

## NEW BOOKS.

Mr. Howells has poetic sensibilities and a fine fancy, but he is not a poet. He is another example of those graceful, facile writers who having won distinction by some elegant prose pages, imagine they must tempt public favour by compositions in verse. As usual, Mr. Howells will find himself mistaken. His name will cause the book to be purchased, but the memory of it will not last beyond a few months. It is none the less true, however, that there are fine verses in Mr. Howells's volume. From a man of such cultivation nothing less could be expected. Indeed we may select "Forlorn," as a poem of genuine power, which, if the rest of the book corresponded with it, would lead us to reverse our estimate of Mr. Howells's poetic abilities.

There is something grandly suggestive in these lines :

"The languor of the crimson shawl's abasement,  
Lying without a stir  
Upon the floor,—the absence at the casement.  
The solitude and hush were full of her."

A good, fresh thought in verse counterbalances many a deficiency and Mr. Howells has several of these. Thus :

And the colonel that leaped from his horse and knelt  
To close the eyes so dim,  
A high remorse for God's mercy felt,  
Knowing the shot was meant for him.

The following is short, sensuous and realistic :

He took the rosebud from her hair,  
While "you shall not," she said;  
He closed her hand within his own,  
And, while her tongue forbade,  
Her will was darkened in the eclipse  
Of blinding love upon her lips.

Mr. Howell is fond of attempting the hexameter, but he is not generally successful.

We have seen a few of the numbers of "Picturesque America" now being published by subscription by Appleton & Co., New York. It is a pictorial delineation of mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, water-falls, valleys, cities and other picturesque features of America from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The best artists have been employed, among their number such celebrities as Church and Bierstadt. The letter-press is by William Cullen Bryant. We have no hesitation in saying, and that emphatically, that it will, when completed, be one of the most magnificent illustrated works ever produced in America. The work will be completed in forty-eight parts, price fifty cents each part, size imperial quarto. We are glad to learn that Messrs. Appleton's agent has already obtained a large subscription list in Montreal.

Those who are acquainted with the Trotty Book by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps will gladly welcome at this season of the year Trotty's Wedding Tour. † It is the very book for a child of the present age, wherein boys and girls are not quite so simple as they were in our grandfather's time, when stories such as "Goody Two Shoes" and "Jack and the Bean Stalk" were all-sufficient. The wedding tour of a child may seem to some nonsensical, but if they reflect, or know anything about children, it must be remembered that children begin as early to talk of marriage as of death, from attending a wedding or following a funeral: a new young visitor is introduced into the family, and from association they soon think of the conjugal bond. Apart from the cleverness of the story, the book is admirably printed and prettily illustrated. The frontispiece is a photograph-portrait of Master Trotty, a manly little fellow about eight years of age. We feel certain that all the young ladies of that tender age will be apt to fall in love with any of their associates if they in the least resemble Master Trotty, either in person or character.

As a rule, the life or works of metaphysical women are dreary reading enough, presenting an abnormal ideal which does not sufficiently counterbalance their novelty. In the case of the daughter of the great Coleridge, however, there is a tender human interest and a force of curiosity which render any account of her mental life well worth the investigation of the psychological student. The book before us ‡ consists of a series of letters written by Sara Coleridge from 1833 to 1851. They are addressed for the most part to her husband, her eldest brother, her son, Justice Coleridge, and such literary celebrities as Rev. F. D. Maurice, Aubrey de Vere, John Kenyon, Henry Taylor and Professor Henry Reed. The contents range over literature, poetry, sociology, theology, domestic economy, classic criticism and politics. They furnish likewise a fund of interesting anecdote, with occasional glimpses into the private life and intellectual habits of the great poet, Samuel Coleridge. The talents which Sara Coleridge inherited from her illustrious father and the severe education which she received at his hands give her the right to be heard on such subjects as those mentioned above, and the reader will derive a fund of entertainment and instruction from perusing the pages of this book. The work is not one to be read through at a sitting, but it deserves a place in the library for consultation, or occasional reading.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

"PLL CROSS IT, THOUGH IT BLAST ME."

To the Editor of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS :

DEAR SIR,

Will you give me leave to correct the errors either of your proof-reader or of your *sub*, who, perhaps, are both congenial, yet not congenite. From whence they obtained the word *congenious* I know not, certainly it is not of my invention; I distinctly wrote *congruous*. Therefore, for the benefit of your readers will you let my sentence run thus:—"The crossing the path of a ghost is congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions, in Shakespeare's time."

\* Poems. By W. D. Howells. 18mo. Red edges. \$1.50. Boston: Osgood & Co. Montreal: F. E. Grafton.

† Trotty's Wedding Tour and Story Book. By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. Illustrated. Boston: Osgood & Co. Montreal: F. E. Grafton.

