

# LITERATURE

POEMS EVERYBODY SHOULD KNOW.

## A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

(Miss Proctor is a poet who has endeared herself to thousands by the deep feeling and tenderness of her verse. Her best known poem is perhaps "The Lost Chord" which was set to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan; but "A Woman's Question" has always been greatly admired for its distinctly feminine quality. Charles Dickens thought very highly of Miss Proctor's work and did much to aid the young poet. She was the daughter of Bryan Waller Proctor, well known as "Barry Cornwall," a poet of repute, and was born in London in 1825 and died there in 1884.)

Before I trust my fate to thee,  
Or place my hand in thine,  
Before I let thy future give  
Color or form to mine,  
Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds nor feel  
A shadow of regret;  
Is there one link within the Past  
That holds thy spirit yet?  
Or is thy faith as clear and free as that which I  
Can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams  
A possible future shine,  
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,  
Untouched, unshared by mine?  
If so, at any pain or cost, oh! tell me before all  
all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel,  
Within thy inmost soul  
That thou has kept a portion back,  
While I have staked the whole,  
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true  
mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need  
That mine cannot fulfill?  
One chord that any other hand  
Could better wake or still?  
Speak now—lest at some future day my whole  
life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid  
The demon-spirit glory,  
Shedding a passing glow still  
On all things new and strange?  
It may not be thy fault alone—but shield my  
heart against thine own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day  
And answer to my claim  
That Fate and that today's mistake—  
Not thou—had been to blame?  
Some sooth their conscience thus; but thou wilt  
surely warn and save me now.

Nay answer not—I dare not hear,  
The words would come too late;  
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,  
So comfort thee, my fate—  
Whatever on my heart may fall—remember, I  
would risk it all!

—Adelaide Ann Proctor.

## NOTES.

It is undeniable that Geoffrey Chaucer, the earliest of the great English poets, stands higher in the estimation of men today than ever before. His works, especially the "Canterbury Tales," are being read more widely each year, and with increasing appreciation and pleasure. The ancient English poet, who lived in the fourteenth century, was once believed to be an insuperable bar to the appreciation of Chaucer by the uninitiated reader, has proved to be no bar at all. A very slight study of his poems is sufficient to dispel the haze of archaic forms, and his diction and his sense are so clear and so simple that even the most unlearned reader can appreciate the beauty of his verse, and that will prove an admirable handbook to those who already know and love him.

Rex Beach, the author of "The Spoilers," is about to start for Texas on an extensive hunting trip.

Roy Rolfe Gilson, author of "Katharine," is a strong believer in "universality of experience" as against "local color," yet it is noted by admirers of his books that there is scarcely a town or a character that does not seem very real to every American, and again and again the reader will have a start as some intimate little secret of his own life seems to be surprised by Mr. Gilson's subtle pen. Yet, after all, his native town of Benton Harbor, Mich., claims the locality of his tale. A Maine man grew enthusiastic about one of his books because it was an exact description of his native city, and more than one of Mr. Gilson's friends have claimed to be the originals of his people.

Mr. Bliss Perry, whose life of "Walt Whitman" is just published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., has been spending the summer in Belgium and is now in Italy. He expects to return to this country in January to begin his work as professor of English literature at Harvard university, which he will carry on at the same time with his editorship of the Atlantic.

Dumas pere, when manager of the Theatre Historique, was continually studying the influence of the temperature on the sale of tickets. It was his interest in the showing of the thermometer was, like so many other acts of his, nothing but an expression of the proverbial kindness of his heart.

One day Dumas happened to meet an old friend whom he had not seen for 30 years. "Where are you going to dine tonight?" he asked the friend.

"Tonight I shall dine nowhere," was the answer.

"Oh, no," said Dumas, "you are mistaken; you will dine with me." He led the friend into his house and gave him the upper place at his table. The poor man had not had such a dinner for a long time, and Dumas, when retiring into his writing room after the coffee, said, "It is a matter of course that I expect you tomorrow at the same time."

The friend came the next day, and the day after this, and so on, for 10 years up to his death. One day, how-

ever, he told Dumas that, as he was eating bread he did not earn, this arrangement could not continue. "If I am not able to stand on my own legs, I shall not come again. Tell me in what way I can be of service to you."

