

## THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

## Another Theological Novel.

The new volume of Ticknor's paper series, *The Desmond Hundred*, will have special interest at this time of religious study and comparison, from the fact that its chief characters are ritualist priests, as clearly marked and carefully drawn as Newcombe, in *Robert Elsmere*. The fact that the book was written by Jane G. Austin, the author of *A Nameless Nobleman* and *Mrs. Beauchamp Brown*, is guaranty of the mingled delicacy and power of its scenes and delineations. It is indeed a story of marked individuality and interest, whose scenes are laid in such attractive regions as New England and the Bahamas. When it first appeared, *The Churchman* pronounced it to be "the strongest American novel that has been produced for many a year."—Boston: Ticknor & Co. St. John: Alfred Morrissey. Paper, price 50 cents.

The *North American Review* for February is bright and interesting. The best and most popular writers of the day are among the contributors. The financier will find plenty to interest him in Andrew Carnegie's "Bugaboo of Trusts" and Edwards Pierpont's "Restore Silver in the Coinage." The author of *Robert Elsmere* discusses "Sin and Unbelief" and if for nothing else the *Review* will be widely bought and read for this. But to many readers perhaps the most fascinating articles in the publication are by Shirley Dare, Rose Terry Cooke, Marion Harland, Catharine Owen and Maria Parloa who write on that great question, "Is Housekeeping a Failure?" There is nothing dull and dry about these articles. The question is all important to women and when they are addressed by such capable and entertaining representatives of the sex they should not fail to read what is said on the subject. Among other articles in this number are "Coming Polar Expeditions" by Lieut. Schwatka; "False Modesty in Readers" by George Parsons Lathrop; "Misrepresentation in Congress" by General L. S. Bryce, M. C.; "Naval Wars of the Future" by Admiral D. D. Porter; "The American Boy" by J. T. Trowbridge; "Unconscious Suicide" by Wm. Hosca Ballou; "Zoological Game Preserves" by F. L. Fremont; "Our Rodent Rivals" by Felix L. Oswald; "Why am I a Missionary" by Marion E. Beall; "Siberia and Land Tenure" by Benjamin Doblin and "Shakespeare Interviewed" by Dion Boucicault.—New York: Allen Thorndike Rice. Price, \$5 a year, 50 cents a number.

## Notes and Announcements.

H. Rider Haggard has become a vegetarian. He says meat diet retarded his imagination.

The first volume of Thomas Stevens' narrative of his journey *Around the World on a Bicycle* has gone into its second edition.

Miss Olive Shreiner, the author of *The Story of an African Farm*, has nearly finished another novel. It is said to deal with the question of ideal marriage, much in the spirit of Tolstoi.

Amelie Rives-Chandler writes to a Philadelphia friend in regard to her next novel: "It has been dashed down in my usual helter skelter style. I wish you would most kindly call my attention to anything that you may think improper."

Robert Louis Stevenson is soon expected in New York. He writes from Tantra that he has taken to going barefoot, and is doing well. In his own words: "I write this just after having dismissed Oli (the sub-clerk in whose house I live), Mrs. Oli, and Pairsi, their adopted child, from the evening hour of music, during which I publicly blow on the Flageolet!"

The suggestion of the *Spectator* that it might be possible to issue an edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* "in 100 instead of 24 volumes—an edition of a size which could be lifted without a backache, and read while sitting in a chair," is meeting with unexpected favor from readers who buy books to read, and not to look at.

Among the new books soon to be published in England are *Occasional Thoughts of an Astronomer on the Subjects of the Day*, by Rev. Prof. Pritchard, of Oxford; an authorized translation of Dr. Geffcken's *Pen Sketches of the British Empire*, translated by Mr. S. J. MacMullan; *The Foundations of the Creed*, by Dr. Harvey Goodwin, the bishop of Carlisle.

Prof. J. P. Mahaffy, of Trinity college, Dublin, the well-known author of *Social Life in Greece*, *Greek Education*, *Manual of Greek Literature*, *The Art of Conversation*, etc., will visit the United States next summer as the guest of the Chautauqua assembly. He will pass two weeks in August at Chautauqua, where he will deliver lectures.

The Shakespeare society of New York receives a proof of the late Mr. Halliwell-Phillips's regard in the shape of electroplates, electros of wood-blocks, and wood-blocks. All these of which he died possessed he leaves to his American disciples. He bequeaths three hundred bound volumes of autograph letters to the University of Edinburgh. His unrivaled collection of Shakespearean rarities goes to the Corporation of Birmingham, if they like to pay \$35,000 for them. His library is left to his nephew.