‡ Memoirs and Letters of Sara Coleridge, Edited by her daughter. 8vo. Cloth. New York: Harper & Brothers. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

You have also another error quite as fatal to my meaning—"On Friday there appeared a tall man whose voice crossed him swiftly."—It ought to be, "a tall man who twice crossed him swiftly."

Having done with your sins of commission will you allow me to allude to your sins of omission.

I gave as additional reasons why Denmark could not, when the play of Hamlet was written, have been a Roman Catholic country.

First, that James I. of England was married to Anne, niece of Christian IV of Denmark, and by the law of the Protestant succession could not have been married to a Roman Catholic. Secondly, that Wittemberg, where Hamlet and Horatio were fellow students, was the University especially dear to the Protestant heart of England from its memories of Martin Luther; dear also for its publication of a host of popular books, such as the tale of Faustus.

THOMAS D. KING.

## FROST CRYSTALS.

BY  
A

This is fine frosty weather, *ma belle Rosie*, and your young blood glows and dances in your veins as you take long walks with the gallant Captain. The next time you are out in the morning look at the frost work hung on cobwebs and tree-branches and humbler vegetation, flashing the light from their tiny crystals. They teach a lesson. For my part, I am old and my blood has a chill on it, and I take my observations at the window. You have noticed those fern-like forms which cover the glass on a cold morning. Breathe on them, *mes petite*, and reduce the solid crystalline film to a liquid condition, then take your magnifying glass and watch. The film appears alive, lines of motion run through it, molecule presses up to molecule, fern-like branches run out and grow under your observation until the thin sheet of water has once more passed into crystalline repose. This is a magic picture painted by winter.

I said I am old. This feeling comes especially to me in winter. I do not care to go out snow-balling or skating or frolicking in the snow as I did a certain number of *us-ra* back. But I like to sit by the window, wrapped up in my padded dressing gown, with a good fire burning, with something warm and fragrant steaming in a tumbler by my side, and a pipe of good tobacco. I like, I say, to look out and see the merry little folks shouting and laughing and enjoying the clear exhilarating cold. I like to see the pretty damosels, with their rosy faces peeping out of furs and clouds. But my enjoyment is frequently disturbed by a miserable shadow clothed in thin summer garments, with blue pinched face, shivering along, breathing upon her poor half-frozen fingers. What an envious look she casts upon that fur-decked lady, and what a silent appeal she makes as she glances up at my old rubicund face and the steaming mixture,—God help the poor in winter!

I read an article in a daily journal a short time since—I am told a clergyman wrote it—in which we are warned against almsgiving. We are to turn the suppliant from our doors. They are to work for their living, they are to exercise their faculties and labour for bread, and we are not to give them a crumb. I hold some such theory myself in summer time; but with the first breath of frost it vanishes. I am not proof against the piteous appeal of hungry, frozen-looking faces, ill-clad bodies, and limbs scarcely draped against the bitter biting wind. They may be "vagrom," and I'll preach heartily to them next summer; but in the meantime—well, I sin with my betters and break my theory in practice.

I am perfectly aware of it, reverend sir. That haggard young woman, with the big-headed infant tugging at her breast, went straight with my five cents to the tavern round the corner and had something hot. Poor soul, I shall not be the first to throw the stone at her. Well clad and well fed, I sometimes like, when exposed to the cold, to take some steaming drink; and does not that poor creature crave for it more than I do? Come to me about June, sir, with your mission scheme for the Pacific Islanders; while it is cold I prefer giving what coppers I have to spare to ill-clad little children.

I freely confess the cold weather makes me very cross. I may be singular in this, but I do not think so. A frosty morning before breakfast does not, I fancy, find most of us in our most amiable mood. We do not, as a rule, say our prayers best with cold feet! What homes our poor must have. What fighting and swearing and crying and grumbling, while the frost bites them and the wind pierces their sides with its cruel spear! What rheumatic aches and colics, what hacking coughs, as the poor wretches crouch and shiver! The beautiful snow brings no gladness to their hearts with wood at seven dollars a cord.

My good ladies, as you wrap yourselves up in your furs, as you return from your sleigh rides, as you sit down to your ample meals, as you stretch out your limbs in healthful repose, don't banish your poor sisters altogether from your mind. You can do something to ameliorate their condition. Organize soup kitchens in your districts. It will cost you very little, *mes belles*, and the blessings of the poor, like white-winged angels, will receive you at the other side of the narrow stream when, by and by, you go into a strange country. Rosie, my girl, take this work in hands, and you may put down my name for a small subscription to the good work.

