

Contemporary Thought.

LITERATURE and sensationalism are apparently hand in hand in New York, at least so far as the newspapers go. Mr. Julian Hawthorne's exploit as an interviewer has created much more talk than would be supposed, but the author went into journalism for the avowed purpose of making money, and he has seldom shown squeamishness over small obstacles when in quest of the mighty dollar. His affair with Mr. Lowell has not only been universally condemned, but the most bitter in condemnation are the honest newspaper men who feel that he has degraded his newly-adopted profession. Personally Mr. Hawthorne seems to feel the scandal very little. He turned up at the usual Thursday meeting of the Authors' Club two weeks ago, and talked as though the whole matter was of no consequence. The *World*, which employs Mr. Hawthorne, pays him a large salary for writing book criticisms over his own signature, and offered him a tempting inducement for interviews with both Holmes and Lowell. Dr. Holmes, it is said, was warned by a friend what might be expected, and refused all conversation with the interviewer. The *World* stands by its representative, and so important has he become, that at the recent Liberty unweiling, he was allowed to write his report and sign his name to it.—*The Literary World*.

As far back as our records reach—perhaps, as Mr. Spencer thinks, from the childhood of our race—a belief in the existence of invisible and, on physical grounds, unexplainable beings and modes of action has existed in human society. Sometimes this belief has dominated a larger, sometimes a smaller portion of mankind, and the attitude of the intelligent classes toward it has correspondingly varied. In our own day this belief not only exists, but it influences a far greater number of persons than the chance observer supposes. Of late years the effects of this belief in supersensible beings and influences have shown themselves in many ways and places, particularly in Great Britain and America. We have heard of numberless clairvoyants, spiritualists, mesmerizers and mind-readers. The nineteenth-century scientist has hitherto found no leisure to investigate the many remarkable occurrences that, from time to time, have been spoken and written of; or, if he has had the leisure, he has spurned the reports of these occurrences as beneath his notice as an educated and well-balanced man. Nevertheless, the fact that such occurrences as we refer to, numerous instances of which are familiar to every one, have been allowed to pass uninvestigated, has been a standing reproach to true science. Science prides itself on dealing with phenomena of any kind whatsoever, without fear or favour. And these occurrences, and the belief which many intelligent men and women hold in reference to them, are certainly phenomena. Grant, for the sake of argument, that the occurrences are fictitious and fraudulent, the belief in them remains as a phenomena in human nature. Instances of this form part of our experience quite as truly, if not so frequently, as the sensations of heat and light do. If they are false, let us know the fact on demonstrable

grounds; if true, let us know how and why. At all events, we must have scientific knowledge concerning them. If this investigation is to be scientific, it must be undertaken in a thoroughly impartial spirit. We must lay aside our preconceived notions, and examine the facts as we find them. We want to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.—From "*The Progress of Physical Research*," by Professor N. M. Butler, in *Popular Science Monthly*.

NOTHING would help the man of science of the future to rise to the level of his great enterprise more effectually than certain modifications, on the one hand, of primary and secondary school education, and, on the other, of the conditions which are attached by the universities to the attainment of their degrees and their rewards. As I ventured to remark some years ago, we want a most-favoured-nation clause inserted in our treaty with educators. We have a right to claim that science shall be put upon the same footing as any other great subject of instruction, that it shall have an equal share in the schools, an equal share in the recognised qualification for degrees, and in university honours and rewards. It must be recognised that science, as intellectual discipline, is at least as valuable, and, as knowledge, is at least as important, as literature, and that the scientific student must no longer be handicapped by a linguistic (I will not call it literary) burden, the equivalent of which is not imposed upon his classical compeer. Let me repeat that! I say this, not as a depreciator of literature, but in the interests of literature. The reason why our young people are so often scandalously and lamentably deficient in literary knowledge, and still more in the feeling and the desire for literary excellence, lies in the fact that they have been withheld from a true literary training by the pretence of it, which too often passes under the name of classical instruction. Nothing is of more importance to the man of science than that he should appreciate the value of style, and the literary work of the school would be of infinite value to him if it taught him this one thing. But I do not believe that this is to be done by what is called forming one's self on classical models, or that the advice to give one's days and nights to the study of any great writer is of much value. "*Le style est l'homme même*," as a man of science who was a master of style has profoundly said; and aping somebody else does not help one to express one's self. A good style is the vivid expression of clear thinking, and it can be attained only by those who will take infinite pains, in the first place, to purge their own minds of ignorance and half-knowledge, and, in the second, to clothe their thoughts in the words which will most fitly convey them to the minds of others. I can conceive no greater help to our scientific students than that they should bring to their work the habit of mind which is implied in the power to write their own language in a good style. But this is exactly what our present so-called literary education so often fails to confer, even on those who have enjoyed its fullest advantages, while the ordinary schoolboy has rarely been even made aware that its attainment is a thing to be desired.—From "*The Extension of Scientific Teaching*," by Professor T. H. Huxley, in *Popular Science Monthly*.

MANY of our readers probably are in some doubt as to the precise course of events which has led up to the present Bulgarian crisis with which the whole European press—in fact Europe at large—is now occupied. A very interesting, and apparently authentic, account of the history of the forced abdication of Prince Alexander appeared in a recent number of the *Contemporary Review*; but those who are not able to peruse that will find some information in the following paragraph from Cyrus Hamlin's "*The Dream of Russia*" which is to appear in the *Atlantic Monthly* for December. The writer's views on the policy of Prince Alexander need not be accepted *au peid de la lettre*:—

"When Plevna fell, the object of Russia, as diplomatically stated, was attained. Bulgaria was in her possession. It was hers by conquest; and had she stopped there she could have expanded into European Turkey at her leisure and Europe would not have interfered. But, as often before, her military officers and counsellors—General Ignatieff especially, who has always known how to ruin success, and who was at that time supreme—cast aside all prudence, rushed across the Balkans in winter, with the loss of twenty thousand men, and were almost at the gates of Constantinople before astonished Europe could act. Then followed the celebrated treaty of San Stefano, between Russia and Turkey, March 3rd, 1878. So soon as Europe had time to study the treaty, and to get at the geography of it, it saw that Turkey had ceased to exist. The fine phrases that showed the contrary had no substantial meaning. England demanded that the treaty be submitted to a convention of the great powers, signatories of the treaty of Paris, and received a courteous but haughty negative. General Ignatieff had boastingly said, '*J'y suis; j'y reste!*' Lord Beaconsfield had, in the meantime, brought up seven thousand Sepoys from India into the Mediterranean, as an intimation of the vast number of Sepoys and Moslems at England's command. The war had already made unlooked-for demands upon the army and the treasury. The indignation of Europe was rising to a dangerous pitch, and Russia changed her tone. 'The treaty was elastic, and would admit of any modifications that the great powers might deem necessary.' Hence the great Congress of Berlin, which required that Russia should withdraw all her troops from European Turkey within a specified time. Then the delimitations of the treaty were materially changed, and the principality of Bulgaria was organized. Unwisely, this enterprising, thrifty, and united people was divided, by the Balkan Mountains, into two governments. The portion between the Balkans and the Danube were the principality; that south of the Balkans, under the name of Eastern Roumelia, remained nominally under the Sultan, but with great municipal freedom. The principality was made self-governing. Its young patriots, many of them educated at Robert College, intelligent students of American history and of the Constitution of the United States, took the lead in the formation of the government, and greatly disgusted the Russian agents. They chose Prince Alexander, and he gradually fell in with the policy of these eager young Bulgarians. Russia's firm purpose to upset this free government, and to expel the prince, beloved by all the people, is the cause of the present Bulgarian complication."