

The Right Hon. Viscount de Vesce has a paper with the suggestive title of "Hibernia Pacata"—concerning "the Silent Sister" it is well for us on this side of the Atlantic to be discreetly silent. "Gardens," by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart., M.P., is a very readable paper, containing some valuable "pointers" not only upon botany, but upon literature. He calls attention to the meaning of the word "canker" in—

So put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this canker Bolingbroke,

which we confess to realizing for the first time. "Milton's Macbeth," by Professor Hales, is, as the author remarks, one of the most curious facts in literary history. Professor Hales draws a curious parallel between Shakespeare's play and "Paradise Lost." "No other of Shakespeare's plays," he says, "comes so near dealing with the very subject of 'Paradise Lost.'" Professor Hales points out how Milton's lofty mind would not have deemed "the wilfulness of Macbeth's ruin" sufficiently emphasized. A volume might be written on this subject, and we would wish the volume from the pen of Professor Hales. The Rev. Professor Cheyne replies to Mr. Gladstone in an article entitled "Beliefs in Immortality." "Shakespeare and Modern Greek," by Professor Blackie, gives us a modern Greek's conception of Hamlet. "A Cereyean scholar, named Polyas, grapples boldly with one of the most difficult problems that could tax the capacity of any language—a metrical version of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet.'" Professor Blackie gives us a short account of this bold attempt, and then passes on to the comparison of ancient and modern Greek; he ends with a powerful appeal against our barbarous pronunciation of Greek in Britain, which is, in his opinion, as much "under the ban of intelligent scholarship" as the world-famous Anglified Latin! Archibald Forbes contributes a paper entitled "Moltke and Moltkeism," and H. H. Cameron ends a most interesting number with "The Labour 'Platform' at the Next Election."

THE *Fortnightly Review*, December, 1891. "Our Army and its Detractors" professes to be a criticism of the critics. The article deals both with the material of the troops and the expenditure for their maintenance. In regard to both these particulars the author defends our present régime in comparison with the results of the continental system. In speaking of the oft harped on "reforms" he says very truly: "Every Englishman thinks he understands the army, but not one in 1,000,000 cares a button about army reform, while nine out of ten would vote against a Government which caused them to miss a train by an attempt at mobilization." Again: "What we want to attain is a determination on the part of England to have a sufficient army and a readiness to make sacrifices for it." This is, as the author states, the main point which the critics should endeavour to get at. "A Rejoinder," by Sir Charles Dilke, follows, in which he vigorously attacks some of the statements made by the author of "Our Army and its Detractors," with what degree of justice our readers must see for themselves by reading both these papers on this most important subject. "Compulsory Greek," written in the *de haut en bas* tone by Mr. J. B. Bury, is the best reason (we were nearly saying apology) for compulsory Greek that we have ever heard. Greek does not aid to "complete living" in Mr. Herbert Spencer's sense, but for all that it has a value of its own. It seems a strange paradox to say that Greek should be taught at a university because of its uselessness, but it is a paradox that contains the germs of a very wide-reaching truth. "An Eighteenth Century Singer," by Vernon Lee, is well worth reading. "Phases of Crime in Paris," by Hugues Le Roux, is a ghastly picture of physical and mental decadence. And yet it is not with the pen, still less with the pessimism of a Zola, that M. Le Roux presents these fearful glimpses of Parisian life: "In the very worst of men," he quotes at the end, "there still remains something that does honour to humanity." W. H. Mallock brings a very good number to a conclusion with "A Human Document" (chaps. IX.-XI.).

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

W. E. HENLEY has edited a volume of "Byron's Letters," which is announced for early publication.

MR. R. L. STEVENSON will write an introduction to his grandfather's reminiscences of his journey with Scott, which *Scribner's* will soon print.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD calls Edgar Allen Poe "the Catullus of American literature," and thinks he should be better appreciated by the reading public than he is.

MRS. WIGGINS' delightful story, "The Birds' Christmas Carol," is said to be in as great demand now as when first published. The secret of this popularity is a very open one, for its humour and pathos are delicious, and of the kind which never loses its flavour.

LORD DUFFERIN'S great ability, popularity and exceptional qualifications as one of the greatest living diplomats, are again *en évidence* in connection with his rapid transfer from the honourable position of Warden of the Cinque Ports to the still more distinguished position of English Ambassador at Paris.

A BEAUTIFUL little edition of Herrick is forthcoming in England—an edition for which Mr. Swinburne has written a preface. The spelling of the poems is modernized—otherwise the text is that of the original edition. This is the first volume of a new series to be called "The Muse's Library."