There is another class, a step above the vagrant and the unemployed, who suffer much. I mean the poorly paid workers, the factory-girls, the milliners, and other female labourers. The other morning, going to catch an early train, I saw a girl of about seventeen, clad in a thin merino dress, which clung to her limbs, a little black cloth jacket that barely met across her chest, and a thin rag of a comforter twisted around her neck. She was one of our virtuous working sisters. A little further on I saw a girl a couple of years older, smothered in furs, walking jauntily along in the same direction. This was one of the Pariahs of Society—a sinning sister. God help the poor. Do not let us be very hard upon them if some of them, for a little warmth and food, slip out of virtue's ranks.

While we observe the good old Horatian advice, sirs and mesdames :

Dissolve frigus, ligna super foco  
Largo reponens, atque benignius  
Deprome quadrivium Sabina,  
Merum diota.

let us not forget those without our gates; but let us with the breath of tender charity dissolve some of the frost crystals from above the hearts of the poor.

about 145 Protestant deaf-mutes and of those about 75 must be of school age—from 6 to 25 years. Of the 1,669 returned by the Census, about 1000 may safely be set down as of school age; but of these only 220 are at present in the three institutions devoted to their instruction, in the Province. It follows that 780 of school age, of both creeds, are uneducated. This is certainly a painful exhibit which deserves the consideration both of the public authorities and of the charitably inclined. Of the Protestant Institution at Cote des Neiges we may state from personal observation that, considering its opportunities, it has deserved well of its promoters and the country. The system of instruction, in the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Widd, is a judicious blending of the most approved modes of deaf-mute education now in vogue, relieved and supplemented in most cases, by assistance adapted to the special wants of individuals. The industrial and domestic departments are likewise well managed, while the attention and zeal displayed by the office-bearers and managers are deserving of all praise.

For a dull unreasoning belief in the dicta of royalty and tithedom, simply because they emanate from royalty and tithedom commend us to the English fashionable journals. Touching on the question of sectarian education, the *Court Journal* says:—The following extract from the Queen's book, 'Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands,' must be read with great interest at the present moment:—"From here we drove to the Model School (Dublin), where we were received by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Roman Catholic Archbishop Murray, and the other gentlemen connected with the school. We saw the infant, the girls', and the boys' schools. Children of all creeds are admitted, and their different doctrines taught separately. This is truly Christian, and ought to be the case everywhere." The system, therefore, which Her Majesty deliberately characterises as "truly Christian" ought to have some weight in this matter so stupidly contested—this fine hair on which it is sought to hang a ton." We are getting rather tired of having the sayings of royal personages eternally held up to us for our admiration, but this last is too much. Greatly as we respect the person of Her Majesty, her religious feelings and her conduct in private life, we are unwilling and we should be sorry to believe that such a feeble argument as that which the *Court Journal* puts forward will have any weight with men of independent thought. It does not follow that because Her Majesty expresses her belief on a point of no small public importance, all her subjects should blindly subscribe thereto. Nor does it follow that because the *Court Journal* is the devoted slave and parasite of whatever is royal or noble, we should all fall a-tail-eating together.

There is nothing like a little travelling to teach wisdom. The Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools has come back from Vienna with the conviction that the American system is very far from being ahead of the European. He found all the Austrian schools of the middle and higher grades most thoroughly equipped in regard to libraries and apparatus; some single schools he saw have philosophical instruments, etc., worth as high as \$20,000. Their buildings also were complete in every requirement, and many of them cost upward of \$500,000. He also found that the girls in the higher as well as the lower schools were taught needlework, and that everywhere the gymnasium was a part of the regular course of instruction.

Some of our heavier and more intensely political journals might do worse than follow the example of the *Paris Figaro*. The editors of that paper, thinking that their readers must sometimes be bored with politics, have determined to give them a holiday every Monday, the number for that day being filled with literary and artistic gossip, amusing stories, etc. By adopting this plan, with necessary modifications, some of our moribund journals might obtain a fresh lease of life and vigour. The public loves to be amused as much as it hates being bored.

A "O that mine enemy would write a book," is an imprecation which is about to receive a singular fulfilment. It is said that Tweed has carefully kept a diary of his life, and he proposes, now that he occupies a felon's cell, to give the world some startling disclosures. He proposes to tell his manner of doing business, whom he bought to serve his purposes, and what the average price of Albany legislators is.

Anything new in these dull plagiaristic days must not be overlooked. Hence we must give the Lord Bishop of Lincoln a hearing. He is said to have preached a sermon directly against the temperance pledge. He denounced it as unscriptural. He said that it "undermined the godhead of Christ," and he wound up by saying that it leads to lying and that "it is a deadly sin for Christians to sign it."

The Congress of the United States are busily engaged in discussing the Salary Bill and the Currency question. Meantime, it is complained that the public interests are being neglected for.