

By B. G. Lathrop.

EVEN on this premature date books upon the Transvaal situation are beginning to flood the market. The Anglo-Boer contest is being considered and picked up from all possible points. There is the resume military, the discussion political and the affair social. One writer takes the side of the Boer and the next espouses the cause of the Briton, each seemingly with the best of arguments pro and con. It is apparently a difficult subject for the authors to discuss without allowing their own personal opinions to enter into the controversy. Not one seems inclined to the testimony upon which he is writing, permitting the reader to deduce his own conclusions. Still, to go into all the minutia of details connected with the political questions involved in the long struggle between the Boers and England is to present thoroughly the mass of evidence for and against either cause; would, besides the task involved in such a compilation, be of little avail to the general reader. The main issue is in a vain attempt to follow some evidence relating to the question of "who hit who" and "who struck first" in some unimportant encounter between the burgher and English residents of the Transvaal. The author of the book has made this one mistake—he endeavors to discuss in a portion of his work the question of who is in the right and who is in the wrong. The reader takes up a book to help him in the consideration of some political question he wishes to hear the best evidence from both sides and then form his own opinion—not to listen to a rehearsal on one side alone and be obliged to take the author's opinion for a conclusion. It is hardly as strong as that in this case, for the author does present some British arguments, but not at any length, and he omits mention of the main points claimed by the pro-British to be most convincing. In the space taken up with the discussion of rights it would have been impossible for Mr. Stickney to go into a more detailed account of arguments pro and con than is touching upon the matter at all. The book is filled with interesting material aside from the question of rights.

The work is of great value as a treatise on the military problem in general as well as the Transvaal affair in particular. The first part was written prior to January 4, 1900, and is a discussion of the military situation under the Boer hegemony and transportation, the field of operations, the contending forces. The author draws a comparison between the civil war and the present crisis, greatly to the disadvantage of the English tacticians and the British War Office. He holds that with the exception of improved arms and the use of dynamite the fundamental features of a campaign are the same now as then, and presents from good authorities "incidents in the civil war illustrative of the wonderful work performed by the engineering corps in the manner of railway construction and the perfection in the commissary and quartermaster departments. He sums up the situation in the Transvaal as follows:

1. The impossibility of handling the problem of transportation and supply for any large army in South Africa by any means other than by railway.
2. The extreme ease of the process of destruction, with the extreme difficulty of the process of construction of railways, necessitating in the present South African field of operations.
3. The absence of preparation on the part of the British army for the handling of the present problem of transportation and supply.
4. The fact that the reason for that absence of preparation is to be found in the immense and dense ignorance and incompetence of the British War Office.

Mr. Stickney does not spare the British War Office. He explains its "ignorance" and "incompetence" in the following: "What is the reason for the ignorance and the incompetence of the British War Office?"

"The answer to that question is somewhat complex. It is to be found in a number of factors taken in combination. It is an old story. At its foundation lies the principal fact of the incapacity of hereditary kings and hereditary classes to do the severe, steady, hard work which is absolutely essential to the proper handling of affairs of state in general and of army officers in particular. To that fact is to be added the further one that efficient army administration is an absolute impossibility when it rests in the hands of an ever-shifting group of ignorant laymen, selected at uncertain times, for uncertain periods, from a Legislature whose time and labor must always be given in the main to the management of the majority in the House of Commons. These last are the conditions which exist under what is termed 'parliamentary government.'"

The author further points out the entire lack of preparation upon the part of the British and "that Great Britain to-day is practically destitute of men of experience for service in the quartermaster and commissary departments for any of the troops which may now be raised for service in South Africa." His figures upon this point are interesting.

"The only force in the entire British army at present in the field for the purpose of transportation and supply consists of the Royal Engineers, the Departmental Corps and the Army Service Corps. The figures of those different branches of the service, according to the latest reports, are as follows:

Branch of Service	Rank and File	Noncommissioned Officers	Commissioned Officers
Royal Engineers	601	1,212	5,524
Departmental Corps	216	1,458	2,106
Army Service Corps	245	751	2,897

"But here we come on another fact of even greater significance.

