# Literary News and Criticism.

## The Advantage to an Essayist of the Sense of Humor.

It is a great comfort to encounter from time to time an essayist who does not go for his inspiration to books alone. We say "from time to time." As a matter of fact, the happy experience to which allusion is made comes only at very long intervals. The average collection of essays is hopelessly "literary." The author seems to feel that he must convey an impression of unsleeping scholarship; of being nothing if not critical; of being, in short, the Perfect Judge. Such writers have a terribly depressing effect upon the mere lover of good books. There is nothing kindling about them. They never move the reader to go and look for himself into the subject under discussion. On the contrary, they leave him filled with an unutterable weariness. An essayist like Mr. Samuel McChord Crothers is therefore a boon. It is perfectly plain from many a page in the book he has just published, "The Pardoner's Wallet" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), that he gets a good deal out of his library, but it is also plain from the character of the volume as a whole that he gets more out of life. Is not this because he has, among other useful resources, the sense of humor?

At the end of his book, speaking of the "Cruelty of Good People," Mr. Crothers points out that righteousness at first is crude, that it is harsh and bitter; but, he adds, "give it time and sunshine, and it will grow sweet and mellow." This illustrates the mood of loving kindness in which he writes, but it illustrates also his sense of proportion, his readiness to put the things that confront him in daily life into a sound perspective; and that, we maintain, is only another way of saying that he takes a genuinely humorous view of mankind and its affairs. He could not for the life of him take himself too seriously, and why, therefore, we can hear him asking, should he take anybody else too seriously? Why, for example, should he object to another man's prejudices? He realizes that they are, as a rule, quite harmless, and that, indeed, they often give the possessor an abundance of innocent pleasure. His essay on the subject in this book is a model of genial and delicate admonition. Mr. Crothers is the sworn foe of what in one of his essays he calls "unseasonable virtues"; he believes in the castigation of wrong, but he knows very well when he has attended successively "more meetings of a reformatory and denunciatory character than nature intended me to profit by." In fact, he has the humorist's conviction that we need to look life sanely and cheerfully in the face if we propose to live it to advantage, and throughout these pages he urges the reader, with all imaginable gentleness and tact, to adjust himself easily and happily to the conditions around him, to practise contentment and common sense. In the essay on "The Pardoner," with which he opens his volume, he paints a droll little picture of the man who is kept awake in the early morning hours by worrying over "The Thing That Was Not Worth Doing," and similar ridiculous bogies. He follows it with this apt bit of comment for those who do not know when to let their sorrows, or their joys, take care of themselves:

> Even in our waking hours there is a tendency for the sins of omission and the sorrows of omission to pile up in monstrous fashion. There is a curious ingenuity which some persons have in loading themselves with burdens which do not belong to them, and in extracting melancholy reflections out of their good fortunes. They will not frankly accept a blessing in its own proper form—it must come to them in a mournful disguise. Poets seem particularly subject to these inversions of feeling. Here are some lines entitled "Two Sorrows":
>
> Before Love came my eyes were dim with tears
> Because I had not known her gentle face.
> Softly I said, "But when across the years
> Her smile illumes the darkness of my place,
> All grief from my poor heart she will efface."
>
> Now Love is mine—she walks with me for aye
> Down paths of primrose and blue violet,
> But on my heart at every close of day
> A grief more keen than my old grief is set.
> I weep for those who have not found Love yet.
>
> There is a fine altruism about this sentiment that one cannot but respect; yet I should hate to live with a person who felt that way. One would not venture on any little kindness for fear of opening a new floodgate of tears.
>
> I should feel like urging another point of view. It is true that you are happy, happier than you deserve. But don't get morbid about it; take it cheerfully. It's not your fault. It seems selfish, you say, to enjoy your blessings when there aren't enough to go round among all your fellow beings. Why, my dear fellow, that's the only way to make them go round. What if, theoretically, it is a little selfish? We will readily pardon that for the sake of the satisfaction we get out of seeing you have a good time. We much prefer that you should allow us to sympathize with you in your happiness, rather than that you should inflict upon us too much sympathy for our deprivations.

