

revised and enlarged edition of . . . , and also favour us with an order for at least one copy.

"Yours sincerely,"

"N.B.—A reply is necessary to insure representation, as only living poets are given a place in this work, and consequently we wish to receive a personal letter from you."

This I trust they did receive in the following form, brief and to the point:—

" . . . Nov. 16, 1891.

"Dear Sirs,—Replying to yours of 7th inst., I beg to refer you to mine of June 6th last, as containing all I can say regarding the proposed publication.

"Respectfully,"

No reply has been received to this, but I understand full revenge has been taken by dropping my insignificant name from the "gilt-edged and morocco-bound" bead-roll (price \$6.00) of famous ones; of the merit of such works as cited by THE WEEK's correspondent it is not necessary to speak. Doubtless amongst the work of 1348 writers covering 1,390 pages there must be much good matter, but if it is gathered by such questionable methods as I have described the endowment of such high authority might probably be withheld were all the facts known.

The following circular letter received from the same firm may fitly close this paper:—

"It has been our intention for some time past to publish a valuable collection consisting of an autograph poem and signature from the pen of each poet, a *fac simile* of which will be engraved and printed in book form. We wish to secure 500 poems for this work.

"A sonnet is preferred, or any complete poem or sentiment not exceeding twenty-four lines, so that the complete poem can appear on a single page.

"Would you please comply and forward us one of your favourite poems in your own handwriting with signature, written in black ink on a sheet of paper not larger than 6 x 9 inches. See specimen form . . . which is exactly the right width but a little too long. Of course the poem can be much shorter, in which case it will be placed in the centre of a page. A prompt reply will greatly oblige.

"Yours sincerely,"

In view of the foregoing, this last did not receive a reply; but should any writer to whom copies may not have been sent desire to be embalmed in this enduring monument they may send them, ascertain terms and conditions on application to the publishers. J. PENN.

### THREE BOYS' BOOKS.

FOR many months past one has not been able to pass either the windows of book shops, or the book stalls of railway stations, without observing piles of cheap reprints of noble books—springing up amongst the garbage of the ordinary cheap press like flowers in the midst of corruption. None of them, perhaps, have been in greater demand than the six-penny copy of "Tom Brown's School-days." It is a book that has long and deservedly taken place among the classics of our literature. No other boys' book can compare with it in point of popularity. I once heard a schoolboy's judgment on it. He was comparing it with "Eric": "Parts of Tom Brown are beastly rot—where Arthur nearly dies, you know. But Eric is beastly rot nearly all the way through." Perhaps boys, more than any other species of humanity, have two opinions on most subjects—one that they keep hidden in the privacy of their own hearts, and very rarely share even with the David of their soul, and one that they express loudly on every appropriate and inappropriate occasion. If they have not, they are open to the charge of inconsistency, for they continue to read what they stigmatize as "beastly rot."

But the contrast between the two books is, in truth, very great—great as the contrast between health and disease—great as the contrast between the feelings of fifty years ago and the feelings of to-day. Yet their likeness is also apparent. In loftiness of aim, in disinterested love of youth, in zeal for youth's welfare, in moral tone, in noble purpose, there is, perhaps, nothing to choose between them. But, to attain the self-same end, each writer has taken a widely different road.

"Tom Brown" is the creature of abounding health, moral, mental and physical; "Eric" is the product of disease. "Tom Brown" has been described by a naturalist; "Eric" by a physician. "Tom Brown" still lingered in that healthier air in which, as Kingsley says of his hero, "he never thought about thinking, nor felt about feeling"; "Eric," in his morbid fear of being misunderstood, in his despair, in his almost unboyish depth of remorse, is tainted with the reflexiveness which is the poison of modern life—and which has been fostered by such books as Miss Montgomery's "Misunderstood," and its host of trashy imitators. One, especially, called, if we remember rightly, "Little Empress Joan," and which appeared in *Little Folks' Magazine*, was enough to make the best and most natural child who ever read it realize that to be interesting she must be naughty; and to set her watching for signs that she, too, was "misunderstood." Looking over boys' books, apart from books of travel, three seem to strike us as standing, for moral and literary

merit, above the rest: the two already mentioned, and Mrs. Ewing's "We and the World."