"Not only is there this total dearth in the British army of the men of experience for the branches of the service just mentioned, but, in addition to that, it is a strictly accurate statement that no officer in the British army has had any practical experience in handling any difficult problem of transportation in opposition to a modern, civilized army."

"The two men who come nearest to meeting the requirements of the situation are Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener." Mr. Stickney then proceeds to show that their experience in handling any difficult question of transportation has been very limited. He further shows that even in the Crimean war and the trouble in India, while "the record of the achievements of British valor has been brilliant, there has been at the same time complete lack of variety in the record of the incompetence and ignorance of the British War Office."

All of which is very interesting when compared with the incidents brought forward relative to the remarkable mobility of the American armies in the Civil War and the manner in which they handled problems of transportation and supply.

From a British point of view Mr. Stickney's book is decidedly a wet blanket and contains dire prophecies of trouble with India and danger from Russia, in addition to his bold attack upon English army methods. The fact that this point is rather overdone in the way of constantly recurring remarks to the effect that: "The first point to be noted in this connection in regard to the British army of to-day is its total lack of experience. Last and not least comes the immense, dense, intense ignorance of the British army, as an army, of the principles and practice of modern and scientific warfare." They have not proceeded to show that this is a matter of common report that the British War Office has been inadequately supplied with maps. This is merely a single point which shows the ignorance and incapacity of the British War Office, and

their ignorance of the fundamental conditions of modern warfare. Their methods are still medieval."

There are innumerable instances of this, until the reader forms a hazy idea that possibly Mr. Stickney has had some experience with the British War Office of an unpleasant nature and is venting a personal spite. He brings plenty of proof forward to show the incompetence which he declares exists, and his evidence is convincing, but his reiteration is tiresome.

The ending of the book is rather dramatic and gives a good idea of the author's partisanship. "The end of the whole matter is—this war of the Boers is a war for good. In the latest map of the Republic that has come to my hand from London, which is stated to have had already a sale of 140,000, there is among the 'explanations' the designation of 'gold fields' by a patch of yellow. Thereupon, upon examining the part of the map which represents the Transvaal, we find it thickly covered with patches of yellow. The Johannesburg gold district there appears only as one of many, and one of the less important."

"Here we have the veritable cause of this war, in behalf of what Mr. Joseph Chamberlain now calls 'British Paramountcy.' A few months ago he called it a war for the civil and religious rights of the 'Hillander' who performed for the truth from Mr. Joseph Chamberlain?"

"GOLD! GOLD! GOLD!"

The book goes to the time of the relief of Kimberley. It is more interesting for

RESULTS FROM THE PENS OF BOOK-WRITERS

And Some Literary Notes Worth Knowing

fell under the ban of the Jacobins Paine was sent to the Luxembourg and sentenced to the guillotine, from which he escaped by a lucky accident. It was while Paine was in prison that he commenced "The Age of Reason."

Paine returned to America, where he passed the remainder of his life. The publication of "The Age of Reason" caused such a storm of indignation that in its shadow the good caused by Paine's more important work was forgotten. But in our country come to be judged without the bias which comes from personal contact Thomas Paine will be held in increasing regard for the inestimable services which his love of liberty prompted him to perform for its sake.

Elery Sedgwick, to whom was assigned the preparation of this biography, has performed his work with care and discrimination. From the mass of writing about Paine, much of it prejudiced either

slight; throw in a hairbreadth escape of two and the story is complete. It is Mr. Roberts' way of telling his stories and his poetical powers of description that give them their charm. The mystical tale of "The Eye of Gluskap" is especially delightful, as it gives the author full play for fantastical fancies and brilliant imagery. "The Witchment of Lieutenant Hanworthy" is written in light vein and is charming, though slightly improbable. It is entirely dialogue under rather remarkable circumstances, and ends in a runaway match after an acquaintance on the part of the hero and heroine of half an hour. "La Mouche" is the tale of an Acedian hunter of that name, who is most active in his hatred of the English, and considered one of the fiercest men in the employ of the evil King Abbe. He falls in love, but finding his passion unrequited makes a most heroic and unexpected sacrifice to restore his rival to the

out well. (F. M. Buckles & Co., New York, \$1.25.)