Mr. Crothers writes always with so much modesty that we suppose he would shrink from hearing this sort of thing described as wisdom; but that is what it is, and that is what he has put into all of his essays. Only he is careful to avoid the preacher's air of authority. What he has to teach he teaches in light, friendly fashion, and though he never drags an anecdote in by the heels, he is lavish enough of the quaint illustration, the funny story, which will serve at once to point his moral and to amuse. If we had more essays like these we would begin to believe that the writing of a good essay is not, after all, a lost art.

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"The Christmas Book," which is to say the volume prepared essentially for the holiday season, is the subject of an interesting paper contributed by Mr. Joseph Shaylor to the "Cornhill" for December. He speaks, among other things, of the famous "annuals" to which writers like Hood, Macaulay, Southey, Coleridge and Tennyson in his younger days used to contribute. The success of these miscellanies was astonishing. Mr. Shaylor quotes the figures in which Mr. S. C. Hall, writing in an early number of "The Art Journal," summarized the results of the sale of the "annuals" for 1829. The total proceeds were £90,000, thus divided:

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|---|---|---|---|
| Authors and editors... | £6,000 | Silk manufacturers, etc | £500 |
| Painters for pictures, etc. | 3,000 | Advertisements ..... | 2,000 |
| Engravers ..... | 12,000 | Incidental expenses... | 1,500 |
| Copperplate printers.. | 5,000 | Publishers' profits.... | 10,000 |
| Letterpress printers... | 5,000 | Retail booksellers' profits ..... | 30,000 |
| Paper manufacturers. | 6,000 | | |
| Bookbinders ..... | 9,000 | Total ..... | £90,000 |

Modern enterprise could hardly beat that. Of course, on the other hand, the modern public would scarcely take as kindly to a scheme of the sort as did the readers and critics of the earlier Victorian age, according to Mr. Shaylor Continuing, he says:

> These Annuals were contributed to by nearly every popular poet of that period, some writing anonymously. W. M. Praed received 50 guineas for a poem, and from 150 to 200 guineas was often paid to artists for some of the illustrations. "The Athenæum" of the time says of these Annuals: "On the wings of these painted humming birds the fame of the poet and the painter was wafted faster and farther than it could have been through the ordinary channels of publication, and the public will find in their pages a body of more beautiful poetry of the fugitive class than in any other original English publication."
>
> About 1825 there appeared an able and enterprising competitor for the Christmas market, namely, Charles Heath, with his "Keepsake," his "Book of Beauty," edited by Lady Blessington, and his "Pictorial Annual." His masterly engravings in the various Annuals had induced him to attempt work on a larger and more important scale. "The Keepsake" was edited by William Harrison Ainsworth, and was published by Hurst & Chance. In 1828 the volume cost 1,000 guineas to produce, and upward of 12,000 copies were disposed of in a few weeks. That number was more than doubled in subsequent issues, thus showing to what a widespread popularity this class of literature had attained. The issue for 1829 cost, for its literary contents only, the great sum of £2,000, £500 being paid to Sir Walter Scott for two of his most feeble prose sketches. None of the great literary writers of the day could refuse the enormous sums paid for very ordinary productions. And yet the literary portion was subordinate to fine artistic designs by such well known men as Kenny Meadows, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Turner, Stothard, Leslie, Smirk, Stanfield and Flaxman. "The Keepsake" had an interesting career of twenty-eight years, being edited at various times by the Hon. Mrs. Norton, Lady Stuart Wortley, and Lady Blessington. The last number was issued in 1856.

