OUR LITERARY BUDGET.

THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION

What Would Have Been the Consequence if Such and Such an Event Had Not Occurred—Things Hang on Trifles.

It is, or once was, a favorite plan of examiners to ask, "What would have been the consequences if such-and-such an event had not occurred?" Scope was thus given to the historical imagination and a man could show both knowledge and fancy. In our own lives we know how much hangs on trifles. You take one side of a street, and miss a fortune or an affection, which might have been yours had you taken the other side. You neglect to answer a letter, you pick up an old lady who has been run over by a cab—nay, you look up and see your Fate, instead of looking down and missing her—and all your life is altered. So it is, too, in the history of nations. Suppose the King had not halted at Varennes; suppose James' nose had not bled at Salisbury; suppose somebody, whose name I forget, had done as he proposed to do at Queen Anne's death; suppose the Medes had won at Marathon or the Saracens at Tours, or Hasdrubal at the Metaurus; suppose that Napoleon had not suffered from indigestion at Waterloo, or that Grouchy had not misinterpreted his orders—and where is history? Nay, take a case on which we cannot dwell, and which suggests reflections which every one can make for himself. Suppose a certain Roman governor had been an honest man!

There is a kind of fanciful pleasure in answering these problems; but, on the whole, would the turn of a straw, which seemed to be so momentous, have made much difference? We know how our character shapes our lives, and we doubt whether accident is so potent, after all. Say you meet the wrong Fate, and marry unhappily. Would you have been luckier with another Fate? Say you miss a fortune by a slight neglect. Has not your whole career been a series of slight neglects? You take up a tract and are converted, or you have a vision like Colonel Gardiner or Pascal. I am certain that Colonel Gardiner's conversion had long been ripening; one day or another the vision would have come, whether he was waiting for that particular lady or another. If not that tract some other tract would have produced its results; you were maturing for that psychological alteration. If we apply this idea to national instead of individual life, it may appear that the accidents were not so very momentous. Say that the French King had reached the frontier. Tant mieux pour lui, but the Revolution would have gone on. Say that Grouchy had "come up," and that Napoleon had been well. We and the united continent were not so near the end of our resources as France was; we should still have beaten the Corsican on another field. Besides, Grouchy's blunder was not an accident. It was part of a habit of missing chances which had sprung up in the French army ever since the defeats in the Peninsula, themselves consequent on Napoleon's undertaking too much, even for him.

Say the Persians had won at Marathon Could they have held Greece, as they held the Ionians, so that Greek civilization would have expired? In all probability that was quite impossible for Persia. For once, in spite of oligarchs and jealousies, Hellas would have been united in resistance; she might even have gained by the struggle. Say that Carthage had supported Hanibal, and had allied herself with Philip of Macedon. They could not have held Italy; they could not have reduced Rome to a village and imposed a new civilization on the world. Had Edward II. been Edward I., Bannockburn would have been lost; but you could no more subdue Scotland than we can hold Afghanistan. If Charles had marched on London from Derby, if the Welsh squires had come in, and if the English Jacobites had been true hearted, still, in a very few years James and his priests would have been sent packing again. History would have gained a romantic page, but England would be much what she is at present. The king would not have had a better chance than Louis XVIII. and Charles X.; he would have squandered his opportunities as readily. Had the Armada landed her men England would have suffered, but few of the invaders would have seen Spain again. Had Charles Martel been defeated, the Saracens, in the long run, would have met the fate of their countrymen in Spain. The movement of the world may be deferred, but not actually diverted. The great stress of national character and circumstance is stronger than any accident of war.—Andrew Lang in the Illustrated News of the World.

The Malady of Style in French Literature.

How many writers are there in France who have carried literary mandarism so far that they care for nothing except the enchantments of style? How many artists of admirable talent we might mention who do not deign to think what results their writings may have or what germs of corruption their stories may disseminate, their pretension being to remain indifferent to the vile crowd, indifferent to their epoch and its events, heedless of purity, of honesty and of justice, uncompromising artists who write for their own pleasure—when they are not simply sacrilegious priests of the Muses who prostitute brilliant gifts to base ends. But, whether sincere or insincere, the writer may plead, if he design to plead, the doctrine of l'Art pour l'Art, and quote Flaubert and Buffon. "Art," says Flaubert, "having its reason in itself, ought not to be considered as a means." "All the intellectual beauties," says Buffon, "that are found in a fine style, all the relations of which it is composed are so many truths as useful and perhaps more precious to the public mind than those which form the matter of the subject."