On Corporation Law.
"Corporation Accounting and Corporation Law" is the title of a text just published by J. J. Rahill, cashier and head bookkeeper for the Fresno Publishing Company, Fresno, Cal. It should prove of great value to every one interested in a corporation, whether as stockholder or official. The contents comprise all the necessary forms and data essential in the running of a corporation, with especial regard to the laws of California regarding the same. The laws of other States are also presented in a brief way, but the book is distinctively of value and intended for the use of the California business man. The classes of corporations treated are oil, mining, mercantile, mechanical, manufacturing, railroad and printing and publishing; also an appendix on stock exchanges. (J. J. Rahill, Fresno, Cal. \$2.)

A Detective Story.
"High Stakes," by Lawrence L. Lynch, is the name of a detective story just published. For all who delight in complicated plots, murders, dark clues and the usual run of impossibilities made possible by the twist of a clever writer, Mr. Lynch's book will be welcome. There are no lengthy descriptions or attempted flights of genius, but the story is told for the greater part in straight dialogue, with a clew on every page, to say nothing of screams, pistol shots and murders. The illustrations, in this day of great possibilities in the way of half-tones and good fine work, are wretched and should much better have been omitted, but any one reading an up-to-date detective story has little time to waste upon studying pictures, so being no gain, neither are they any loss. (Laird & Lee, Chicago. Cloth, 75c.; paper, 50c.)

"A Mother Book."
"A Mother Book," by E. Francis Soule, is a suggestion on the newer method of child education as applied to religious subjects. Its object is to help the conscientious mother who wishes to train her children to keep holy the Sabbath day and yet to make it a pleasure to do so.

to be called the "Westminster Biographies." It is the intention to model this series on the plan of the "Beacon Biographies," which have been reviewed at length in former columns of this paper. The type and paper will be the same with the exception that the cover will be red instead of blue.

It was the old fashion to turn a successful drama into fiction, as for instance Victor Sardou did with his "Mime. Sans-Victor." Charles Reade with his "Peg Woffington." It is the new fashion to turn successful fiction into drama, as for instance—why give instances without fact—is so well known. From "Dilly" to "Sapho" we have had a succession of dramatized novels. Wilson Barrett merges the two plans. He and Elwyn Barron have been collaborating on the simultaneous production of a play. The book is just out. The play will be produced shortly. The plot tells of a young Dutchman who, after a life of noble self-sacrifice, is slain in a duel by the young man who has done most to befriend him. There are, indeed, a few details in the book, besides a horse race, where the favorite is shot dead a few yards from the winning post.

It is rumored that Bret Harte contemplates the publication of a second series of "Condensed Novels" which will do for present-day fiction what the first series did for that popular novelist in his youth—that is, turn it into good-natured ridicule. Will he find it possible to burlesque Sarah Grand or Marie Corelli? one asks with bated breath. And will the burlesque really be funnier than the original?

What a change a happy marriage, a landed estate, a seat in Parliament and an increase of years and waistband will make in a man! Here is Rider Haggard, who a few years ago was writing of war, adventure and romance in South Africa, now, at the very time when the land of excitement and King Solomon's mines have been discovered, publishing a book about his year's farming. Think of the magnificent description of the battle in "King Solomon's Mines," when the imps clashed their shields, and spears and shouted "Koom!" and then read this: "Most people unaccustomed to the routine of a farm have a notion that his (the farmer's) duties are of the simplest description. To these I would say, let them try, any one of them, even the easiest, such as 'drawing a ditch, and I think that they will change their views. In truth, there is no single operation on the land that does not require a very considerable amount of skill to perform it properly, and this skill, acquired by years of practice, the agricultural laborer puts at the service of any one who will pay him 13 shillings a week. Moreover, there is no nonsense about eight hours a day with him. With

Mr. Egerton Castle is what might be called an all-around man. He is an author, dramatist, editor, a member of the bar, an engineer. He writes delightful novels, one of which, "The Pride of Jenico," written jointly with his wife, has been dramatized, and is soon to be produced by E. K. Hildreth. However, we must look to "The Light of Scartrey," though only recently published in this country, has gone into four editions.