Of the first, little need be said—it has been eulogized by our greatest critics, from Kingsley downwards. Kingsley says in a letter to the author—his dear and intimate friend—"I recommend 'Tom Brown' wherever I go, only to find that it *has* been read." (One can hardly help an envious sigh as one thinks of the friendship of those two men—each so nobly gifted—each so able to satisfy and enrich the other.) Its bubbling fun, its gladsome vigour, its noble morality, its healthy piety—the interest that attaches to its portraiture of the great Arnold—place "Tom Brown" almost beyond the reach of further and humbler praise. It is a picture of school-life at its best. Even the painful episode of Flashman's bullying hardly detracts from the joyousness of the whole.

"Eric" has a different scope and mission. A recent article in the *Spectator* called it "an exasperating present for a healthy boy." Indeed, one *would* be rather sorry for the boy who could prefer it to "Tom Brown." But it might be—one cannot doubt that it has been—a profoundly helpful book to a boy who had gone not too far upon the downward path; and for such, we take it, the book was written. It abounds in almost thrillingly painful incidents—its end is almost needlessly tragic, and strikes one as being a little sensational and over-drawn. All through it lacks the open-air vigour which makes "Tom Brown" so delightful, and which is replaced in "Eric" by a gloom which is, at times, oppressive. Of a different stamp from either is "We and the World." Not a school book to begin with. ("Crayshaw's" is only described to show what cheap schools were in those days of "Dotheboys' Halls.") But it is a book describing boys' tastes, feelings and pursuits with exceptional skill, to judge from the avidity with which boys read it. The modern taint is shown a little, but shown only to be condemned. Here is a sentence which gives the author's feelings on that matter: "If I had said that I was misunderstood and wanted sympathy, I should have been answered that many a lad of my age was homeless and wanted boots."

The different characteristics of the Scotch, Irish and English boys are charmingly portrayed. "Cripple Charlie" is an interesting creation; the old "Bee Master" is worthy of George Eliot. The book, like all of Mrs. Ewing's, insensibly lifts one God-wards, and, though boys have been known to grumble at the religion in it, we never knew one who was content to put it down until he had finished it. The favourite chapters were, as a rule, those containing the account of the schoolmaster's rescue of "Arthur," and those describing Jack's embarkation at Liverpool and his subsequent adventures. All three are charming books, and anyone discovering that a boy friend has not yet read either, has it in his or her power to confer the purest pleasure by presenting it.

LEE WYNDHAM

### WILL YOU FORGET ME, DEAREST?

WILL you forget me, dearest? If I knew,  
It would not be so hard to go away,  
If love could change, as human love may do,  
To go would be less bitter than to stay.

Better to miss love's sweetness, all life through,  
Than have it lose its fragrance, as it may;  
Will you forget me, dearest? If I knew,  
It would not be so hard to go away.

Fold me in your dear arms, if false, or true,  
What matters it, since you are mine to-day,  
Kiss me good-bye, the hours are brief and few,  
The first kiss and the last, who can gainsay?  
Will you forget me, dearest? If I knew,  
It would not be so hard to go away.

EMMA P. SEABURY.

### PARIS LETTER.

BY their audacious crime in the Rue de Berlin the Anarchists have this time inaugurated the reign of terror. Society is alarmed, and more than angry; if the real authors of the diabolical deed can be arrested, the infuriated crowd will hardly give them the benefit of the new law now being manufactured for the punishment of offences with explosives. Judge Lynch will interfere. To sacrifice a whole house full of innocent people, men, women, children, and even babies thirty minutes old, in order to destroy a judge who had the courage to do his duty by sending guilty Anarchists to the hulks, next to justifying the treatment extended to wild beasts—immediate extirpation, no matter how.

This last outrage has clearly shown that the ends aimed at by the desperadoes are to deter judges from doing their duty, save at the risk of being blown into fragments at their own residences and in the bosom of their families; to shock the social fabric to its foundations by destroying the security in the civilization on which it reposes. The anarchists can sardonically grin at their hideous success. They are organized not only in Paris but elsewhere, and we wait, not so much in the expectation of their arrest, as to know where their next outrage will occur. The aspect of the ruined house is terrible; all the inside was blown up, and then fell in a chaotic mass at the bottom of the stair case. Imagine children piling up dominoes to make a tower,

when suddenly the pieces collapse. That's the spectacle of the premises in the Rue de Berlin just shattered, to say nothing of the smashed windows in the contiguous mansions.

