

so puzzling and discouraging to the general public, though necessary to the student and the electrician. The author does not put it forward as a scientific work, of which there is no lack, intending it only as a sort of guide-book on the road to electrical science, which will probably give to many the information they may desire, without requiring too great a research into works which treat more extensively and deeply of the subject. The book bears the indorsement of Thomas A. Edison.

#### AMONG THE PUBLISHERS.

AMONG the timely articles in the July number of *The New Review*, which Longmans, Green, & Co. expect to have ready about the 12th, are "The Eiffel Tower," by M. Eiffel himself; "The Shah of Persia," by Lord Castletown; and "The Eight Hours Bill," by Mr. Charles Bradlaugh. There will also be an anonymous article on "The Talkers of London." Matthew Arnold's literary executor, Lord Coleridge, has written a paper on the lamented poet and critic, which will appear in the July number of *The New Review*.

— The July number of *Blackwood's* will contain a story by Mr. Oscar Wilde on the subject of Shakspeare's sonnets. Mr. Wilde will put forward an entirely new theory as to the identity of the mysterious "Mr. W. H." of the famous preface.

— John Wiley & Sons have just ready a work on "Steam-Engine Design," for the use of mechanical engineers, students, and draughtsmen, by Professor J. M. Witham.

— Ticknor & Co. announce "The Moral Idea: a Historic Study," by Julia Wedgwood, — a work which is said to be the outcome of twenty years of study, and which is described as "a history of human aspiration after a moral ideal that changes continually in the evolution of time and thought, the highest truth discovered by one age being often found by a revolt against the errors circling round the belief that was the life of a former age."

— D. Appleton & Co. have ready "Days Out of Doors," by Charles C. Abbott, a companion volume to his "A Naturalist's Rambles about Home;" "The Garden's Story," by George H. Ellwanger, relating the pleasures and trials of an amateur gardener, illustrated with head and tail pieces by Rhead; and "The History of a Slave," by H. M. Johnston, author of the "Kilimanjaro Expedition."

— In the July issues of the leading English reviews, Mr. Gladstone contributes to the *Nineteenth Century* an article entitled "Plain Speaking on the Irish Union." Mr. Gosse writes on "Edward FitzGerald," the translator of Omar Khayyūm, in the *Fortnightly*; and Walter Besant describes the first society of British authors (1843) in the *Contemporary Review*. This last-named periodical will contain, in addition to other notable articles, a paper on "Jewels and Dress," by Mrs. Haweis; and one on "Thomas Hardy," by J. M. Barrie.

— Messrs. Belford, Clarke, & Co. send us two of their lately published novels, — "The Prophet's Mantle," by Fabian Bland; and "Trean, or The Mormon's Daughter," by Alva M. Kerr. The former is much better than many recent novels, being not only unexceptionable in both a moral and a literary sense, but really an entertaining story. The leading character is a Russian nihilist, but the scene is mostly laid in London. The incidents are mostly of an ordinary kind, only a few being unusually exciting; yet the interest is unflagging from beginning to end. A good deal is said by the various characters on the subjects of socialism, capitalism, tyranny, and the urgent need of social re-organization, and the author seems to be more or less in sympathy with socialistic views, but with some doubts about their practicability. The other novel is inferior to "The Prophet's Mantle," but has nevertheless an interest of its own. The hero of the tale is an eastern man, who goes on business to Utah, and there falls in love with a Mormon's daughter. A Mormon bishop, however, who already had several wives, was bent on adding that same girl to the list; and hence arose a host of trouble for the young lovers, out of which, of course, they at last emerged triumphant. The book contains a great deal about the Mormon doctrines and practices — most readers will

think too much for the interest of the story; and the author is evidently a determined hater of the whole Mormon system. Almost every novel nowadays endeavors, as these do, to deal with some moral or social question, either by showing in a vivid light some evil that requires a remedy or by rousing a public sentiment in favor of reform. This tendency, if properly directed, is certainly to be welcomed; for it makes the story not only more useful and improving, but also to men of intelligence more interesting.

— Messrs. Ginn & Co. announce for early publication "Pages Choiesies des Mémoires du Duc de Saint-Simon," edited for use in colleges and advanced classes, and for private readers, by Alphonse N. Van Daell, Ph.C., LL.D., recently director of modern languages in the Boston High and Latin Schools, and now professor of French in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The "Mémoires of Saint-Simon," which are of great importance for both the literary and the historical study of the seventeenth century in France, are accessible to but few students, partly on account of their bulk. The editor does not know of any American edition, although it is very desirable to have Saint-Simon's prose studied in an advanced course. The notes will be in French; and the introduction will consist of two selections, — one from Taine, the other from Rambaud. The same firm also announce for publication in August, Dumas' "Les Trois Mousquetaires," edited by Professor F. C. Sumichrast of Harvard University, for use in schools and colleges and for private readers. Alexandre Dumas was one of the brightest and most entertaining of writers; but his works, with the exception of "La Tulipe Noire," have not been available for college or school work on account of their length and the frequent occurrence of objectionable passages. These two objections are removed in this edition of Dumas' masterpiece, "Les Trois Mousquetaires." The story itself is kept intact, and the brilliant description of court, camp, and city life preserved; but the "padding" has been omitted, and its place supplied by brief summaries. Every objectionable page has been carefully excised, and this with the greater readiness that the actual story is not thereby affected. The book will form a volume of about two hundred pages of reading-matter, and, being fully annotated, will prove an edition serviceable to student and teacher alike.