The artist, according to Flaubert, must not write a single line with a view to the demonstration of a truth, or intervene in a narrative where he can have no business, "inasmuch as the beautiful and the useful have no contact with one another," and inasmuch as "a novelist ought to abstain from expressing his opinion on the things of this world." As for the malady of style, the refinements of what has lately been called wth a certain affection l'ecriture, we have only to read the correspondence of Flaubert in order to comprehend the intensity of the tortures which its victims undergo. To judge from these letters, full of cries of pain and despair, we might imagine le mal d'ecrire to be one of the dolorous circles forgotten by Dante in his "Inferno," and discovered by the author of "Madame Bovary" in the course of the years he passed struggling with phrases, wrestling with perfection and writhing month after month in the tortures of voluntary infecundity. Certainly the career and artistic aspirations of men like Flaubert and the Goncourts are noble and fascinating: but the development of their dogmas the continued refinement of their theories can only end, as we have already seen, in making literature into a sort of mandarism, unintelligible to all except the initiated, utterly inaccessible even to people of average culture, and mere gibberish to humanity in general.—Theodore Child, in Harper's Magazine for September.

Authors as Dogmatists.

A notion is undoubtedly abroad that the creative artist to-day talks over much of his own affairs. He would do better, it begins to be thought, to mind more closely his proper work, and leave the codification of the laws of artistic creation, and the framing of subtle commentaries thereon, to workmen of another sort. Of course, the dogmatizing artist, when his art is letters and of the English branch, can be confronted with Shakespeare—always our first witness in literary controversies. Certainly Shakespeare did not waste time discoursing in reviews, or chatting through interviews, on the peculiarities of his way of writing plays, and the superiority of his over the ways of other men. But, then, who knows that this in Shakespeare was wholly moral strength, and that, had he lived under the temptation of editorial checks in three figures for a few pages over a great name, even he would have preserved his admirable reserve on questions of "shop"? Without this temptation, a number of his "esteemed contemporaries," very considerable creators, too, did not scruple to publish strict theories by all the means open to them, and to make the play a sort of tract for popularizing the dogma.

Really the difference in question is not of times, but of individuals. The creative faculty works effectually only in alliance with the critical. Every artist is endowed somewhat with both, and none but must have his theories, his set of principles. Whether his theories, his set of principles, shall become a dogma with him, a thing of itself to proclaim and fight for, will depend on the relative strength of the two faculties in each individual. If the predominant faculty be the creative, the critical serving it as a humble and scarcely noticed guide, you shall have few or no words from the artist as to method. If, on the other hand, the critical be the predominant one, method will acquire in the artist's esteem a corresponding predominance.

Sometimes, where the intellectual force is pretty evenly apportioned between the two faculties, they set up a sort of rotation of the sovereignty, each holding supremacy by turns. It is by the grace of some such accommodation as this that we have instances of artists who hold and urge theories to the point of mania, and yet achieve creation of the very highest order. Fielding, for example, turned to writing novels under the supremacy, not of the creative, but of the critical faculty, intending at first nothing but criticism on Richardson. Under the returning sway of the other faculty, the creative, this criticism took the form of fable, and Fielding set out to make in "Joseph Andrews" a simple burlesque of "Pamela." But the creative faculty coming, with the progress of the work, into almost exclusive dominion, criticism of Richardson was lost sight of, and "Joseph Andrews" became, instead of a joke and a gibe, an independent and original creation. But it still bears traces, and others of Fielding's novels bear traces, of the conflict of the two faculties in him. He obtruded discourses on method that, while interesting, are strictly a blemish in artistic portrayals.

