

AMERICAN SHIPS.

Our Merchant Marine Surveyed by Two Writers.

THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE. Its History and Romance from 1620 to 1892. By Winthrop L. Marvin. Octavo, pp. xvi, 444. Charles Scribner's Sons.

AMERICAN MERCHANT SHIPS AND SAILORS. By Willis Abbott. Illustrated by Ray Brown. Octavo, pp. x, 372. Dodd, Mead & Co.

The development of our merchant navy and that of our war navy, present rather curious contrasts. When the nation was first formed it would have met speedy disaster had it counted for defence and aggression on its warships.

That the number of privateers with which our channels have been infested, the audacity with which they have approached our coasts and the success with which their enterprise has been attended have proved serious to our commerce.

This almost gigantic strength at sea came from the readiness and the long preparation of the merchant fleet. France and England had asserted and exercised the right to stop and search American vessels, with the result that speed had become of the highest value.

Today the relative positions of the two marines are quite reversed. The wooden built ship declined at the first wide introduction of steam, and the steam lines suffered while still an experiment by adverse legislation in a Congress that was showing the plain marks of North and South cleavage.

The American merchant marine in foreign commerce will remain what the American people demand it. Economic conditions are quietly shaping themselves not to make this revival easy and certain, but it can be hastened by an aroused patriotism and prompt action.

Mr. Marvin approves of government subsidy to shipping in order to stimulate it to the possibility of equal competition with the subsidized fleets of foreign nations.

As I write, the actual head of the greatest shipping concern the world has ever known is a Wall Street banker, whose knowledge of the sea is as great as that of the skipper of a fast steam yacht.

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Writers on maritime subjects, such as George Coggeshall and Henry Hall, are leved upon in both the books before us, in the latter especially for tales of adventurous moments in the careers of early seamen of this country.

And at home everywhere Captain Cleveland certainly was. All his life was spent in wandering over the seven seas in ships of every size from a 25-ton cutter to a 400-ton Indiaman.

The prejudice against which Fulton had to struggle in his experiments with the steam-boat are typified by the scientific demonstration made by a sage of the day that ocean navigation in an iron ship propelled by steam would never be possible.

These are, first, the weight of the engine and the fuel; second, the large space it occupies; third, the tendency of its action to rack the vessel and render it leaky; fourth, the expense of maintenance; fifth, the irregularity of its motion and the motion of the water in the boiler and cistern, and of the ship in rough weather; sixth, the difficulty arising from the liability of the paddles, or oars, to break, if light, and from the weight if made strong.

The illustrator of Mr. Abbott's book has used the opportunity to picture scenes of pirate attack and whaling struggles in several spirited drawings in wash and line. The various types of vessel, many of them now passed away, are well shown in smaller sketches.

Longmans, Green & Co. are publishing a volume of travels "Across Iceland," by W. Biskier, with illustrations, maps and an appendix on the plants collected—this last by A. W. Hill.

We invaded the workroom and bedchamber which is usually called the bathosia. As its name implies, this chamber was once the bathroom of the home; but bathing has gone much out of fashion with the moderns, and he no longer considers it a thing at short intervals to be desirable.

W. E. Lawson will publish through McClure, Phillips & Co. early in the spring a study of "American Industrial Problems" from a British point of view.

H. J. Whigham, the author of the book on "The Persian Problem," announced by the Scribners, was at one time amateur golf champion of the United States.

Mr. Abbott's survey of our merchant marine is more topical in arrangement, though naturally the two books cover much the same ground. This one includes chapters on the course of arctic exploration by Americans, and the shipping of the Mississippi River and its development.

Miss Grace Lathrop Collin, the author of a collection of short stories called "Putnam Place," just published by the Harpers, was graduated from Smith College in 1894 with the degree of B. L. She was born in Elmira, N. Y., and her girlhood was spent in Ithaca, where her father was a member of the faculty of the law school of

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A. C. McClurg & Co., Publishers, Chicago

Cornell University. Later she studied at Columbia, receiving the degree of M. A. in 1890, and afterward travelling abroad. She has written stories and essays from time to time since her sophomore year in college.

Dr. R. Mackintosh, professor of apologetics in Lancashire Independent College, Manchester, is the author of a new volume in the Scribners' "World Epoch Makers" series devoted to "Hegel and Hegelianism." Dr. Mackintosh was the author of a book called "From Comte to Benjamin Kidd."

Dodd, Mead & Co. will publish on March 25 Max Pemberton's novel "The Gold Wolf"; Mrs. Mary Dudeney's novel, "Robin Brilliant"; Emma Rayner's story of negro life in the South called "Handicapped Among the Free," and a volume of short stories by Ian MacLaren called "Our Neighbors."

"The Moral System of Shakespeare," by Professor Richard G. Moulton, which the Macmillan Company publishes, is written about the thesis that the plays, besides the interest of amusement, have also an interest analogous to that of experiments in physical science; that the theatre and the novel are the laboratory of the moralist, in which are given practical demonstrations in philosophy.

The valiant gentleman in "Pinafore" who might have been a Russian, a Frenchman, Turk or Prussian, or perhaps Italian, and remained nevertheless an Englishman, may share the honors with Joseph Conrad, whose latest book of English stories called "Youth," is being published here by McClure, Phillips & Co. Mr. Conrad was born in a southern province of Poland. His father was a critic and poet and conducted a patriotic review at Warsaw. The son had an early period of schooling at Cracow, which he interrupted by going to sea.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

- ART. THE ART IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By Charles Waldstein. 12mo. pp. ix, 110. (The Macmillan Company.)
A talk on nineteenth century art as expressed in literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture and decoration.
CHINESE PORCELAINS. By W. G. Gulland. With notes by T. J. Larkin. Vol. II, 8vo, pp. xxxviii, 606. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)
A survey of the art of ceramics at its different periods in China. Illustrated with reproductions of photographs showing specimens in various collections.
OUR HOMES AND HOW TO BEAUTIFY THEM. By H. J. Jennings. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 254. (Town and Country.)
A survey of the decorative art of the past, the principles governing the art, with practical suggestions for the artistic treatment of a house.
BIOGRAPHY. LIFE OF RICHARD WAGNER. Being an Authorized English Version by William Ashton Ellis of C. F. Glasenapp's "Das Leben Richard Wagner's." Vol. III, 8vo, pp. 423. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.)
The career of the composer from 1849 to 1883.
FICTION. THE MAHONEY MILLION. By Charles Townsend. Illustrated by Clare Angell. 12mo, pp. 215. (New-American Book Company.)
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Stories of the fisher folk of the Hebrides.
CLIVEDEN. By Kevon West. 12mo, pp. vii, 478. (Boston: Lothrop Publishing Company.)
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