

LIBRARY TABLE.

WHO IS THE MAN? A Tale of the Scottish Border. By James Selwin Tait. New York: Tait, Sons and Company.

The scene, as indeed the title implies, is laid in Scotland, but "Who is the Man?" is undoubtedly an American production. It is a sensational novel, in which "character painting, for excellent reasons, has been neglected. A series of ghastly murders are committed in a small town in the Lowlands. The interest of the story is centred upon the discovery of the murderer, who is none other than a poor imbecile possessed of an unreasoning hatred of a prosperous banker, upon whom suspicion is fastened. The author can describe contests between men and beasts with a vividness not often surpassed, and it is the clearness and empressment of his dramatic situations which serve to make this a readable book.

ROWEN: Second Crop Songs. By H. C. Bunner. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1892.

A very pleasant little volume, graceful and unaffected. "The Ball—1789" and "The Ball—1861" are both in their different ways powerful. "May Bloom" with its

Oh, for you that I never knew,
Only in dreams that bind you!
By Spring's own grace I shall know your face
When under the May I find you!

is really pretty, as also is "Heave Ho!" Mr. Bunner has given us a charming sketch of the sixteenth century, "A Look Back," in which is contained a line—

Had I seen further I had wandered less,
which deserves a place amongst saws ancient and modern. The sonnet entitled "Leopold Damosch" is good, but it is perhaps in his lighter vein that this author is at his best; for example, in such poems as "On Seeing Maurice Leloir's Illustrations to Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey'" and "Wilkie Collins." There is a certain vigour in "Wilhelm I., Emperor of Germany," and a catching swing about "The Battle of Apia Bay." On the whole "Rowen" is a most readable volume of poems.

UNCLE REMUS AND HIS FRIENDS. By Joel Chandler Harris. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Toronto: Williamson & Co. 1892.

The stories contained in this volume are to be regarded simply as stories and not as more or less successful gropings in the region of comparative mythology. The dramatis personae are an old negro and a little boy. It is difficult to discriminate as to these tales, simple and homely—in the true sense of the word—they form as it were a literary world of their own. Uncouth and irregular, without the charm of polished diction, or of dramatic situations, there is about them, "close to the earth," as Mr. Harris himself observes, "a stroke of simplicity ringing true to life." The rabbit is as usual the hero and comes off successful in his encounters with the fox, the bear and even the lion; for, as Uncle Remus tells us, "Dem what got strength ain't got so mighty much sense." This edition of these irresistible tales is ably illustrated, and by the time we have read the book through Brer Rabbit and Brer Wolf, Brer Mud Turkle, and the rest, are very near to us.

CASTOROLOGIA; OR, THE HISTORY AND TRADITIONS OF THE CANADIAN BEAVER. By Horace T. Martin, F.Z.S., etc. Montreal: William Drysdale and Company. London: Edward Stanford.

There are 238 large 8vo. pages, well printed on thick paper, in this work of Canadian science, literature and art. It contains nearly sixty illustrations, which are creditable to Canadian art, and the book is handsomely bound. Altogether it is a goodly volume, in spite of the scrappy appearance given to many pages by short, hysterical paragraphs and not always interesting extracts, letters and quotations. Mr. Martin writes as an enthusiast in his subject, which, however, he has thoroughly mastered. He exhibits the beaver in mythol-

ogy and folklore, in palaeontology in Europe, the United States and in Canada. He hunts him, domesticates him, dissects him and stuffs him. The book tells of the Beaver's geographical distribution, of his engineering skill, and of his importance in trade and commerce. It treats the reader to Beaver meat and Beaver meadows, Beaver furs and Beaver hats, to the chemico-medical properties of the animal, and to his place in heraldry. Poem and anecdote lighten up the pages of science and statistics, and give a literary flavour to this most praiseworthy effort to do justice to the animal emblem and benefactor of Canada. No truly Canadian library should be without Castorologia.

A QUARTETTE OF LOVERS. By John Allister Currie. Toronto: The Williamson Company. 1892.

Mr. Currie disarms criticism. In his envoi he says:—

I do not ask to rule in other hearts;
I do not wish to govern other minds;
I do not seek the goal Ambition finds,
Nor yet the pride and cares that Power imparts.
But all I ask is Love that ne'er departs:
A heart that round my own for life entwines;
A moment's joy to those who read these lines,
My tribute to the Muses and their arts.

And yet neither "Love that ne'er departs" nor "a moment's joy" is hardly sufficient excuse for the publication of a book. Does Mr. Currie recollect Milton's appreciation of a "good book"? But perhaps Milton is a severe standard to apply to modern times—though why so, it would be no easy matter to say. Still, Mr. Currie disarms criticism. Youth will write poetry, and sometimes youth will publish it, and who is to say youth "no"? We shall not be so callous as to undertake that task.

Mr. Currie's inspiration is evidently genuine:—

Then let us love while youth's mad pulses burn.
Then love I'll follow like the vagrant bees,
That seek the rose, and in its petals swoon.
Ah, those are days I have not drained the lees,
And love is young, and life is at its noon.
A kiss to me is more than riches rare;
A smile is heaven for a moment seen
In some sweet, loving face;
The halo of the sun is in love's hair;
The blue of heaven is in her eyes, I ween,
And in her arms I'll find a resting place.