A yet more striking example is Wordsworth. Under the full supremacy of the creative faculty, he produced poetry of such excellence that he is ranked among the first five or six poets of modern times. But this is scarcely a fourth of the whole body of his production; and the rest is so tainted by theory run mad as to be almost valueless, and in parts positively ludicrous. With such instances as these to keep us in heart, we need not grow hopeless before any present disposition of the creative artist to aid his notions. It is clear that he may be very much of a dogmatist, and still remain capable of supreme creation; though his being a dogmatist must, as far as it goes, be always a hindrance to him.—Scribner's Magazine for September.

A School of Fiction.

If the angel that disturbed Abou Ben Adham's midnight slumbers should appear to the editor of Authur's Home Magazine, and demand his record, the latter might say with truth, "Write me as one who loves his fellow subscribers." In proof, he could point to the "School of Fiction" he has established in the periodical he edits, to which writers may send their articles and receive criticism and advice gratis.

The aim of the editor of Arthur's Home Magazine, it is to be supposed, is only to aid literary aspirants by criticism, not to graduate them as fiction-writers. The art of fiction-making is even less communicable than that of the other branches of literature. One might be taught to write a respectable' if uninspired, essay, or, following given laws of meter and rhythm, might learn how to construct verse of a certain sort; but the practice of fiction is more dificult. There is an imperative necessity for the gift of imagination and the ability to tell a story. Even if the tale be a study of character, it must have imagination behind it, or it will seem but a humdrum recital of facts. Some writers appear to think that system and industry are the geat prerequisites in literature—but when the ant has heaped up grain upon grain of sand, the result is, after all, only an ant hill, not a palace, or a "lordly pleasure house." Such reasoners recall the schoolmaster who, when Charles Lamb remarked that his own essays were "far from methodical," kindly offered to instruct the author in the rules by which the young gentlemen of his seminary were taught to compose English themes.

As for the wisdom of counselors, whether literary or otherwise, the experience of one man is of little value to another. No two poeple ever encountered exactly the same difficulty; so each must live his own life, and wring out of existence for himself the solution of the problem. The utility of a school of fiction is to be doubted. It might possibly help some of the little writers that swarm like black betles upon the face of the earth; but those who possess nature's passport to greatness have a way of helping themselves. The latter do not stand hesitating upon the brink of literature, asking the advice of this or that passer by, but plunges in at all hazards. The difficulty would be to hold them back. A man or woman who is to be the great expositor of any art is vowed to it from birth, revealing the vocation from the first stammering attempt at speech.

There have been men of great gifts born fortunately, amid surroundings that fostered and stimulated intellectual growth; yet how often has genius shown like a fallen star, in some mean hovel or peasant's hut. As a general rule no "huge feather-beds of promotion" have been outspread for those who have helped to make the arts a living force in human existence. Frequently the influences surrounding them have all been adverse. Not only have they had to endure want of sympathy from those nearest them, but even the derision of that vulgar ignorance which tries to belittle what it cannot understand. To such obtuse minds the painter and poet are merely idle, worthless visionaries. Corot's relatives always remain blind to the charm of his pictures, and to the very last his father could not believe in the artist's fame—his dull eyes being unable to discern anything that justified it. The man of genius himself has often been neglected until his old age, or it sometimes happens that the meed of honor is not granted him until after he is dead; but the work of genius inevitably finds and maintains its own place.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Notes.

Ledbury, where Mrs. Browning spent some of her early years, is about to have a monument to her memory.

Thomas Whittaker will issue in September "Imogen; or, Only Eighteen," by Mrs. Molesworth, and "The Cross Roads; or, a Choice in Life," by Charlotte M. Yonge.

The novel by Miss Mary Angela Dickens, granddaughter of Charles Dickens, entitled "Cross Currents," is ready for publication in Appletons' Town and Country Library.

The Behring Sea Commissioners will be supplied with the Century Dictionary by the State Department, and it will be the standard in their deliberations. The Century is now the authority at Chautauqua.

Thomas Whittaker, New York, announces "Virginia Dare; a Romance of the Sixteenth Century," by E. A. B. S., and "At the End of the Rainbow," by Julia A. Sabine, a novel, with scenes laid in Colorado.

