

clever and practised writer. Walter Crane's illustrations are in his best style, and add not a little to the charm of a book which would be delightful even without such artistic adjuncts.

WINTER SONGS AND SKETCHES. New York, E. P. Dutton & Co. Toronto, R. W. Douglas & Co.

Here is a truly beautiful little quarto, which may be bought at a price not much more than nominal, and which nevertheless contains pictorial effects such as, a very few years ago, all the wealth of the Rothschilds would not have sufficed to purchase. The literary contents are charming in themselves, and include verses by Shakspeare, Herrick, Shelley, Keats, Swinburne, Tennyson, Austin Dobson and others. In this respect, however, the volume has nothing to specially distinguish it from other collections of verses by eminent poets. It is in the matter of pictorial illustration that it presents exceptional claims to notice. The style of art is altogether novel and striking, combining all the finest effects of the rarest wood engraving with a softness and warmth of tint which no wood engraving can even distantly approach. The process, which is understood to emanate from Germany, appears to be a dexterous adaptation of oleo-lithography, and seems admirably adapted to the illustration of poetry and works of fiction. What a pleasure would it be to possess an edition of one's favourite author, illustrated after this artistic and delightful fashion.

IN DIVERS TONES. By Charles G. D. Roberts, Author of *Orion*, and *Other Poems*, Professor of English Literature in the University of King's College, Windsor, N.S. Montreal, Dawson Brothers. Toronto, R. W. Douglas & Co.

Professor Roberts, it is to be presumed, has adopted the title of this little volume from Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. The contents, however, are adapted from nobody, and are in the author's happiest manner. Those readers who welcomed *Orion* several years ago will receive this contribution from the same source with full acceptance. Mr. Roberts's strong point is perhaps rather in treatment than in conception, but one or two of the pieces in this volume indicate that he can invent as well as describe. Some of the softer warblings fall soothingly and gratefully upon the soul. The invocation to Canada, forming the second poem in the collection, breathes forth the true spirit of independence. It is suggestive just at the present time, as being a veritable voice from the Maritime Provinces. The following fine stanza gives a faithful idea of the pervading spirit of the whole :—

How long the ignoble sloth, how long  
The trust in greatness not thine own ;  
Surely the lion's brood is strong  
To front the world alone !

Professor Roberts's Montreal publishers have done him justice in the matter of mechanical details. A neater or more tasty little volume is not often seen. In respect of paper, typography and binding, Messrs. Dawson Brothers have fully maintained the reputation which they long ago acquired, and which they seem determined to maintain.

MR. T. WENYES REID, late editor of *The Leeds Mercury*, on leaving Leeds to take the position of general manager for Messrs. Cassell & Co., has been presented by some of the inhabitants with a cheque for 425 guineas and a gold watch of the value of 75 guineas. Several other presents have also been given to Mr. Reid, including a silver inkstand from the members of the Leeds Liberal Club, and an English oak writing cabinet from the staff of the paper.

## Correspondence.

Editor ARCTURUS : *Modern Massacre.*

DEAR SIR,—I read an editorial in your last issue commenting strongly on the railway disasters occasioned by derailment and fire, which appears to me is but an echo of a generally arising public sentiment on that matter. Lives and limbs are being sacrificed at a shocking rate of late. The succession of horrors which have occurred is sufficient to wake up the most soulless of corporations—railway companies—to the duty of the hour. These latter cannot excuse themselves on the score of inability to avoid such disasters. First, there appears to be palpable negligence as to the condition of the road-bed ; secondly, a criminal refusal to accept those appliances which inventors have brought to their notice, intended, and practically proved, to prevent disasters. We know that hundreds of couplers have been invented, any one of which would spare the lives of the poor brakemen. There has been an invention patented for several years, both here and in the United States, and tested on all leading railways, which practically renders derailment under ordinary circumstances impossible, *i.e.*, in cases of sharp curves, broken rails, open switches, spreading of rails, etc. There have been many other inventions brought to the notice of railway corporations and their practicability proved beyond question, but railway magnates are above all things conservative in their method of doing business. Nothing but compulsion, or the strongest incentive to self-interest, will cause them to move in the forward march of greater security to life and property, or even the economical utilization of their own resources.

What I deem to be the duty of the press, our public men, Boards of Trade, and all beneficial institutions is to start an agitation which will crystallize itself in a law compelling railway companies to adopt all reasonable appliances and all reasonable means of securing to the travelling public the greatest possible safety. And here comes in a strong argument for the existence of a railway commission, whereby railway companies might be made amenable to some power, greater than their own, looking to the public interests.

And let me remark that the government, controlling as it does several lines of railway in the Dominion, should set an example by adapting such safeguards as are available and practicable. But governments, like other corporative bodies, do not usually act until compelled to, and there is little hope, even here, until the compulsion come from the people in an unmistakable demand that they have rights to protection, while travelling, which railways and governments are bound to respect. The safe way is the better way. If railway companies but counted the cost of wreck-ages, compensation of claims, etc., etc., they would find they could afford to be generous in providing for the safety of passengers.

Yours very truly,

Chatham, Ont., March 21st, 1887.

R. E. GOSNELL.

## Literary Notes.

MESSRS. R. W. DOUGLAS & Co., of 250 Yonge St., have just passed through the custom house and placed upon their shelves a huge importation of English and American books. The collection is a miscellaneous one, including all the staples suitable for Mechanics' Institutes and public libraries. Among these are cheap editions of all the leading poets, historians and novelists, works of travel and adventure, and a large number of illustrated juveniles. Several of the most noticeable of the latter are particularly referred to in the current number under the head of "Book Notices." Among the more expensive works may be mentioned a huge folio of choice *Etchings by American Artists* ; a splendidly-bound set of Black's 25-vol. edition of the *Waverley Novels* ; and several copies of Tennyson's *Complete Works*, beautifully bound and tooled by Tout, whose name is well known to bibliophiles as belonging to one of the foremost bookbinders in the world. Book-lovers who have a spare hour at their disposal can spend it very pleasantly in inspecting these and other literary treasures to be found on the premises.