LITERARY NOTES.

Theodore Watts's "Life of Rossetti" promises to be a very full and complete biography.

A favorite exercise of the English critic is the "sitting down on" some volume of "verse" by some half-baked American "poet"—a book to which no critic in this country would think of giving space and which is merely the froth washed up by the waves of every publishing season. The English critic often manages to convey a subtle impression that such a book is all that one can justly expect from an American writer. The London literary weeklies have amused themselves in this absurd way several times in the last six months.

One of our foreign critics, Walter Lewin, thinks that "a defective sense of proportion" is characteristic of American writers, and presents as an example Mr. Lowell's praise of Abraham Lincoln.

M. Renan says that it is impossible to write well before the age of forty. Literary history does not altogether support his theory; but we may concede its approximate truthfulness for the sake of conveying an encouraging word to "Amelie Rives." There really is a kind of rude force in her tragedy, "Herod and Mariamne"—a dramatic fervor, which, if it were properly disciplined, might do the writer valiant service when she reaches Mr. Renan's "age of forty." But what a murderous and hysterical composition it is! As Mr. Habberton's Budge and Toddle would say, "It is all bluggy." Its wild and whirling nature may be estimated by the fact that a rough and hasty count shows that the word "mad" and its variations of "madness," "madman," and "madder," appear about eighty-eight times in the course of this short drama.

The statement that the seventh volume of Mr. Lecky's "History of England" would soon be ready for publication has just been contradicted by the author.

Mary Robinson, the English versifier, is about to publish a volume of historical essays entitled "The End of the Middle Ages."

Lady Brassey's "Last Voyage" is about to appear in a richly illustrated form in England.

M. de Falloux's "Memoirs of a Royalist" and Count Gleichen's "With the Camel Corps Up the Nile" are in the press of the Lippincott Company. Count Gleichen is the nephew of Queen Victoria.

There is said to be an inexhaustible thirst on the part of the British public for books on Political Economy.

Richard Burton writes contemptuously of the popular impression that "The Arabian Nights" is a "book for babes," a "classic for children"; whereas, he says, "Its lofty morality, its fine character painting, its artful development of the story and its original snatches of rare poetry, fit it for the reading of men and women, and these, too, of no puerile or vulgar wit. In fact, its prime default is that it flies too high."

Mr. Pennell is taking his holiday on the Thames, journeying at leisure from Oxford to London; and it is supposed that a book of sketches will be the result.

In a volume of reminiscences recently published in England, Mr. George Grossmith gives these interesting details concerning the rehearsals of the Gilbert-Sullivan operas: "The music is always taken first. The principal singers and the ladies and gentlemen of the chorus are seated in a semicircle on the stage. A cottage piano is in the middle, and we are rehearsed as an ordinary choir would be. Sir Arthur Sullivan usually first composes the difficult choruses, especially the finale to the first act—an elaborate score. The quartets and trios arrive next, and the duets and songs last. Mr. Gilbert will attend all these musical rehearsals; he takes mental notes of the style of composition, time, rhythm, everything, and goes home and invents his groups and business. It is well known that Mr. Gilbert is an extremely strict man, and on all matters of stage business his word is law. All arrangements of colors and the original groupings, with which the frequenters of the Savoy are so well acquainted, are by him. He will stand on the stage beside the actor or actress, and repeat the words with appropriate action over and over again, until they are delivered as he desires them to be. In some instances, of course, he allows a little license, but very little."

The letter in which Mr. Gladstone announced to Samuel Rogers his engagement to Catherine Glynne has been found among the papers of the poet, and it is hoped that it will appear in the last volume of Mr. Clayden's "Life of Rogers."

The fresh calendar of the valuable manuscript preserved by the Marquis of Salisbury at Hatfield House exhibits Queen Elizabeth in the amusing character of an elderly coquette. Many of the letters which appear therein were addressed to her by two brothers, the Dukes of Anjou and Alencon, at the time when each had hopes of her hand. The former, when she was thirty-seven and he was twenty, wrote to her that "she was the most perfect beauty that God had made during the last five hundred years." After Alencon's victory at Cambray he wrote to the Queen that a garter which she had sent him "alone was the cause" of his triumph.

Mr. Edmund Gosse's just-published "Life of Congreve" is said to give a full account of the dramatist's life, and a carefully thought-out estimate of his works. We shall probably soon see a reprint of the book here.

New Publications.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS,
NEW-YORK AND LONDON,
PUBLISH NEXT WEEK:

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, with annotations by R. R. Bowker, in "Questions of the Day" series. 12mo, paper, 25 cts.

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THE FEDERALIST, a Commentary on the Constitution of the United States, by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay. Edited by Henry Cabot Lodge. Octavo, cloth extra, $2.00.

THE LIFE OF W. E. GLADSTONE, 1809-1880. By Geo. Barnett Smith. Third cheaper edition, with portrait, octavo, $2.50.

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But a limited edition has been printed of this well-known work, which has for a number of years been out of print, and of this edition a portion only has been secured for American readers.

Lists of standard and recent publications in Economic and Political Science, including the "Questions of the Day" series, and the works of Wells, Bastiat, Schoenhof, Sumner and other authorities, mailed on application.

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A. A. REDFIELD, Esq., Restraints on Testamentary Alienation.
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MISS CROCKER AND MISS BECK'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, 31 West 42d-st., opposite Bryant Park. Reopens October 3, 1888. Classes for Boys.

MISS BALLOW'S SCHOOL, 24 EAST 22D-ST. Will re-open on Thursday, October 4.

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REOPENS OCT. 8. CIRCULARS.

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