For a book of sermons to run through five editions is sufficiently unusual to attract

especial attention to the late Dr. Roswell Hitchcock's volume, *Eternal Atonement*.

Among the interesting fac-simile reproductions in the forthcoming volume of Wallack's reminiscences, *Memories of Fifty Years*, is the comedian's first theatrical contract. This is dated London, September 9, 1846, and in it "Mr. John Johnstone Wallack" engages himself to Mr. B. Webster to act in the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, for three seasons, in eccentric comedy, at a salary of £6 per week for the first season, and £8 per week for the two next seasons. Wallack also stipulated that he should act under the name of Lester.

Mr. Henry B. Blackwell, the sturdy advocate of Woman's Suffrage, and one of the senior editors of the *Woman's Journal*, received a charming compliment the other day. His compact figure, his smiling face surrounded by snow-white beard and whiskers, his large head crowned with hair as white, are very well known indeed to Boston people. Sitting at his desk in the pleasant parlors of the *Woman's Journal*, which look out on Boston common, Mr. Blackwell received a call from Mrs. Anna Garlin Spencer, who was accompanied by her little daughter. The small woman of five years gazed admiringly at Mr. Blackwell, poised her head critically to survey him from all points, walked round and round him, and finally exclaimed in enthusiastic tones, "Well, this is the first time I ever saw Santa Claus in the daytime before!" When Mr. Blackwell put on his hat and coat and walked out her disappointment was great because he did not disappear up the chimney.—E. M. Gosse, in *February Wide Awake*.

## MUSIC, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

## AT AN ORGAN RECITAL.

Midway we sat between the nave and door, Between the worldly tumult of the street And the calm silence of God's pure retreat. We heard the hidden organ pipes outpour Their mighty waves of music. More and more The melody encompassed us. The sweet Four woke my soul to see his incomplete And strive towards God on those pure strains to soar.

Midway between the world and God we sat, While through the dim, arches vault the music stole, And in its rustling garments wrapped us twain. Of thy pure soul, so free from wrong and hate, Then woke my soul to hear the grand refrain, And yearned to reach, like thee, life's heavenly goal.

—Arthur Weir, in *The Dominion Illustrated*.

A London, Eng., exchange says that the cathedral organ at Gloucester has been rebuilt. The old organ was built in 1666 by Charles and Renatus Harris. Many of the old pipes have been incorporated in the new instrument, and the handsome oak case remains unaltered. I wonder what will be the condition of the Mission church organ in 230 years, say A. D. 2100!

Now I am upon organs, naturally I must say something about recitals, and I have been rather surprised to find what a very feeble and poor attendance those at the Mission church have called forth. The fact is impressing itself more and more on my mind that the people of St. John do not appreciate the highest class of music. These recitals have been of more than average merit, both vocally and instrumentally, and one would have thought that 350 people would have been found in St. John to go to such an evening's recreation. Knowing the ability of the performers, only on one night has the church been more than half full, and the audience on each evening has been largely composed of the congregation of the church. Taking an experience of St. John audiences of over five years, I come to the conclusion that they want something to laugh at, and patter songs, minstrels, comic opera and comedy (or rather farce) are better suited to their taste than organ recitals, oratorio, opera or tragedy.

The recital on the 1st was the best yet given. Miss Massey's singing of "With Verdure Clad," was a gem only marred by her very imperfect enunciation of the words. Mrs. Carter's reappearance after such a long silence, about eighteen months, I think, proved that her voice has lost nothing by its long rest, her singing of the two trios and the duet with Mrs. Perley being very delightful performances. Mrs. Perley has not sung so well or been in such fine voice for years, as she was in "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and it was a treat that those present would not have missed for a great deal. I myself have not enjoyed any sacred music quite so much since I came to Canada. Rev. Mr. Davenport was in his usual fine form, and Mr. Morley was—well, Mr. Morley.

At the organ recital in St. Stephen's church, Tuesday evening (which, by the way, suffered from lack of attendance, as all these recitals do where the tickets are sold), the most noticeable numbers played by Mr. Morley were the two selections from Handel's works, the aria, "Waft Her Angels" and the Coronation Anthem, Chinner's Offertoire and the lovely Pastoral by Sir Sterndale Bennett. These four selections brought out Mr. Morley's now well known ability in the fullest manner, though of course the rest of the programme was admirably performed.