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The persecution of the Jews in Russia to-day, and other political disturbances in that unhappy country, give a certain timely interest to the strangely uneven story told in "Minna, Wife of the Young Rabbi" (Consolidated Retail Booksellers), by Wilhelmina Wittigschlager. The plot is too wildly extravagant to merit consideration, and when the author changes the scene from the ghetto to court circles in Russia she loses all hold on reality and probability. But in her description of the adventures of the half Jewish heroine in a Russian village, in Hamburg, in London and in New-York she shows herself to be on more familiar ground. The life in the Jewish quarters of those cities is laid bare in all its unloveliness with an unsparing yet not unsympathetic hand. Had the author been content to confine her story to this phase of Jewish life without seeking to add a factitious interest by recourse to the methods of cheap melodrama her book would have been as valuable as a whole in its revelations of lower class Jewish conditions as it now is only in parts.

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George Lewis Dickinson's "A Greek View of Life" has just been published in this country by McClure, Phillips & Co. Mr. Dickinson is the author of "Letters from a Chinese Official" and "Religion—A Criticism and a Forecast," issued by the same house. He was born in 1862, and his father was a portrait painter, a contemporary and friend of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Mr. Dickinson went to Charterhouse School, and, after obtaining important scholarships, to King's College, Cambridge, where he was graduated with the first class in the classical tripos, and was made a Fellow. Later he became librarian, and in 1896 was appointed a lecturer of King's, a position which he holds at present. Mr. Dickinson lives in Cambridge, but lectures once a week at the School of Economics in London. He has done considerable editorial writing for "The Independent Review," a monthly paper published at Edinburgh, representing liberal views, of which he was one of the founders. He was in America a few years ago, and gave lectures on the British Constitution at several colleges and universities.

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Among the hardships suffered by Oscar Terry Crosby, the author of "Thibet and Turkestan," while exploring on the plateau of Thibet were the bitter cold and the fact that he could shave only once a week. Wood was scarce, and at times the only fuel available was the straw taken from the packsaddles of dead horses. This quickly flaming material allowed only one heating of water, which was devoted to making the tea, so essential to comfort, and for soaking the hard bread which formed his staple diet. It therefore became necessary for him to shave with tea, which he found served admirably for the purpose. Most travellers would prefer to grow a beard and to drink their tea; but judging from the anti-tea crusade now going on in England, perhaps the external use was the more wholesome.

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Dr. Guido Biagi, the well known Italian scholar, who is now engaged in editing "Romola" from the historical point of view for a new edition in preparation by A. C. McClurg & Co., has recently come across some interesting material for his purpose, as described in a letter, from which the following is an extract:

> The work is more important than I imagined. I have unexpectedly stumbled upon valuable material which throws great light upon Eliot's sources of information. I have found the original cards of all the books studied by George Eliot here in the National Library for "Romola." These books, with their ancient views of Florence, gave to her the first idea of the scenes of the novel. I have reproduced the cards signed by Lewes, studying with her. I can now furnish more than one hundred and twenty illustrations and give documentary evidence of the historical materials utilized by the great novelist for her book.

The work when completed is to be issued in two volumes, uniform with Mrs. McMahan's "Florence in the Poetry of the Brownings" and "With Shelley in Italy."

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Herman Bernstein, the author of "Contrite Hearts," the novel of Russian Jewish life, just published by the A. Wessels Company, has been less well known hitherto as an original writer than as the translator of Anton Chekov's and Maxime Gorky's novels and stories. He was born in Eastern Prussia in 1876, but was taken to Russia as a child, and lived there for nearly twelve years, coming to America in 1893.

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John C. Fitzpatrick, of the Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress, has prepared a valuable calendar of all the manuscripts in the library relating to Benjamin Franklin, including those of the Henry Stevens collection purchased by Congress in 1882, but only transferred to the library in 1904 from the Department of State, which has retained merely the diplomatic documents. The calendar, which is now ready for distribution at 60 cents a copy, comprises 322 pages, and is uniform in size and binding with calendars of the John Paul Jones, James Monroe, Vernon-Wager and Washington manuscripts. It has been planned to include all the letters to or from Franklin in the Stevens collection, the Jefferson, Washington, Robert Morris, John Paul Jones, Shippen and Dumas papers and in the papers of the Continental Congress. The entries in the calendar, besides the names and dates, give brief summaries of the contents of each paper.