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The Transvaal Outlook, by Albert Stickney, Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, \$1.50.

"Honore de Balzac's Letters to Madame Hanssens," translated by Katherine Prescott Wormeley, Hardy, Pratt & Co., Boston, \$1.50.



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Biography of Thomas Paine.

There has been issued by Small, Maynard & Co. another volume of the Beacon Biographies. Thomas Paine is the subject of this latest book.

The publication of a life of Paine is particularly appropriate coming at this time, when there has arisen a renewed interest in the meaning of the principles of the American republic. For although Paine reached America just before the outbreak of the Revolution, there were Americans who played a more important part than he in arousing his adopted countrymen to defiance of tyranny and in strengthening their flagging courage when they had once entered upon the war.

Thomas Paine was born in Theford, England, in 1737. His father, who was a staymaker, took the boy at the age of 13 from school into his shop. These few years of schooling formed the foundation of the education which Paine supplemented by private reading. The trade Paine's father taught him he practiced for a few years, but he did not succeed in it, and, as it was hateful to him, he gave it up. Then he tried several other employments, in which he was equally unsuccessful. Finally he decided to go to America. Paine had met in London Benjamin Franklin and had been given a letter from Franklin to his son-in-law in Philadelphia. On Paine's arrival in America in 1774 Franklin's letter procured for him employment and opened for him the career in America which was successful for so many years. It was in 1776 that Paine began the publication of the political pamphlets which brought him so quickly into renown and which were of such moment in inspiring with hope and zeal those who were struggling for the liberty of the colonies. Paine threw himself heart and soul into the struggle for the new cause he was championing. All through the war and for several years after its termination he lent his enthusiastic aid to the new republic. When he felt that his services were no longer needed in America he returned to England on a visit. There his republican sympathies led him to the attack upon the government of his native land which resulted in his publication of "The Rights of Man," and later upon his banishment from England.

In his favor or against it, Mr. Sedgwick has chosen to sift the undisputed facts, which will give to the general reader a clear outline of Paine's career, leaving the student to supplement this by reference to larger works.

"A Rational Marriage"
"A Rational Marriage," by Florence Marryat, is the story of a match entirely different from the accepted idea of a wedding. In it a young lady of rather bohemian habits leaves her country home and goes to London to make her own living. She becomes the private secretary of an old nobleman, and incidentally does typewriting for a young journalist. She has an old grandfather from whom she will one day receive an inheritance, but only under the condition that she remain single. Of course the young people fall in love and are married, but the lady gives her consent only upon the condition that the wedding be kept a close secret and that they have their own individual friends, spend their earnings to suit themselves and never see each other unless by previous arrangement. All sorts of amusing and trying circumstances occur to make the story a very interesting one. The situations arising from this novel understanding are humorous and brightly told, and as the young people have both been hard hit by Cupid's arrow, all turns

and not a task. The book is unsectarian and undogmatic. At the end there is a collection of hymns and poems for the little ones. (Fords, Howard & Hulbert, New York. Cloth, 75 cents.)

Overheard by the Bookworm.
Professor Harry Thurston Peck, in the Independent, has given an interesting list of the six best novels of the year 1899, arranged in the order of their literary merit. Four of these have been great financial successes also, but the two others are lacking in the popular appreciation shown in enormous sales:

1. "The Greater Inclination," by Edith Wharton.
 2. "David Harum," by E. N. Westcott.
 3. "The Maternity of Harriott Wicken," by Mrs. Dudney.
 4. "Richard Carvel," by Winston Churchill.
 5. "The Market Place," by Harold Frederic.
 6. "When Knighthood Was in Flower," by E. Casakden.
- The valuable "Beacon Biographies" published by Messrs. Small, Maynard & Co. have proved so acceptable that the publishers are about to issue a series of "brief memoirs of eminent Englishmen."

brief intervals for food, he labors from 6 to 8, or more, and in winter from daylight to dark."

People in England just now are interested more in earnings than in abstinence, and Haggard's earlier books are selling well, while "A Farmer's Year" is not in great demand.