A student in the demolished house—for it is temporarily propped up with beams—informs me that he had been reading from five to eight in his bed on Sunday morning; he had just closed his book and lay a-thinking for a few minutes, preparatory to turning out, when he heard an awful "boom"; then came a current of air that sucked open the bedroom door, shattered his window inward and sent himself upwards in a manner that recalled his early school days when tossed in a blanket. The sappers quickly arrived, their headquarters being happily near. The first persons saved were the wife of an apothecary, who had just been confined half an hour previously, and the midwife, who was soothing the little stranger. The three escaped unhurt. Victor Hugo alluded to the birth of the Comte de Chamford as "the child of a miracle." What would have been his opinion about little "Mademoiselle Dynamite," as the new-born is already baptized?

The judge, M. Bulot, whose life was aimed at, occupied the fifth flat; he, his wife and family rushed on the balcony in their night clothes, imploring aid; a white pet poodle came to the front also, thrust its head through the railing, barking, as it were, for assistance, while wagging his tail to give courage to the family. No lives were lost, which is another miracle. Of the nineteen wounded, six are severely so; one housemaid was positively ripped open as she was going down the stairs to purchase milk, by the flying wood, iron and splinters from the balustrade. The iron hooks had been so twisted as to recall those immense gimmet hooks that suspend carcasses of oxen in a butcher's shop. The maid's life is not despaired of.

Since the Anarchists have chalked all the houses for destruction wherein the judges and assistant public prosecutors who condemned their co-mates to imprisonment reside, landlords decline to rent premises to official members of the legal profession, and where the latter at present dwell the feelings of the other tenants are not enviable. The boycotting for self-defence has been extended to parrots: since the latter have disseminated Brazilian consumption over the city, "pretty Poll" will not be allowed to accompany its owner to any new apartments. In a house where some parrots are kept as vocal and linguistic pets, one tenant has called upon the Municipal Hygienic Committee to send a sanitary inspector to examine some of the birds reported to be on the sick list. Six persons have died, having contracted the parrot epidemic, and the eleven down in the hospitals are slowly pulling themselves together. The doctors cannot classify the new malady; its diagnosis reveals all the symptoms of typhoid fever united to pulmonic congestion.

The Bank of France enjoys the monopoly of issuing notes; it is not exactly the bank of the State, since the Ministry of Finance has its own strong boxes and pays public expenditure out of the taxes poured into its coffers; the Treasury, furthermore, has its "receivers" in the departments to discharge similar duties, and the departmental treasuries are about the best plums in the gift of the State. The security exacted from the holder of the office is so elevated that a syndicate of friends guarantees in many cases the solvability of the receiver, who has to share his profits with them. That was one of the mines exploited by M. Wilson, President Grévy's son-in-law. A receiver accepts subscriptions for all licensed loans; he can discount local paper and accept deposits of money. It is he who is the confident of the peasantry when they save a little hard money and desire to invest it. Several financial establishments have offered to transact all the local business of the Treasury free, and thus abolish the receiverships. But the indemnity necessary to pay the latter amounted to such a total that the Government recoiled from the reform. The Bank of France, in return for the extension of its privileges, will have to share its profits more liberally with the State; to open about seventy more branches; to discount and collect bills every day; to cease the prehistoric rule of refusing all paper unless backed by three sound names, and to negotiate bills for even the modest sum of five frs. to suit the peasant-farmers.

The fortifications round Paris, or rather the military zone, comprise an area of 1,000 acres, and valued, as a building site, at 225,000,000 frs. The fortifications are totally useless since the discovery of long range artillery; the only foe they ever kept out was the Government of 1871, whose head, Thiers, was the originator of the big ring fence round the Capital, the want of which in 1814 was the cause Napoleon I. asserted of his defeat, and anything "the ogre of Corsica," as the Royalists called him, recommended, was gospel for Thiers. The delay in commencing the part demolition of the fortifications is really due as to how to dispose of the site. In the way of private companies, there are no less than six Richmonds in the field, but none absolutely free from objection. The *Crédit Foncier* proposes to purchase the land as it becomes vacant, and to erect thereon dwellings for artisans and labourers, with a certain proportion of houses for the lower stratum of the middle classes.

Respecting duelling, M. Maclair admits that it "can become dangerous" if the swords be replaced by pistols. In practice this theory is not sustainable. M. Legoué, of the Academy, is opposed to women including in their "rights" that of duelling; their fighting paraphernalia