Dumas thought a moment, then he said: "You can do me a great favor. You may go to the new bridge every day and take the temperature by Chevalier's thermometer. The temperature, you must know, is of great moment in the matter of the sale of tickets. Could you do this?"

The poor fellow answered affirmatively, and from that time on reported to Dumas every day: "At noon the thermometer showed so and so many degrees in the shade." And Dumas, who, of course, did not care in the least about the temperature, replied with the same regularity: "I am very much obliged. If you only knew what a service you are doing me!"

In England a committee has been organized for the purpose of erecting a monument to Livingsstone in the heart of Africa, at Chitamba, east of the Bangweulu See, on the exact spot where the great discoverer breathed his last and where, as is reported, at the foot of a high tree, his heart lies buried.

Since the author of "Little Women" ceased her work the authors who have been able to write good stories for girls may be counted on the fingers of one hand. It has been predicted that the first real successor to Miss Alcott will be found in Miss Christina Gowans Wright, the author of "The Story Book Girls," which is soon to be published by the Macmillan company. Like "Little Women," this is the story of a family in which four sisters play the principal parts, and the resemblance is carried further by the fact that the new book is a delightful tale of the everyday life of four girls who are as charming and as completely alive as any who have ever appeared in the pages of a book.

"Jack London has hit the mark again," says the New York Mail. "The 'Call of the Wild' is a masterpiece. It is in its meaning greater than 'The Call of the Wild' because it symbolizes the crowd the lesson down anyone's throat—the eventual happy conquest of that Fighting Wolf, social humanity, by the influence of kindness, and its transformation into the Blessed Wolf."

Mr. London has written a splendid book. It will be read by very many thousands, some of whom will appreciate its symbolism.

Few modern reprints are likely to mislead anyone. If photographic reproductions, the paper alone is generally sufficient. The Dandelion in 1904 made a reprint of Franklin's "Poor Richard's almanack" of 1733, on old paper printed on a hand press.

Had a new Anglo-American poet "arrived?" This question has been asked by more than one critical reader or a reviewer.

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PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

This is perhaps the most satisfactory portrait of Theodore Roosevelt in existence. Mr. Roosevelt has written nothing for magazine publication for a long time, but the leading article of the January Century is an essay from his pen on "The Ancient Irish Sagas," in which he urges that chairs of Celtic be established in our leading universities wherever possible.

cent volume of verse, entitled "The Worker, and Other Poems." Its author, Contingency William Dawson, is a young man, an Englishman by birth, a graduate of Oxford, and at present a resident of this country. His unpretentious and unheralded little volume has been acclaimed by many a surfeit critic as a genuine and important poetic utterance.

## BOOKS.

Miss Olive Durfee is a young resident of Utah who has written a remarkably brief and inspiring little book called "Self Culture: an Essay on Individuality." The main idea of this little book can hardly be called original.

Ralph Waldo Trine, Lillian Whiting and others of the many "new thought" writers are suggested in its pages, but the matter withal is so cleverly handled, and the style so delightfully forceful and natural that one does not stop in reading its chapters to consider their sources of inspiration. The expression is remarkably clear and vivid, and not one chapter in the book that does not contain thought enough to uplift any soul from dependency, doubt, slothfulness or any of the other evils of pessimism to peaks of hope and faith. The truth Miss Durfee enunciates cannot have too frequent expression; each city should have local teachers of its gospel of cheer and each individual—or person—Miss Durfee takes all the sympathy out of these terms—should carry a copy of her little volume in his pocket as a constant stimulant to fear, and stimulant to hope, health and wealth—for a single page of it will do all for its reader and more than all material medicine, travel and the thousand and one other remedies for mental, physical and moral ills that have ever done an unhappy world. One of the good things in its pages is the following:

"Never think that just anything is good enough for you. It is an easy matter to determine a person's opinion of himself by going into his house. He will often overvalue his own possessions for deficiencies and disapproval, but never think of apologizing to himself for enduring all the time these deficiencies himself."

Another paragraph is this: "Life as it is appears to be a hideous confusion to those who have not confidence in God's omnipotent power to bring all things together for good. One by one we come back into the fold of Christ, the worse for wear and worse for having been guided by the wisdom of man."