Miss Josephine Pollard, a well-known writer on religious topics and a favorite author with children, died at her home, 409 west Eighteenth street, New York, August 16th, after a long illness. Among the best known of Miss Pollard's works are "Bible Stories for Children," "The Old Testament in Words of One Syllable," "The New Testament in Words of One Syllable," and the Life of Christ for Young People." She also wrote hymns, and one of her best was called "Outside the Gate."

The Open Court is about to publish a series of articles by Mr. Charles S. Pierce, to be entitled "The Critic of Arguments." The series will be devoted to a critical and historical discussion of the methods of reasoning.

Henrik Ibsen is at work on a new play which is said to contain characters taken from personal friends. The first act is finished and has been printed at Copenhagen. The play is a comedy with scenes laid in Christiania.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. promise a volume of late verse from Whittier, "At Sundown," with illustrations by Garrett; and "Songs of Sunrise Lands," by Clinton Scollard, suggestions of his travels in Egypt, Syria and Greece.

The mental state of Guy de Maupassant is now considered absolutely hopeless. His yacht has been sold and his furniture will soon pass under the hammer. M. Zola thinks that dwelling too much on a study of a monomaniac affected his mind by sympathy; others say that there is insanity in his family.

A new novel by Alphonse Daudet will soon be published called "Soutien de Famille," the story of the god and the bad son of a widow. After finishing this he intends to translate into French from the Provencal of a farmer's boy named Baptiste Bonnet a rustic novel called "Memories d'un Valet de Ferme."

The complete edition of the late Philip Bourke Marston's works, edited by Louise Chandler Moulton, will soon appear from the press of Roberts Brothers. It will contain some verses not before published in volume form, and an appendix—much interesting criticism on Marston's work made by some of the most distinguished men of letters of our time.

Mr. Paul Leicester Ford has for the first time collected in one handy volume, entitled "Writings of Christopher Columbus," those letters, etc., of the voyager, which describe his experiences in the discovery and occupation of the New World. The book will be published immediately by Messrs. Charles L. Webster & Co., in their "Fiction, Fact and Fancy Series."

A new novel by Marion Crawford, under the title of "Children of the King," will shortly be published by the Macmillin's uniform with their new dollar edition of his novels. The same firm announces also a new number of their Dollar Novel series by an American resident in Rome. "Under Pressure," by the Marchesa Theodoli, is a graphic picture of the Roman society of to-day.

Lord Tennyson's birthplace, Somersby House, is to be sold by auction on Thursday, the 18th instant. It is a beautiful property with lovely grounds, and then there are its associations, for it was there that as a child the Laureate made unconsciously his first line of poetry, as he ran down the garden, with his long curls flying in the breeze, and called out:"I hear the voice that's speaking in the wind."

"Beulah," the author of "Tatters," was born in Mexico, of Spanish and American parentage. Her mother died when Beulah was almost an infant, and her father left his home for the goldfields of Arizona, taking his daughter with him, where, until her tenth year, her home was a miner's camp. Her father died when Beulah was twelve years of age, and she was then taken in charge by her mother's friends in Boston.

A. C. McClurg & Co. have in press "France in the Nineteenth Century: 1830-1890," by Elizabeth Wormly Latimer; "A History of Modern Philosophy (from the Renaissance to the Present)," by B. C. Burt; "Sound and Music," by Professorts John A. Zahm, profusely illustrated; "References for Literary Workers," by Professor Henry Matson; and "A Short History of English Literature for Young People," by Elizabeth S. Kirkland.

Harper & Brothers' list of new books includes "The Danube: From the Black Forest to the Black Sea," written by F. D. Millet, and illustrated by the author and Alfred Parsons; "The Principles of Ethics," by Professor P. Browne; "A Family Canoe Trip," by Florence Watters Snedeker, illustrated; "The Woodman," by Jules de Glouvet (M. Guernay de Beaurepaire, Procureur-General and prosecutor of the Alarchists), translated by Mrs. John Simpson (nee Senior); and a new edition of "The Maid of Killeena," by William Black.