PROFESSOR GILDERSLEEVE, of Johns Hopkins University, was in the Confederate Army, and a firm believer in the cause for which it contended. In the *Atlantic Monthly* for January he will state with frankness and force the reasons for his course, in an article entitled "The Creed of the Old South."

"AN American Claimant" is the name of Mark Twain's serial, which seems to be the *pièce de résistance* of Jerome K. Jerome's new magazine, the *Idler*. Robert Barr, who is to be Mr. Jerome's assistant editor, was formerly connected with the *Detroit Free Press*, for which he wrote over the name of Luke Sharp.

THE Browning Cyclopaedia, which has been in preparation by Dr. Edward Berdoe, author of "Browning's Message to His Time," will be published very shortly by Macmillan and Company. It is the most thorough and probably the most generally useful of all the aids to the study of Browning as yet attempted.

PROF. C. M. WOODWARD, of Washington University, contributes to the *New England Magazine* a vivid account of St. Louis, its early beginnings, its development and present day progress. The article is illustrated by Ross Turner, the famous Boston impressionist, and will interest a large number of readers North, West and South.

THERE are no Tom Hoods now in the magazines; only a number of metaphysical, botanical poets, who write things which might have been shaken out of a dice box. But, for a change, there is a poem with a strong human interest in the January *New England Magazine*. It tells the story of a babe dying in the streets of cold and starvation on Christmas Eve, and is by Agnes Maule Machar.

THE personality of no man in America to-day possesses greater interest for English-speaking peoples all the world over than that of Phillips Brooks, the newly-elected Bishop of Massachusetts. One of the most interesting articles in the New Year's magazines will be "Phillips Brooks," by Julius H. Ward, in the *New England Magazine*. It gives an account of the great preacher's early manhood, his homes, his haunts and his work.

ANNIE PAYSON CALL, in a paper on the "Greatest Need of College Girls" in the January *Atlantic*, says: "English women are showing a marked superiority over American women in the college career. They are taking prizes and attaining marked intellectual distinction, not because their scholastic advantages are greater, nor because of superior intellectual gifts, but because of better physique, more normal nervous systems, and consequently greater power of endurance."

AMONG some photographs sold recently in London was a letter from Thackeray, dated in 1849, and reading thus: "Well, what can a man more desire than a good wife, a fair living, a pretty country, and health to enjoy all these good things? A parson's life I should take to be the best and happiest in [the] world—lucky they whose vocation it is. I wish mine was as tranquil. You, I know, are such a young fellow; I am grown quite an old one with a white head and a—what do you call that curve which the male figure and a—frequently (about the waistcoat) throws out at forty or so?"

In the interesting collection of letters entitled "Joseph Severn and his Correspondents," in the December *Atlantic*, there is a letter from John Ruskin, which gives an account of his first introduction to the paintings of Tintoret. He writes: "I see what the world is coming to. We shall put it into a chain armour of railroad, and then everybody will go everywhere every day, until every place is like every other place; and then, when they are tired of changing stations and police, they will congregate in knots in great cities, which will consist of club-houses, coffee-houses and newspaper offices; the churches will be turned into assembly rooms, and people will eat, sleep and gamble to their graves."

It is ten years since Mr. Joseph Henry Shorthouse, a native of Birmingham, who had then reached the mature age of 46, astonished the world by presenting it, in "John Inglesant," with a romance of the Stuart times which, for charm of style and depth of historical learning, was in some quarters regarded as almost unrivalled. In the same year (1881) Mr. Shorthouse published "The Platonism of Wordsworth," which was followed by prefaces to George Herbert's "Temple" (1882) and "The Spiritual Guide of Miguel Molinos" (1883). In the year last named, "The Little Schoolmaster Mark," described as "a spiritual romance," appeared, and was succeeded in 1886 by "Sir Percival." In 1888 two more works saw the light—"The Countess Eve" and "A Teacher of the Violin, and other Tales." More than two years had elapsed without a fresh story from Mr. Shorthouse's pen, when "Blanche, Lady Falaise," was published. Admirers of this writer cannot complain, as some authors' admirers do, that sufficient interval does not take place between the publication of his works to enable them to keep up with the author. But it may be doubted if Mr. Shorthouse has done anything to equal his first work.