The London Athenaeum is given to learned discussions of the modern literature. Of David Harum it has spoken in a heretofore much in a solemn and critical manner, but it has not yet discovered that its author is dead. The other day it published an article in which it said: "Mr. Westcott has the makings of a good novelist. . . . In the art of narration he has a good deal to learn. . . . It requires a patient reader to find out the good parts of his work, and he should bear in mind that there are not too many patient readers."

By a curious coincidence John Kendrick Bingham's "Houseboat on the Styx" has been made the subject of illustration by two of the carnival societies of New Orleans. It is the first time in the history of the carnival that an author has been so honored. His book was chosen by the Comus Society and by that of the High Priests of Mithras. Much bitterness between the two societies has naturally resulted. The question as to which has the prior right to the selection is now agitating New Orleans society. Both presentations of the "Houseboat" were so elaborate and unusual in character that the curious coincidence is regarded by outsiders as most happy.

The editors of the Bookman have high hopes for the success of their serial story for the year 1900, beginning in the March number. It is entitled "Stringtown on the Pike." While it is not the first book of the writer, yet it is his first venture in fiction. It is a thoroughly American story in spirit and in execution. The writer, John L. Lloyd, was born in Western New York and removed to Cincinnati, where he became a clerk in a retail drug store. In his spare time rescued from the long hours, then and now inseparable from that occupation, he turned his attention to the principal pharmaceutical societies not only in this country but abroad as well. A few years ago he wrote a book called "Toxins," which was published at his own expense in Cincinnati and has passed through ten or twelve editions, and many thousand copies each. This book embodies the author's speculations in various directions, and may be considered a scientific

tific romance. "Stringtown on the Pike" was written by the author for his own satisfaction, and with no expectation of its being published. It was, however, by those who had the opportunity of reading it that it possessed interest, and merit so great as to forbid its being withheld from the general public, and the editors of The Bookman believe that in it they have made a discovery and found a prize.

Stephen Crane's remarkable series of sketches of the great battles of the world begins in March. Lippincott's with striking business. His excursions into other fields, and since his "Red Badge of Courage" he has done nothing so significant as the work now begun.

The Overland Monthly for March contains a most interesting article by George Wharton James upon "Types of Female Beauty among the Indians of the Southwest." It is well illustrated with photographs of the different types under discussion.

Outing for the current month announces a change of editorship and ownership. The entire property of the Outing Publishing Company has been purchased by a company composed of well-known sportsmen, and the editorship was assumed by Caspar Whitney. The many friends of Mr. Whorman, the present editor, will learn with regret that in view of his being a partial invalid he has deemed it advisable to resign the magazine, and in the announcement of future policy the names of many well-known writers are mentioned as contributors. The March number presents numerous up-to-date features, and among them are several articles that will be read with interest by Californians and San Franciscans. Arthur Inkersley gives a paper on "Rowing in San Francisco Bay," that is most timely, considering the general feeling that more attention should be paid to this splendid sport by our athletes, and especially by the two universities of the coast, who should take up the matter of intercollegiate races. There is also given a well illustrated article upon "Golfing in the Far West," by Thomas Arnold, that should be read by the many golf enthusiasts of the coast.

The March number of Harper's Magazine is rich in timely and interesting features. Prominent among these is the illustrated article on "Pretoria Before the War," by Howard C. Hilleago, author of "Oom Paul's People," in which the writer gives a comprehensive sketch of the life in the South African capital at the time of hostilities. Captain Mahan contributes the first of a series of articles on "The Problem of Asia," in which he discusses the future of the European powers as factors in Asiatic problems, and the third installment of "Mrs. Ward's new novel" also appears. There are short stories by Stephen Crane, Virginia Fraser Boyle, Charles Egbert Craddock, Ellen Douglas Deland, and Marie Van Vorst, and special articles by Julia R. Barr, by Archibald R. Colquhoun, Poulney Bigelow and Ippan Adney.

The International Monthly (Macmillan Company) of the current month contains an article by W. W. Ireland upon "Degeneration, a Study in Anthropology," which is full of startling facts most ably presented and of great value to every deep thinker.

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