The book is neatly bound and altogether is worthy of a generous patronage.

A new novel, "At the Court of the Maharaja," by Louis Tracy, author of "Pillar of Light" and "The Wings of the Morning," is just out. Louis Tracy has done many excellent things. "The Wings of the Morning" and "The Pillar of Light" are much more than popular novels; they are works of art. "At the Court of the Maharaja" is a story of a man and a woman, only in this instance the woman is a pure-blooded English girl, the man a dark-skinned, debased, and naturally cruel son of India. That he is a maharaja makes little difference, for although well educated he cannot cultivate the hereditary traits, and when he is on his native soil there is a real reversion to type, and the savagery of his forefathers displays itself in the cultivated brute who by his magnetic power has won an English wife. It is a strong story, one of the strongest ever written about India. There is plenty of action in it, of the most strenuous kind, and it deals in an attractive way with a theme that has been little exploited. Hence it is reasonable to expect a big demand for the book. For sale by all booksellers.

The revolution in public sentiment toward Whitman is perhaps the most significant event in our literary history. The startling change in the attitude of the critics is vividly illustrated in an article in the December Current Literature.

When Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" first appeared in 1855, it was denounced by the journals of Boston as "bombast, egotism, vulgarity and nonsense." A quarter of a century later, the district attorney of the same city tried to suppress it, on the ground that it was "obscene." Today, the most conservative publishing house in Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., stands sponsor for a book, written by Bliss Perry, the editor of the Atlantic Monthly and a Harvard professor of literature, in which Whitman is characterized as "upon the whole, the most original and suggestive poetic figure since Wordsworth." The significance of Mr. Perry's volume is but heightened by the fact that it is the fourth notable appreciation of Whitman to appear within a year. The other three are Horace Traubel's "With Walt Whitman in Camden," H. B. Bin's "Life of Walt Whitman," and Edward Carpenter's "Days with Walt Whitman."

The real Christmas story is not one in which are depicted a series of happenings that must have taken place on any day of the year, but which, in order to make the story reasonable, are conveniently located on Christmas day or Christmas eve. The real Christmas story is full of the real Christmas spirit; it breathes the air of peace and good-will as unmistakably as the real Fourth-of-July oration voices the spirit of patriotism. George R. Sims has written a story of the real Christmas kind, and it appears in the January issue of the People's Magazine, which has now taken its place with the other high-class fiction publications of the country. In this story, "God Bless the Master of This House," the Christmas sentiment is so undeniable, the holiday spirit so faithfully preserved, that every one reading the story becomes infected with its happiness.

There are several other Christmas stories in the same number of the People's Magazine, which is a special holiday number—among them tales by Edward Frederic Benson, the famous author of "Dodo," Elmore Elliott Peake, the author of "The Darlington," and Edna Phillips, the distinguished writer of Dartmouth stories. The magazine contains, in all, 192 pages of copyrighted material, and is a delightful gift. There is a delightful novelette by Charles Carey, entitled "The Affair at Clifton." Mr. Phillips' story is a capital tale of life at a boy's preparatory school. The distinctive American touch is so vivid and so intimate, the picture of Dartmouth, with its queer people and queer dialect, and has written in simple English a tale abounding in humor and showing a thorough appreciation of juvenile character.

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Special Correspondence.

Shakespeare's Fame in Greatest Danger: Secret of 300 Years "Revealed" at Last? Our London Literary Letter.

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yet, "Pages from the Autobiography of a very Young Man" is the title given to a pretty set of color reproductions from the drawings of Douglas McClees, representing children in various character and attractive poses. There are eight of these pictures, all good enough to frame and keep. Any one who likes children is sure to look at these drawings for a long time, and then, perhaps, this is an article by Charles no Kay on "The Childhood of Christ," illustrated with reproductions of paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York. These are unusually beautiful, and are printed well on heavy, colored paper. The magazine, which contains, besides this, 16 full-page portraits of stage favorites, printed on tinted paper, opens with a complete novelette by Nath Boyce. It is a fascinating study of an American girl's heart and mind, and is sure to make considerable reputation for the author. The skill with which the narrative is handled, the truth and reality of the situations, the telling climax at the close, all combine to make it a story to be read with keen and unalloyed enjoyment. The short stories are of a like exceptional variety. "A Presentiment," is a true reflection of the part of a woman's mind that keeps zealously to herself and will not have known for worlds. "Christmas Waits" by Charles For, is a real Christmas story, with a gay humor of its own, half-whimsical, half-pathetic. "The First Affair," is a delightful frank account, told in the first person, of the love-passages of an ingenious miss, still in her teens. "The Ditty of Kivy Greedy," by Wallace Irving, has the true Gilbertian swing to it, and is almost as funny as the illustrations by H. Mayer.

