

TALKS ABOUT BOOKS.

Behold the JOURNAL's "Ancient Mariner," with anchor up, drifting vacation-wards on a sea of literary small talk! Well, he has had his day, or his five months, bobbing about and riding over larger waves of thought, so that he cannot complain if booksellers at last deluge him *cum scripturis gentium minorum*. Yet it's hardly fair to set a whaler fishing for sprats, even near holiday time. Mr. Chapman sends a volumette, the author of which says, "the book can be readily carried in the vest pocket." As it is about six inches long by a little over two broad, it could only find its place in a waistcoat pocket perpendicularly, and would thus be in danger of falling out. Of course one could get a pocket made to order to fit it horizontally, at the risk of spoiling the symmetry of one's clothes. The thing is not paged, so that the Talker has been compelled to count its 158 closely printed pages, which are bound in flexible red roan. It is called "The Gist of the Lessons" (International Sunday School, 1900); is written by R. A. Torrey, Superintendent of the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago; and is published by the Fleming H. Revell Company for twenty-five cents. There are, doubtless, people in the world who have time and heavenly patience enough to read such a lazy teacher's lesson help through, but they are not in evidence here. Mr. Torrey's notes are evangelical and practical, and he knows something of Strauss, Renan, Dr. Nevius, and other writers on scriptural themes, adverse or favorable. He does not mean to be flippant, but only Moody-esque, when he remarks,— "Philip at once *hunts up* Nathanael;" and "Nathanael was decidedly sceptical about Jesus being the Christ. Indeed he did not believe He could be *any good*, coming from Nazareth." He also annotates Titus ii, 4: "To love their husbands," or literally "to be husband lovers." Ponder that phrase. (2) "To be children lovers." That is not characteristic of the typical nineteenth century young woman in America. The Gist of the Lessons is not dull.