Daudet says that he does not think anything of literature as a profession "After all," he declares, "there is nothing so weary as brain work, and it is practically impossible to keep up the sort of strain undergone by every literary mn for many years without breaking down." His advice to young people who come to consult him on the question of taking up a literary career always is: "Stick to your profession, and if you have it in you to write anything really good, you will find time to do it."

Henry Holt & Co. have in press the second volume of Ten Brink's "Earl English Literature"; "German Literature in its Chief Epochs," by Professor Kuno Francke of Harvard; a translation of Professor R. Falkenberg's "History of Modern Philosophy," from Nicholas of Cusa to the present time; "Hume," by Professor Aikens of Trinity, N. C.; "Hegel," by Profesor Royce of Harvard; a 'Dictionary of Botanical Terms," popular as well as scientific, by A. A. Crozier; and "Physics," by Professor George F. Baker of the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Whittier has several homes, and divides his time between them. He always votes in Amesbury, and spends much of the time in his house there—now occupied by Judge Cate and family—where his room and study are always kept ready for him. Another of the poet's homes is Oak Knoll, at Denver, taken care of by an elderly maiden niece and her companion. The home of Dr. Cartland, on High street, Newburyport, is also open to Mr. Whittier at all times and seasons, and the brotherly regard existing between these two old men must be beautiful to witness.

M. Zola's next novel is to have a religious theme. He proposes to deal with those who go on pilgrimages with the hope of spiritual or temporal benefit; and he is about to visit Lourdes to study his subject. It is understood that he intends to treat the great modern pilgrimage with the reverence due to earnest devotional conviction, although some of the surroundings will meet with his strong disapproval. It is asserted that he takes the side that miracles undoubtedly occur at the famous grotto, but he draws distinctions between certain maladies. Another novel which M. Zola has in contemplation will turn upon the decrease of population in France.

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AN ELEPHANT WITH A JAG.

He Empties a Jug of Whisky and the Wild Carouse Begins.

Frankfort, Ind., Sept. 5.—While the Ringling Brothers' circus was exhibiting here yesterday, Babe, one of the big elephants in the menagerie, was taken with cramps. Charlie Malloy, the boss animal man, sent for a gallon of whisky and, according to the instructions of Dr. Alexander, the veterinary surgeon of the show, told Ryan, the elephant keeper, to give Babe a tablespoonful of peppermint in a pint of the whisky every half hour.

Ryan did as he was told, but carelessly left the jug, containing nearly a gallon of the liquor, on the ground within reach of the animal while he went elsewhere.

On his return a few minutes later he was horrified to find the cork to the jug gone and the jug empty. During his absence the elephant had evidently pulled the cork out and drank the whisky. Such is the story and the conjecture.

Ryan, fearing that he would be discharged for his carelessness, would not report the matter at once, but took the jug and hurried away to the nearest saloon to have it refilled, hoping in this way to cover his mistake. In the meantime the whisky was getting in its work and Babe began to develop some of the symptoms of an elaphantine drunk.

His loud trumpeting attracted the attention of the other animal keepers, who, however, were unable to understand the cause of the elephants queer antics. The huge brute rocked from side to side, swung his trunk, and rolled his eyes as if in a very paroxyism of delight, at the same time giving vent to a series of noises such as the oldest elephant keepers had never heard before.

The unusual actions of the elephant had by this time caused a crowd of thirty or forty of the employees to gather around it.

James Dillon took an elephant hook, and by prodding tried to subdue the animal. His foolhardiness, however, nearly cost him his life, for the elephant became terribly enraged.

Quicker than a flash he had his trunk wound about Dillon, and, raising him above his head, held him there for fully a minute. The bystanders were horror stricken, expecting every moment to see Dillon dashed to the ground and trampled upon.

Waving him in the air, as a child would wave a penny flag, the powerful animal threw him fully twenty feet through the air against the side of the tent. Had Dillon been thrown a foot further to the right he would have struck against a pole and undoubtedly been instantly killed, but as it was the yielding canvas greatly lessened the force of the shock, and thus saved his life.

After hurlig Dillon through the air the elephant gave one mighty wrench, broke his chains and began a staggering rampage through the menagerie. The other elephants were thrown into a panic, and it required all the skill and presence of mind of their attendants to keep them under control.