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In the December number of "The North American Review" William Dean Howells continues the discourse on "English Characteristics" which he began in the November number. He commends the rule of civility which prevails in England so universally that politeness from class to class seems to be all but unfailing. Apparently, he remarks, the manners of the lower class, where they have been touched by the upper, have been softened and polished to the same consistence and complexion. He seems to think also that English society is less sensitive to moral differences than ours. It appears to him that the English are not so prone to follow fashions as Americans, and he thinks the reason may be because we like better than they to seem of one effect with the rest of our kind. Thus the Englishman strews his convictions and opinions broadcast, while there is a variety of dress there which one rarely sees at home. Those of them who admire force and strength and believe that it is the mission of the Anglo-Saxon to possess the earth at the expense of its weaker peoples nevertheless express a great admiration for the American Republic. He writes:

> An English Radical, who would say of his King no more than that he was a good little man, and most useful in promoting friendship with France, was inclined to blame us because we did not stay by at the time of our Revolution, and help them fight out as Englishmen the fight for English freedom. He had none of the loyalty of sentiment which so mystifies the American, but plenty of the loyalty of reason, and expected a Utopia which should not be of political but of economical cast. But one was always coming upon illustrations of the loyalty of sentiment with which, of course, one could have no quarrel, for their patriotism seldom concerned us, except rather handsomely to include us. The French have ceased to be the hereditary enemy, and the Russians have now taken their place in the popular patriotism. I always talked with the lower classes, when I could, perhaps because I felt myself near them in my unworthy way, and one evening in a grassy lane I made the acquaintance of a friendly man letting his horse browse the wayside turf. He was in the livery stable line, but he had been a soldier many years. Upon this episode he became freely autobiographical, especially concerning his service in India. He volunteered the declaration that he had had enough of war, but he added, thoughtfully, "I should like to go out for a couple of years if there was any trouble with Russia."

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More calendars, this time a collection of some six or seven from Fox, Duffield & Co. The first we take up is a sheaf of illustrations by Walter Appleton Clark. This, "The Canterbury Calendar," is charming both in design and in color. "Babes in Toyland" is of the same size, but the illustrations are in a lighter and gayer vein. 'A Wagner Calendar," designed by Marion C. Bridgman, in pure black and white, is not very attractive. The artist has had better luck with the stencil patterns used in "A St. Francis Calendar." Most ambitious of all is the "Thomas Mitchell Peirce Calendar," composed of large reproductions in color, mounted on sheets of tinted paper, from drawings of modern young men and women, by one of the popular illustrators of the day.

## OBITUARY.

### EDWARD ATKINSON.

Boston, Dec. 11.—Edward Atkinson, the well known social and political economist of this city, died suddenly to-day after an attack of acute indigestion, affecting the heart. He was seventy-eight years old.

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Edward Atkinson, economist and author, was born on February 10, 1827, at Brookline, Mass. He was descended from a long line of New-England ancestry. His education was secured in private schools and by his own efforts, his life, after the age of fifteen, being devoted to what he termed "work in a practical way." But his mental attainments resulted in the degree of Ph. D. from Dartmouth College, and that of LL. D. from the University of South Carolina.

In 1842 he entered the commission house of Read & Chadwick, in Boston, where in five years he worked up from a boy-of-all-work to the post of clerk, and later became treasurer of various manufacturing corporations. After an extended experience in various branches of cotton manufacture he became interested in mutual insurance for manufacturers, and in 1878 was made president of the Boston Manufacturers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company, which he aided in establishing. He devoted much energy to the study of the prevention of loss by fire and the reduction of the cost of insuring, making an especial study of construction, occupation and apparatus, the special hazards of textile factories, paper mills, cordage factories and machine shops, and the safeguards to make them better risks.

Mr. Atkinson made an address on cotton manufacturing in Atlanta, which led to the Atlanta Cotton Exposition in 1881, and to the introduction of cotton manufacturing in the South. He regarded his invention of the "Aladdin Oven," a device for cheapening and simplifying cooking, as his chief life work, and the use designed to do most to carry down his name as a benefactor of the race. He gave the invention to the public freely, without patenting it. By it two pints of kerosene, it is claimed, will do the work in cooking of 120 pounds of coal, as used in an ordinary range, the work being done in a better and more wholesome manner. But the efforts to push it were never especially successful.