Altogether, the holiday Smith's is an exceptional number. The article "An Essay in the History of the Christmas Story," by Charles For, is a vivid and intimate picture of Hartman, the railroad magnate. Channing Pollock has contributed a valuable article on "The Youth of the American States." The departments in Smith's conducted especially for women are of unusual attractiveness and value. "The Out-of-Town Girl in New York," by Grace K. Gould, is a story of a girl's life in the city, with a lot of hints to the Christmas shopper.

he has built around the Earl of Rutland. The origin of his theory, Dr. Bleibtreu confesses, was suggested to him by a little book entitled, "The New Shakespeare Gospel." The author is a German named Avon of Munich. The argument is that no mere drunken comedian with little scholarly learning and knowledge of foreign countries such as Italy, France and Denmark, could have written the Shakespearean works. Roger, fifth earl of Rutland, was not only a brilliant scholar but a traveler. He was born Oct. 6, 1576. When 20 years of age he began the grand tour of Europe. He visited France and Italy, stayed at Vienna, Venice, Mantua, Rome and Milan; studied law at Padua university and on returning to London settled down in Gray's Inn continuing his law studies and beginning his writings.

Shakespeare, declares Dr. Bleibtreu, could not possibly have made his alleged expedition to the Azores and thereby gaining the "Tempest" with which to write "The Tempest." He also fought in Holland, thus explaining the Dutch reference in various plays. Lord Rutland was sentenced for life to the Tower in 1601, but after two years was pardoned. During the period of his imprisonment no single Shakespearean scholar appeared. In 1603 Lord Rutland was released from the Tower and became the representative of King James I at the christening of the crown prince, thereby gaining the local color of Hamlet's Denmark. Dr. Bleibtreu, this child explains, the description of the terrace at the Castle of Elsinore. The earl met Gullenstern, the Danish courtier, and much significance is also attached to the fact that the two young barons Rosencrantz were fellow students of the earl at Padua.

The last Shakespearean drama, "Coriolanus" and "The Tempest" appeared in 1612. The Earl of Rutland died June 25 of that year. This, Dr. Bleibtreu considers, is a convincing proof, taken in conjunction with other evidences, that it was Rutland who wrote the plays that ceased when he died. Dr. Bleibtreu develops his argument with great thoroughness. He explains in detail why Lord Rutland concealed himself behind the name of another and many other of the mysterious dramas which are interwoven in the new theory.

Dr. Bleibtreu's opponents point to the fact that Lord Rutland was only 36 when he died; they say he was too busy fighting, studying law, love making, traveling, imprisonment and so on to write such stupendous works. They assert that if the earl was the author he must have written "Romeo and Juliet" when 17 years old and before he went to Italy. They also declare that the man who wrote the plays must have been a Warwickshire man, for the plays show a wide knowledge of Warwickshire scenery, dialect, expressions and flowers. Lord Rutland, they say, lived practically all his time in London, abroad or at Belvoir Castle, which is in Lincolnshire.

Dr. Bleibtreu is coming to England very shortly—early next year in fact—in order to follow up by researches here, his positive opinion. He declares that proof must lie in the archives and historical papers of the house of Mansfield, which now is no longer an earldom but the dukedom of Rutland.

Dr. Bleibtreu has sent a special message to American and English Shakespearean scholars asking them to follow the line of research indicated in his book. As for the professor himself, he said when interviewed:

"I shall live and die in the belief that Roger, Earl of Rutland was the real author of those immortal works which have conquered the world."

The book, of course, will be published within a month perhaps, in the United States.

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