Yes, the inspiration is genuine, and it would be, if not unjust, at least unkind, to find fault by saying that we did not know that bees faint, or that the fourth line lacks the words "of which." Such things belong to criticism, and genuine inspiration is now-a-days not so frequent that criticism should nip it in the bud. Indeed, the inspiration often finds expression in words that are charming. Who will not read the following with more than "a moment's joy"?—

Words cannot tell how dearly I love thee,
Nor yet the sweetest strains of music ever known;
Bird-notes in spring time or the ocean's moan
Are discords to those songs that come to me
Nightly in dreams, while in these dreams I see
Thee by my side, my arms around thee thrown—
You smile, and then I deem you all my own.
The vision fades in all its ecstasy.

There is true imaginative poetry in such lines, even if ecstasy is spelt with a "c."

Should Mr. Currie continue to publish—and we sincerely hope that he will: maturing judgment will eliminate such faults as we have hinted at—he must be a little more careful of his language, "the spotless purity" of which, he will permit us to remind him, De Quincey said young poets should hold dear next to the honour of their country's flag. For example, there is surely a lapsus in

Like some cool draught
So do thy soothing accents softly fill
The veins with long-forgotten fires.

Such commonplace phrases, too, as "sweet slumber," "restful night," "weary workers," "worldly things"—all in one stanza—might, with advantage, have been a little more varied. However, it is not every day that we get a book of poems so real and so heart-felt, and we thank Mr. Currie for them, and the public also should buy them and thank Mr. Currie for them.

THE LOST ATLANTIS, AND OTHER ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES. By Sir Daniel Wilson, LL.D., F.R.S.E., etc. New York: Macmillan and Company; Toronto: The Williamson Book Company. Price, \$4.00.

A melancholy interest attaches to this well-printed, large 8vo. volume of 413 pages, as a posthumous publication of its late lamented author. His end came before he was able to read all its proofs, so that the completion of the work devolved upon his daughter, Miss Sibyl Wilson, who, in brief and touching language, tells its story in the preface. In addition to "The Lost Atlantis," the volume contains articles or chapters of varying length on "The Vinland of the Northmen," "Trade and Commerce in the Stone Age," "Pre-Aryan American Man," "The Aesthetic Faculty in Aboriginal Races," "The Huron-Iroquois: a Typical Race," "Hybridity and Heredity," and "Relative Racial Brain-weight and Size." The late Sir Daniel was always felicitous in composition, whether oral or written, and in this respect the volume in question sustains his reputation. He was an extensive reader in many departments of literature and science, with a special bent in the direction of anthropology; hence all the eight studies in the book betray research, and are full of those pleasant scraps of information and fancy which the general reader, as well as those interested in ethnology, might delight in. Were one asked what addition the volume has made to scientific knowledge, it would be hard to answer the question. Sir Daniel was more a pleasant stater of problems than a solver of them. He gave hints and descriptions, stimulated curiosity, and practically left his reader to draw his own conclusion. The last chapter, on his favourite study, Craniology, is probably the most scientific, although less generally interesting than the others to the majority of readers. Otherwise one does not care to criticize the work of one who has left us so recently, and the motto, *nil de mortuis nisi bonum* should be operative in the case of his last work, who has left behind him a fragrant memory. Taking it altogether, "The Lost Atlantis" is a worthy memorial of the man.

THE MEMORIES OF DEAN HOLE. London: E. Arnold; New York: Macmillan; Toronto: The Williamson Company. 1892. Price \$4.00.

Dean Hole places on the title page of this volume the well-known line, "From grave to gay, from lively to severe"—from Pope's *Essay on Man*—and no motto could better describe the character of its contents. The Dean cannot be accused of ever forgetting the gravity of his calling, and yet his book shines with the sparkles of his wit from beginning to end. It is a volume which will rank with Dean Ramsay's "Reminiscences," and Greville's "Memoirs," and which will occupy no low position in the society of such. These memoirs, the author tells us, are the holiday task of an old boy, who desires, and hopes that he deserves, to rest, but is too fond of work to be quite idle; and so he gives us these delightful remembrances of men whom he has known.

The arrangement of the volume is novel, but we think it good. Instead of giving his reminiscences in chronological order, he adopts an alphabetical arrangement. Thus chap. I. is given to Archers. "I begin my recollections," he says, "as I began my education—in alphabetical order . . . 'A was an Archer.'" Chapters II. to V. are given to Artists; VI. to IX. to Authors; X. to Cricketers; XI. to XVII. to Ecclesiastics; XVIII. to Gamblers; XIX. to XXI. to Gardeners; XXII. and XXIII. to Hunters; XXIV. and XXV. to Shooters; XXVI. to XXVIII. to Oxonians; XXIX. to Preachers; and the last chapter of all, XXX., to Workingmen.

Now, if we were to follow our inclination, we should simply set to work and transcribe some of the Dean's good stories; but such a course would be liable to a double objection. In the first place, we have hardly a right to pick out the plums from the Dean's volume and so deprive the reader of a chief part of his enjoyment in its perusal, and in the second place, before we could stop we should have