As a pamphleteer Mr. Atkinson was prolific, and he contributed at various times to many magazines and newspapers. He came into much notoriety as an opponent of the acquisition of the Philippine Islands, and published a newspaper called "The Anti-Imperialist," for a time. He sent out circulars which were denounced as seditious by members of the Cabinet in 1899, and were shut out of the mails. He prepared a series of tables of national expenditures in the last Presidential campaign, which were sharply assailed by Secretary Shaw and other administration supporters. Many of his publications and speeches were in support of free trade and honest money.

He was appointed by President Cleveland, in 1887, to report on bimetallism in Europe, on which he published an extended report. His other works included discussions of economic subjects, banking, railways, cotton manufactures, the tariff, fire prevention and the nutritive value of foods. He wrote for "The Atlantic Monthly," "The International Review," "Harper's Magazine," "The Century Magazine," "The Forum," "The Fortnightly Review," "The Arena," "The North American Review" and "The Popular Science Monthly." Among his published works are "The Distribution of Products," "The Industrial Progress of the Nation," "The Science of Nutrition," "The Margin of Profit," "Taxation and Work," "The Prevention of Loss by Fire."

In 1885 Mr. Atkinson was married to Miss Mary C. Heath. He was one of the founders and a director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the founders of the New-England Emigrant Aid Society, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a member and corresponding secretary of the American Statistical Association, a member of the Cobden Club of England and honorary member of the Harvard Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa and a member of the Boston Unitarian Club. His home was in the Brookline suburb of Boston, and is called Heath Hill, where his widow and seven children survive him.

### DR. MORTON GRINNELL

Dr. Morton Grinnell died on Sunday at his home, Denver Brook Farm, Milford, Conn., in his fifty-first year. He was born in this city, being the son of G. B. Grinnell, who was a merchant and banker. Dr. Grinnell was graduated from Yale with the class of 1875, and four years later from the Bellevue Hospital Medical School. After a year's study in Europe, he settled in this city to practise. On his retirement fifteen years ago he moved to Milford. There he wrote two books on nature subjects. Dr. Grinnell married Miss Jennie Catherwood, of San Francisco. He travelled extensively through Egypt, India and Japan. He leaves a wife.

### THOMAS J. KENNA.

Ex-Police Justice Thomas J. Kenna, who at one time was a power in Democratic politics in Kings County, died at his home, No. 240 Madison-st., Brooklyn, on Sunday night. He was born in Manhattan in 1843, but had lived in Brooklyn since he was seven years old. When he went into politics he was a foreman along the docks. He was elected alderman in 1874. He studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1881. He served as a police justice for nearly twelve years, until he was elected Register, in 1891. Mr. Kenna leaves a wife, one daughter and a sister. The funeral will be held from his home to-morrow afternoon.

### MRS. JANE PERCY DUNCAN.

Mrs. Jane Percy Duncan, wife of W. Butler Duncan, the yachtsman, died at her home, No. 1 5th-ave., yesterday. Mrs. Duncan was Jane Percy Sargent, the daughter of the late George W. Sargent, of Philadelphia and Natchez, Miss. The funeral will be held at Grace Church, 10th-st. and Broadway, on Thursday morning at 9:45 o'clock.

### THOMAS ROBINS.

Thomas Robins died at his home, No. 950 Madison-ave., from pneumonia, early yesterday, after a short illness. He was born in Philadelphia in 1836, and came to this city as a young man. His father, also named Thomas, was once the president of the Philadelphia National Bank.

Mr. Robins became a member of the firm of Robins & Powell, bankers and brokers, of Wall-st. About 1880 he retired from business, and had lived at Morristown, N. J., most of the time since then. He leaves a wife and three children—Mrs. W. Allston Flagg, Thomas Robins and W. Powell Robins.