— The *Forum* for July contains eleven articles on a great variety of subjects and of varying excellence. The most important is the opening one, by Bishop Henry C. Potter, on "The Scholar in American Life." The writer justly thinks that the American people are greatly in need of a much higher grade of scholarship than now prevails among them; and in this essay he endeavors to show this need, and also to point out the conditions on which alone it can be supplied. By scholarship Bishop Potter does not mean the mere possession of knowledge: on the contrary, he speaks slightly of those who merely retail other men's ideas. It is the original thinker, the teacher of new truths, whom he designates as the scholar, and whose work he regards as so important. At present such men are rare in this country, and those of the highest class are not found here at all; and Bishop Potter doubts if we shall have them in any considerable numbers until our universities provide, either by fellowships or by lectureships, for their support. The whole paper is well considered, and ought to be read and pondered by all who have the interests of American civilization at heart. Mr. W. S. Lilly continues his series of papers on what he deems the moral looseness of the present age, treating this time of "The Ethics of Journalism." He contrasts the ideal of the journalist's profession with the reality, and it cannot be denied that the charges he brings against the common run of journalists have a solid basis of fact. Professor G. J. Romanes replies briefly to Mr. Mivart's criticism of the Darwinian theory, but without saying anything that is new. Dr. Austin Flint has a paper on "Late Theories concerning Fever," in which he considers especially the mode of treating that disease. He remarks that the increase of temperature is the really dangerous element in the case, and, while he speaks somewhat hesitatingly about the use of drugs for reducing the temperature, recommends in strong terms the application of cool baths. M. Honoré Beaugrand writes of "The Attitude of the French Canadians" on the questions of commercial union and annexation to the United States. He replies to Professor Goldwin

Smith's strictures on the French people of Canada; and while he admits that they are less successful in accumulating wealth than men of the Anglo-Saxon race, and that they are too much under the influence of the priests, he maintains that they are, on the whole, as good citizens as any others. On the question of annexation, he thinks the French are tending toward a decision in its favor, largely because so many of them have already settled in New England, and so have become familiar with life in the States. Mrs. J. C. Croly writes on "Domestic Service," expressing the opinion that mistresses usually expect too much of their servants,—as much as could be expected of trained experts; and, furthermore, that the servant-girl is too often not treated, as she should be, like any hired laborer, but rather as a dependent. To these causes Mrs. Croly attributes many of the troubles that ladies have with their servants. The other papers in the *Forum* deal with familiar subjects, and call for no special remark.

— It cannot be said that in these days there is any lack of high-class reviews, but their cost is prohibitive to the great mass of the people. A high standard of excellence, and a cultivated literary taste, are no longer confined to the few; while a keen anxiety to become acquainted with the ideas of the foremost men of the day on the many vital problems now before the world is developing among a class unable to purchase the periodicals in which alone these subjects are handled. The object of *The New Review* (Longmans, Green, & Co., London and New York) is to place a critical periodical of the first order within the reach of all; and the preliminary list of writers is a sufficient proof that it will not yield to any in the eminence of its contributors. The public will be brought into direct contact with the most representative men of the age. Politics, science, and art will be treated by writers of acknowledged repute; and literature, both critical and creative, sober and fanciful, will be associated with names which have long carried their own commendation. Brevity as well as cheapness will be one of the distinguishing features of the new enterprise. The second number, to be published early in July, will contain, "The Shah," by the Right Hon. Lord Castletown; "Matthew Arnold," by the lord chief justice of England; "The Eiffel Tower," by M. Eiffel; "The Eight Hours Bill," by Charles Bradlaugh, M.P.; "The Higher Policy for Africa," by Sir G. Baden-Powell, M.P.; "The Talkers of London," "Greyfriars," by St. George Mivart,

F.R.S.; "The Dying Drama," by William Archer; "Three Types of Womanhood," by the Countess of Cork.

— A natural-history serial, "Among the Florida Keys," by Charles Frederick Holder, describing the strange adventures and observations of a party of boys during a vacation trip in Florida, begins in the July number of *St. Nicholas*, and will continue for four months.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

\*.\*Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as proof of good faith.

The editor will be glad to publish any queries consonant with the character of the journal.

### Queries.

45. IS THE HUMAN VOICE GROWING, OR DECAYING? — In his article on speech and song, in the *Contemporary Review*, Sir Morell Mackenzie writes, "Before leaving the subject of the speaking voice, a word or two may be said on what is more a matter of curious speculation than of practical interest. Is the human voice growing in power and beauty, or is it tending to decay? Certain physiologists assure us that the retina has acquired the power of distinguishing colors by degrees, and that the process will probably continue, so that our descendants will by and by evolve the power of seeing colors now quite unknown to us. On the other hand, it is undeniable that civilization, so far from increasing the keenness of our sight, threatens to make spectacles universally necessary. There can be no doubt that the voice has developed greatly since our 'half-human ancestors' wooed each other in the primeval forests, and it is conceivable that it may in time to come acquire the power of producing musical effects at present undreamt of. It is also probable enough, that, as the voice gains in sweetness, it may lose in power, the latter quality being more required in barbarous than in highly civilized conditions. On the other hand, we are taller and of larger chest-girth than our predecessors even of a not very remote date: it is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the average lungs and larynx are bigger nowadays, and the air-blast from the lungs stronger. This would appear to justify us in believing that the voice is stronger than it was even two or three centuries ago. There are, however, no facts that I know of to prove it." Cannot some of the readers of *Science* throw light on this?

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