

LITERARY NOTES.

The history of the war of 1812 has yet to be written. Among the existing books on the British side of the subject, there is very little original work of value, if we except Auchinleck, and unfortunately Auchinleck's work is weakened by the same fault that mars every American historian of the war—a palpable bias in favor of his own side. A great deal of valuable material is being annually lost through the death of the veterans of 1812, but a vast amount is happily preserved in the archives at Ottawa and other sources, and scarcely any of this material has yet been put in order. It is to be hoped that some capable hand will begin this work at once, for the war of 1812 may be said to have been the real beginning of our national history. It was a Spartan era that developed heroism in every rank of life. It is hard to say whom we should idolize most, the noble Sir Isaac Brock, who fell with the shout of "Push on, brave York volunteers!"; the gallant De Salaberry, the French-Canadian hero of Chateauguay; the solemn chief Tecumseh, who never knew fear; or that sweet heroine, Laura Secord, the simple farmer's wife, who tramped those weary miles with bare and bleeding feet, facing the dangers of death every mile of her way, to warn Fitzgibbon of the approach of the Americans. And yet there were hundreds of heroes like those of whom we know nothing. Then there are many heroic officers like Col. Harvey, Col. Fitzgibbon, and Col. Proctor, of whom we know something in the histories extant, but of whom we crave to know more. We therefore heartily welcome the biography of that patriot and soldier, Col. Fitzgibbon, from the pen of his granddaughter, Mary Agnes Fitzgibbon, just issued under the title of "A Veteran of 1812," and in reading it we feel that we have the most complete and graphic picture of this brave man that will ever be given to the Canadian public. In perusing these pages it is gratifying to find that the picture is drawn by a pen which, though graphic and admiring, is neither servile nor merely flattering. It is also satisfying, in these days when biographers treat of almost everything else but the personality of their subject, to find Miss Fitzgibbon confining herself so strictly to the man and his doings. The consequence is that we have a most instructive account of the life and character of one of the finest soldiers in Canada's first war. The man who, with a detachment of 58 men, had the pluck to demand and achieve the surrender of a force of 544 of the enemy, as Fitzgibbon did at Beaver Dams, is a man whom even his foes would now delight to honor; and if a government which can throw money in hundreds of thousands into the pockets of boodling contractors ever can spare a thought for those worthies of 1812 who gave their lives to hold this country for Britain and make it what it is, we may some day expect a double monument to Laura Secord and Col. Fitzgibbon at Beaver Dams. Enough money was squandered on the Curran Bridge job, at Montreal, to have built a statue to these two in pure gold. But to return to the book, we would remark that it is an excellent specimen of typographical work, being issued by Wm. Briggs, of the Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto, and is embellished with a number of interesting engravings, most of them now for the first time published. Miss Fitzgibbon, as many of our readers may know, is the author of "A Trip to Manitoba," a chatty sketch of life in the Prairie Province, issued when the C. P. R. was first opened up, and which ran through more than one edition in England. Miss Fitzgibbon inherits the literary instinct on both sides of her house, being not only a near relative of Agnes Strickland, Mrs. Moodie and Mrs. Traill, so well known in English and Canadian literature, but descended from well known authors in the Fitzgibbon family. The reader will agree with us that she bears up well the traditions of the family, and we are not surprised to learn that the book is already having a large sale.

We heartily congratulate the *Monetary Times* on its improved appearance in its new dress of type and new "make-up." Before this improvement it was still the only commercial weekly which could be called attractive in typographical appearance, but its wide columns and clean type, and its artistically set advertisements, now challenge comparison with the best commercial papers of the

United States or England. But it is not for this reason merely that we admire the *Monetary Times*. "The apparel oft proclaims the man," it is true; but it is only because the clean exterior may sometimes symbolize the inner character that attention is called to it. What the mercantile community of Canada may feel proud of is that it has one commercial journal which in its twenty-seven years of life has never wielded the club of the blackmailer. It has always regarded its own integrity as of more value than an advertisement, and hence the powerful influence it now exerts in commercial circles. Under the broad-minded editorship of Mr. Hedley, there is no danger that these traditions will be departed from.

J. Van Sommer, jr., of Toronto, has sent us a book entitled "Britain and Her People," in which he seeks to trace the rise and development of the policy of "Political Union" throughout the British Empire. The book is divided into chapters, amongst the titles of which are "Building the Fleet," "Australia," "Canada: the Policy of the Seas," "Africa," etc., and is illustrated with two or three useful maps. The author finds that for many years there has been a natural change of thought as to the ultimate destination of the British Empire, and that this has gradually led to a conception of the great principles of "local self-control of local affairs" and "union of the Empire by popular representation in the British Parliament." He concludes from these facts and from a consideration of many other circumstances as well, that the time is now ripe for such a union, by which the Empire's vast and diverse resources will be developed to their fullest.

The *June Century* has a piquant, vivid little story entitled "The Magic Egg," which, while in the form of an extravaganza, strikes into the heart of a current fad. Two college students, Messrs. Allen and Sachtleben, who are contributing a record of their trip "Across Asia on a Bicycle," devote the *June* paper to a description of "The Ascent of Mt. Ararat." There is an interesting and authoritative account of "Edison's Invention of the Kinetograph" by Antonia and W. K. L. Dickson, Mr. Dickson having been associated with Mr. Edison in working out this invention. There is also an introduction by the inventor, and a portrait of him from a recent photograph, together with examples of the pictures shown by this new invention for reproducing to the eye the motions of a given scene as the phonograph reproduces the related sounds. An important undertaking is described by Mr. Theodore Stanton in an article on "Tissot's Illustrations of the Gospels," a series of pictures made by the French artist after many years' study of the types and scenes of the Holy Land. Amongst fiction is the conclusion of Mark Twain's "Pudd'nhead Wilson," containing some of the very best of his serious writing in the scene of the murder trial, in which the story reaches an exciting climax. There is also the concluding part of Mr. Thomas A. Janvier's sprightly "Loan of Half-orphans," and a new novelette is begun in "A Cumberland Vendetta," a tale of the Kentucky mountains, by John Fox, jr. To the first and third of these serials Mr. Loeb contributes illustrations.

The *Century* strikes into the summer season in the *July* number with the beginning of novelettes by Marion Crawford and Mrs. Burton Harrison. Mr. Crawford's story is entitled "Love in Idleness: A Fortnight at Bar Harbor," and is in the author's lightest and chattiest vein. The characters are New York people, and are strongly contrasted, and there is some lively and entertaining love-making at the very start. Some of the personages have appeared in "Katharine Lauderdale," but the story has an entirely separate interest. Mrs. Harrison's story, "A Bachelor Maid," with drawings by Wiles, opens in New York city, and deals with the aspirations of a young woman to whom the conventionalities of family life are somewhat irksome. Incidentally the story deals with some of the current questions in regard to the relations of women to society and public life. A third novelette, Mr. John Fox, jr.'s "Cumberland Vendetta," reaches its second part, and takes on a tragic character, as the illustrations by Mr. Loeb suggest. The short stories of the number are "Her Mother's Success," by Viola Roseboro, with pictures by Sterner, the characters being for the most part a traveling company of actors; "An Unexpected Legacy,"