The funeral will be held at 10:30 o'clock to-morrow morning, at the Church of the Holy Communion. The Rev. Dr. Mottet and the Rev. Mr. Barbour, will officiate. He will be buried in Trinity Cemetery.

### PROFESSOR GEORGE W. MILTENBERGER.

Baltimore, Dec. 11.—Professor George W. Miltenberger, one of the oldest and most widely known physicians in this State, died of old age at his home in this city to-day. He was in his eighty-seventh year. Professor Miltenberger was graduated from the University of Maryland in the class of '40, many of the members of which became eminent.

Immediately after being graduated he was made demonstrator of anatomy, and thereafter filled various professorships in the university, notably that of obstetrics, which chair he held for thirty-two years. Upon his retirement in 1890 he was made professor emeritus and honorary president of the faculty.

Professor Miltenberger was identified prominently with the work of the medical societies of the city and State, and was consulting physician to the Johns Hopkins and the Baltimore Eye, Ear and Throat Charity hospitals. He had no children.

### GABRIEL M. TOOKER.

Gabriel Mead Tooker died at Monte Carlo on Monday, December 11. He was the Paris representative of the New-York banking firm of John Munroe & Co., with offices at No. 30 Pine-st. He was graduated at Columbia University in 1859.

### REAR ADMIRAL LILLIE DEAD.

Rear Admiral Abraham Bruyn Hasbrouck Lillie, U. S. N., died at his home, No. 138 East 45th-st., yesterday. He was born in this city, the son of the Rev. John Lillie, D. D. Having been graduated from the Naval Academy, he was assigned to the North Atlantic station, where he served until 1867. On March 3, 1903, he was retired, with the rank of rear admiral.

At the time of the Paris Exposition in 1878 he was in charge of the Constellation. The following year he became commander of the Nepsic, which was assigned to the European station. For two years he was in charge of the receiving ship Vermont. In September, 1895, he was promoted to commander, and five years later he was promoted to Captain.

## WOMEN MOB LAWYER.

### Inquest Over Nurse Who Died While with Him.

Schenectady, N. Y., Dec. 11.—There was nearly a riot at the inquest held this afternoon on the death of Louise Westwood, the hospital nurse who committed suicide by taking prussic acid last Tuesday evening. She died thus while dining with George H. Smith, a well-known lawyer of this city, at a Wall-st. restaurant. The following evening Smith was married at Cohoes, the bride being Miss Nellie Kernaghan, of the latter city. As a result of the notoriety Mrs. Smith is dangerously ill at her home.

Coroner Dettbarn started to hold the inquest in the Common Council chambers in the City Hall, but the hundreds of curious women who surrounded the building led that official to adjourn to the county court rooms. The mob surged after him.

At the courthouse the crowd of women caught sight of Smith, and there was a rush for him. It was with difficulty that he was taken into the courtroom without injury, and the Sheriff and his deputies had hard work in keeping back the crowd. Smith will be guarded closely until the inquest is completed.

### FIRE UNDERWRITERS ACCUSED.

#### Montreal Council Takes Steps to Prosecute the Association.

Montreal, Dec. 11.—At its meeting this afternoon the City Council instructed the City Attorney to immediately begin proceedings against the Fire Underwriters' Association under the section of the criminal code dealing with combinations in restraint of trade. The insurance men, it is alleged, have a combination by which exorbitant insurance rates are fixed.

### WILL OF ROBERT L. HARGOUS.

The will of Robert L. Hargous has been filed for probate in the surrogate's office. Mr. Hargous died in Quebec on November 25. The testator leaves to his brother-in-law George B. De Forest, $10,000, and to his brother-in-law William Appleton, $5,000. To Duncan, Robert and Gerard Elliott, the children of his sister, now Mrs. Sallie H. Kane, he leaves the interest in the real estate owned by him adjoining the Harlem River from 121st-st. to 125d-st. The residue of his estate goes to his three sisters, Nina H. Appleton, Anita H. De Forest and Sallie H. Kane


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