The Oratorio society are showing to better advantage every time they are heard, and these public recitals are evidently doing much for the chorus, who are evidently learning to depend more on counting their own beats than entirely on the conductor; and as they now do so well without the baton, I look forward to a great advance over last year at the next

annual concert, where they will be under their conductor.

The beautiful solo and chorus, "Hear My Prayer," went very well, Mrs. Gilchrist taking the solo with much effect, though it was apparent that a contralto is not quite fitted for the singing of a soprano part, however well trained the voice may be, there being a very noticeable lack of tone in the upper register. The quartette choir of the church sang, "Still, Still With Thee," to a simple chant, tunefully and with some expression.

The Minstrels having fixed their dates for Feb. 28, March 1 and matinee on the 2nd, will now get on rapidly with their work. There is a sort of feeling that there is plenty of time and so the attendance is not so good at rehearsals as it should be, until the actual date is fixed and the members stand committed. Then they buckle to. At least that was the experience last time. I think it would be well to practice some of the songs that were so well liked last time and give them at least on the second evening or at the matinee. There seems to be a very general demand for a second hearing of "Dem Chickens."

The Folio for February is at hand and is composed mainly of short paragraphs, there being no very noticeable articles of any length—probably on account of removal of the publishing premises. The music is composed of a duet for soprano and contralto, "Trusting," by C. A. White, "Little Nugget Polka," by H. J. Sechrist and a gavotte by Keller, "Youth and Beauty."

The Oratorio society have ordered the copies of *Samson*, one of the works to be done at the annual concert this year. I shall have something to say about this oratorio next week.

The following is rather a severe remark about the organist of Trinity. I heard a musical friend who is a regular attendant there asked how Mr. Cogswell played last Sunday and the following was the reply: "Mr. Cogswell is as good as an amateur as Mr. Hill was bad as a professional." I hear from a good many sources that Mr. Cogswell acquitted himself well last Sunday.

## TALK OF THE THEATRE.

Sol Smith Russell seems to have hit upon a character to which he can do justice. In his impersonation of Noah Vale, in *A Poor Relation*, he is said to achieve a success beyond anything which has yet fallen to his lot. He has given it a reality far beyond that conceived by the author, and the best description of it seems to be that while as quaint as a character from Dickens, it is yet human and real. Sol has many acquaintances in this part of the world who will be glad to hear that the Boston critics appreciate his latest efforts.

Mrs. Langtry seems to have improved wonderfully in *Macbeth* since her first appearance in that play, a week or two ago. It was then flatly declared that she was unequal to the part of Lady Macbeth, and that the production was likely to be a dismal failure. Now the New York papers have only good words for her and mild criticism for her support. The *Sun*, which was very pronounced in its opinion at the outset, says that her share "is so unexpectedly satisfactory, and the general merit of the revival is so marked, that excellent entertainment is provided by her enterprise, which was regarded beforehand as rash, but which proves to have been carefully considered." The question occurring to some people will be: Has Mrs. Langtry really improved, or have the critics been "seen" by her manager?

Next Monday evening Boston will see Gilbert and Sullivan's *Yeomen of the Guard* for the first time. It will be given at the Globe theatre, and will undoubtedly be a success in the Hub. It has had a run of 100 nights in New York, and is said to please the public even better than the *Mikado*, which took Boston by storm three years ago.

Joe Jefferson will spend the next three months at New Iberia, La. By that time he will begin to make preparations for his usual trip to the salmon streams of New Brunswick.

Booth and Barrett have not toiled merely for "the bubble reputation," this season. The profits of the former will reach the snug sum of \$165,000, while the latter, who has had to pay the expenses, will clear the modest figure of \$75,000. The weekly receipts have averaged over \$13,000 during the season. They will close their season with a week of plays which must fill the house. These are *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *The Fool's Revenge*, *David Garrick*, *Yorick's Love* and *The King's Pleasure*.

Mrs. James G. Blaine, jr., who has signed a three years contract, will have an American society comedy written for her. She will make her first appearance in New York in October. By the terms of her contract she will receive a weekly salary and a share of the receipts, with her own travelling expenses and those of her child's nurse.

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I will walk into this Retail, Said the Lady passing by; And, perhaps, some pretty Hamburgs In here I may espy.

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But she wanted more than Hamburgs, So she quickly pressed her way To the counter, where the Gingham And the Seersuckers are displayed.

And here, she looked and purchased— And in fact, she was dismayed At the beautiful array of patterns For the Spring and Summer trade.

\*The London House Retail is on the corner of Charlotte and Union streets.

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