles were let off from the whole line of show-shoers, and the ice palace was brightly lighted with coloured fires, one tower being red, another green, and another blue. The effect was almost magical. We watched the whole parade—a thousand show-shoers in their picturesque white suits, and then returned home, and from the window watched the line pass and repass across the top of the mountain and then wind down its side, doubling back and forth in the descent four or five times, until finally we saw it as it sank into

"the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid."
George A. Buffum, in St. Nicholas for February.

THE REV. DR. PARKER.

Dr. Parker's church is in the heart of the business part of the old city of London. He has next to no population near at hand. It is as poor a location as could be conceived for building a large church. Yet just there, in the midst of the world's busiest life, the City Temple stands, and, what is more, its three thousand seats are always full. It is a wonderful audience—mostly composed of men. Dr. Parker preaches to more men than any living preacher. People come from all over London to hear him. On Thursday of each week, at noon, he preaches to an audience that fills the body of his huge church. He is a preacher. He is never heard of in political, and seldom in ecclesiastical affairs. He has written and published much, and his words are read by hundreds of less prominent ministers throughout the English-speaking world with great gratitude and enthusiasm. He wrote "*Ecce Deus*" years ago, and since then has written on "*The Inner Life of Christ*," on "*The Apostles*," and is just commencing to issue a mammoth work on the whole Bible. His church is not located where it can do the same kind of work as churches with their constituencies around them, but it is doing its work nobly.

In the annual accounts of the city of Glasgow there is a deficiency of \$113,810 in the ecclesiastical revenue.

British and Foreign.

MR. JOSHUA IVES, M.B., Cantab, organist in Anderston Church, Glasgow, has become professor of music in Adelaide University.

THE Columbian University of Washington has decided to admit women to the study of medicine, with the same privileges accorded to men.

THE Rev. T. C. Fulton, M.A., recently ordained by Templepatrick Presbytery to the mission field, left Belfast lately for Newchwang, China.

THE Rev. R. Robinson has retired from the position of Home Secretary of the London Missionary Society, which he has held for twenty years.

THE Queen's offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh were, in accordance with the usual custom, presented at the Chapel Royal, St. James', on the 6th ult.

THE average age of English Episcopal clergymen who died in 1884 was sixty-seven years, giving an average term of forty-four years' service in holy orders.

A GOVERNMENT census in Japan shows that there are 80,000 Christians in that country, including the converts of the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR, the Liberal whip, told his constituents lately that he has no doubt the Welsh Church will be disestablished by the next parliament.

A BILL introduced in the Michigan Legislature provides that the occupation and politics of each candidate shall appear on a voting paper giving the names of all candidates.

It is intended to hold special missionary services for the young next month in Aberdeen. The Free Church Presbytery has invited the co-operation of the Established and U. P. Churches.

ACTIVE preparations are being made by the inhabitants of St. Augustine, Florida, for the celebration of the 320th anniversary of its founding, which will take place on March 27th and 28th.

THE coffee shop, as a recognized regimental institution in the British army in India, is under the consideration of the authorities at head-quarters, and it is expected that it will be made as compulsory as the canteen.

THE Rev. W. K. Landels, Naples, has started the only illustrated journal published in that city. Its title is *Bian Genio*; it is designed for evangelistic purposes. He also issues another paper called *Testimonio*.

FOR a prize of five guineas for the best mission hymn, offered by *Life and Work*, there were 300 competitors; and pieces by the Bishop of St. Andrew's and Mrs. Bayly-Jones, Kilm, Argyllshire, were found to be equal.

THE chief of the Ojibway Indians, who for twenty-one years has been a missionary of the Colonial and Continental Society, delivered an address in Dublin last week, on "My Work, My People, and Myself." The new Archbishop presided.

THERE is a Faith Home in Springfield, Mass. Two women, who are called Sisters Rosa and Orpha, opened it five years ago. The *Republican* vouches for them as humble, earnest believers in the miracles which they think they work.

MR. AFFLETON, the retiring President of the Stockton Chamber of Commerce, in England, delivered a farewell address, in the course of which he said that arrangements were nearly completed for a line of steamers between Stockton and New York.

THE pastor of the little church at Longtown, Cumberland, England, has carried on his ministrations there for over five years without being certain of receiving \$25 a year. His two congregations scarcely produce between them \$125 per annum towards the pastor's support.

SIGNOR FAVAZZI has been visiting Milan, encouraging the Church in that city by his words and presence; he was in wonderful vigour and force. It is probable, if his health continues good, that he may spend a month or two next summer in Scotland on deputation work.

A CLOCK seven feet high has been made by a Leesville, Ohio, blacksmith with the aid of nothing but the tools of his trade. It is made principally of steel, gives the time in eleven cities, strikes the hours and quarters, and is exhibited in a glass case where the movement can be seen.

BERLIN papers report that a subscription list for contributions to the pedestal of the Bartholdi statue has been put up in the United States Consulate General in that city, in accordance with an order by President Arthur. The amount subscribed is limited to \$1, and the list is already well covered.

THE faculty of Magee College, Londonderry, have requested Rev. Dr. Glasgow to take charge of the class in Hebrew and Oriental literature until the close of the session. Professor Dougherty has succeeded the late Dr. Given as President. There are four candidates for the vacant professorship.

ST. ENOCH'S congregation, Belfast, embraces 700 families. There are sixteen elders, thirty-eight members of committee, 146 Sabbath school teachers, and 3,166 scholars on the rolls. The day schools have 2,100 pupils. The income for 1884, including a grant of \$1,250 from the Presbyterian Council, was \$10,550.

DR. MARSHALL LANG has collected nearly enough to rebuild the Barony Church on its old site near Glasgow Cathedral, but the magistrates wish to improve the view of the cathedral by enlarging the square, and have proposed to present the congregation with a new site, behind the present church, near the Molendinar Burn.

CHARLES WESTWOOD, of Shoreditch, an anti-vaccinationist, evaded the English health law and permitted three of his children to remain unvaccinated. They have recently died of small-pox. The *Lancet* says that Mr. Westwood will have to look far back into history for any accident from vaccination to be compared with the disaster that has accrued to his home from small-pox.