FROM some reminiscences of Hawthorne in the Boston *Transcript*: "Pike saw him occasionally after his return from Europe, and found him reconciled to life. But from the first he regarded life as a burden to be borne. He saw so much evil in the world—not all the consequences of sin, as theologians asserted, and which no human wisdom could overcome—that he often doubted whether the world was governed by a Benevolent Power. He felt that if he had the power ascribed to God he would not permit the strong

to oppress the weak, would not permit the wicked to bear rule. For himself, he was involved in the general ruin of the race, and often sighed to be at rest. Pike said that Frank Pierce made him, for he would not make himself; he was too timid and distrustful to take a step in advance for fear he should stumble: that he required to be pushed forward and kept on the move from behind. Pike says that he was so fastidious in his writings that he probably destroyed more than he published, and that he often polished the life out of some of his best publications. Mr. Pike wrote out a sketch of his intercourse with him, and it was so well put together that his friends advised him to publish it after his death. The writer of this article informed James T. Fields of the fact, and he visited Pike and Hawthorne's family, and the result was that the sketch was never published.—*New York Critic*.

A BORE interviewed Lord Tennyson recently, and, as if that crime were not enough, he has added stupidity to bad taste by publishing an account of his reception. The following are some selections from his narrative: "He laid down the book he was reading and eyed me through his glasses with a searching, scrutinizing glance, as he is extremely short-sighted. Then he nodded. 'Pray sit down,' while his frail, white fingers toyed absent-mindedly with the paper-cutter. 'Have you also taken the trouble to come out here, simply to tell me that I am a great author? Pardon me; but be assured that the honorary visits of a grateful public can reach incredible dimensions.' The beginning of our interview was not very encouraging. . . . I thought it time to leave, and rose. 'I hope I have not disturbed you.' 'Not in the least, but you will oblige me by leaving now,' he replied. 'Would you allow me to call again?' 'You will be welcome if you have anything particular to communicate to me, but otherwise it would, most likely, be unprofitable to both of us. Do you think you can find your way? Oblige me by ringing the bell.' . . . Then another servant with a set smile and faultlessly brushed hair noiselessly made his appearance. 'Show the gentleman the nearest way to the railroad station.' Perhaps after all the report of his interview will be some compensation to Lord Tennyson, for he certainly showed himself possessed of patience of a very high order. Only, let us hope it may not encourage other bores to attack him!

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

ARTISANS AND HIGHER EDUCATION.

MANY of the leaders of the artisans in the north are men of great ability and earnestness and well-read to an amazing degree. During one of the visits, in a conversation with a number of pitmen after a public meeting, some reference was made to "Whewell's History of the Inductive Sciences," when one of the men said: "Ah! that is a book I have long been wanting to see. Mill criticizes a point in it, and, as far as I can see, Mill was wrong." John Stuart Mill is held in great respect among the miners, and in most of the scanty libraries of the more thoughtful working men some of Mill's books are to be found. The same pitman who made the remark about "Whewell's Inductive Sciences" dwelt, with feeling that was evidently rooted in personal experience, upon the fact that one of the hardest and most pathetic things in the lot of a young working man endeavouring to educate himself was the waste of time and money occasioned by the purchase of antiquated or worthless books, owing to lack of guidance in their selection. A miner who attended a course of lectures on Physical Geography at Middlesboro' in 1881 is an illustration of this point. He had wished when a young man to know something of Natural History, and out of his modest earnings had spent a couple of pounds in the purchase of "Goldsmith's Animated Nature," only to discover later that Natural History was making rapid advances, and that the kind of book he wanted was of an entirely different character. A most important indirect benefit conferred by the University Extension scheme has been the help and guidance which lecturers residing in the district have been able to give in this way. Many instances are recorded of the enthusiasm of the miners for knowledge and their sacrifices to obtain the opportunities of higher education. In a letter to a local paper in 1883 one of them wrote: "I know several persons who go a distance of six miles in order to hear the University Lectures. Nay! I know some who have travelled ten miles in order to hear the present course." The following is an instance of this: Two pitmen, brothers, living in a village five miles from one of the centres, were able to get in to the lectures by train, but the return service was inconvenient and they were compelled to walk home. This they did weekly for three months, on dark nights, over wretchedly bad roads and in all kinds of weather. On one occasion they returned in a severe storm, when the roads were so flooded that they lost their way and got up to their waists in water. It is not surprising to find that they distinguished themselves in the examination and eventually succeeded in making their own village a lecture-centre.—*From Eighteen Years of University Extension. By R. D. Roberts, M.A., D.Sc.*

THE longest ocean cable in the world is that of the Eastern Telegraph Company, whose system extends from England to India, and measures 21,000 miles. Africa is now completely encircled by submarine cables, which make up altogether a length of 17,000 miles.