The cage animals also became frantic, and the lions and the tigers made terrific attempts to break their cages. Had the audience in the main tent known what was going on, a panic would have ensued.

Barbe reeled over to the large tank of the hippopotamus, and was pounding against the side of it with his trunk.

In the meantime several hundred feet of rope had been secured and, tying a slipknot in one end of it, John Sneller, the boss canvas man, slipped the noose over one of Babe's hind feet and in another instant had slipped it over her leg.

By a number of quick and skillfull movements the big beast was entangled within many coils of the rope, and thus secured to strong stakes.

Up to this time every one had supposed that the elephant had been seized with a sudden vicious inclination, but at this juncture, Ryan, who had refilled the jug, quietly slid under the canvas and deposited it on the ground.

When he heard what had happened during his absence he became greatly agitated, and confessed his carelessness. The elephant was kept bound about two hours, at the end of which time he was released, and his cramps and drunk were both over.

A Sacred Urn.

A commercial tourist traveling in the interest of a fancy crockery and glassware house arrived at the Palmer House recently with his large trunks filled with samples, which he arranged upon the tables in his room. After completing this work he took from his hand satchel a large and handsome urn, which he placed on his dressing case. It was a peculiar looking article, resembling the designs of ancient times. He looked at it intently for a few moments, frowned and turned away, sighing audibly. He went about his samples with an air of melancholy, and every time his eyes rested on the mysterious urn he sighed. Dropping into a large chair he buried his face in his hands and was silent for some minutes.

At last he was aroused from his reverie by the appearance of one of his oldest customers and friends. His face brightened and the two entered into a brisk conversation. They had talked upon all subjects, when suddenly the Chicago man saw the urn on the dressing case and exclaimed: "Why, old man, what a peculiar design. What price have you on that?" The knight of the gripsack frowned as he replied: "That is not for sale. That is one of my personal effects." The Chicago glass man proceeded to examine it. "Mighty pretty thing. Oh, there are ashes in here. I daresay you use it in your smoking set." The young man could not avoid an explanation. "You see," he said, with some feeling, "my wife requested before she died that her body be cremated and that I carry her ashes with me in my travels. I complied with her request and those are the ashes of my wife." The Chicago man suddenly thought of a previous engagement and left the room unceremoniously.—Chicago Herald.

The Spread of Cholera.

Professor Pettenkofer, of Munich, is the great cholera authority among medical men, and his theories as to the propagation of cholera by water are generally accepted by the profession. The observations of Dr. Snow, Dr. Frankland and Mr. Simon in certain epidemics of cholera in London have conclusively connected outbreaks of the disease in various districts with the use of drinking water contaminated with the discharges from cholera patients. All investigations appear clearly to show that the prime factor, and that without which no other conditions can take effect, is the introduction into the locality of the specific infecting matter, this being accomplished in general by the arrival of infected persons.

That cholera might be carried by the agency of the winds from one country to another is held as a possibility, though there is no satisfactory evidence on this point. The general theory accepted is that the germs get into the water and thus are taken into the system. Pettenkofer holds that the disease has been generally found to prevail more extensively and with greater violence in low lying districts than in elevated situations. He also maintains that the character of the soil has a close relation to the spread of the disease, and that shallow, porous soils afford special facilities for the reception and distribution of the cholera germs through the ground water of the locality.—Harper's Weekly.

It Is a Success.

Flash light telegraphy is pronounced a great success in Paris. From the top of the Eiffel tower the army engineers find that they can communicate with all the forts around the city—a great advantage in the event of war. The only difficult point is Vincennes, where the thick atmosphere prevents the communications from being seen distinctly.

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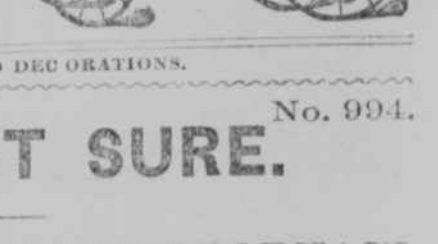

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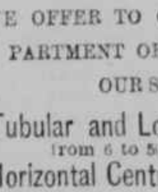

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