November 30 1895

The Critic

14th, Mr. A. M. Palmer will sell five copies of "Trilby," signed by the author and recently brought over from London by one of the ladies of the Table. Further details regarding the Fair may be had by addressing Mrs. Alfred Meyer, 801 Madison Ave., New York.

Canadian Copyright

Mr. Hall Caine was entertained at a farewell public banquet at the Russell House, Ottawa, on Nov. 25, when the chair was taken by Dr. Montague, Secretary of State, who was supported by four other Ministers of the Dominion.

In responding to the toast of the evening, Mr. Caine outlined the terms of the probable settlement of the question as follows—

"Grateful, I want to tell you, and also the public, to consider what better legislation which Canada promised to authors is under way. The much disputed Copyright Act of 1895 will never again be offered to your Parliament or sent to England for Imperial sanction. Instead of that there will be an amended act to be called the Copyright Act of 1896. What provisions the Act will make is a matter to be made known by your Government when the Appropriations, the royalties and the fees are been born. No one belongs to me when I say that at the conference with the Ministers of Justice and Agriculture, which my colleague, Mr. Dalby, and myself, together with the Canadian Copyright Association and Canadian publishers, were permitted to hold in Ottawa to-day, a draft measure, which forms an agreement between myself as the delegate of English authors and the interested parties in Canada, was submitted and recommended to the Ministers, and we have every reason to hope that, in the wisdom of your Government, it will be regarded as a probable general basis for forthcoming legislation.

"By this agreement the time within which a copyright holder can publish in Canada and so secure an absolute and unhampered copyright is extended from thirty to sixty days, and a possible extension of thirty days more at the discretion of the authorities. Also, by this agreement the license to be granted for the production of a book that has not fulfilled the conditions of Canadian copyright is limited to one licence; and a single license is only to be issued with the copyright holder's knowledge or sanction. Further, the copyright holder who has an independent chance of securing copyright for himself within a period of sixty days, is to be allowed a second chance of securing it after it has been challenged and before it can be disposed of by licence. Further, Mr. Dalby, in the text of the bill bears the section to enter the regulations of the Revenue to stamp an edition of a book on the issue of a license. This is the ground of the Draft Bill which the Canadian Copyright Association has joined with me in recommending to your Ministers, and on its general principle I have to say, first, to Canadian authors, that a bill framed on these lines, and the rights of English authors and the copyright in Canada are considered, or the understanding between Great Britain and the United States. Beyond this I must allow that the arrangement is a compromise. There have had to be concessions on both sides. But the people who are sticklers for principles will condemn us all round, and there are always folks enough to hold for the moon when they only want green cheese."

An Interview with Mrs. Stevenson

(Mrs. Edith Seaborn Tupper, in the Los Angeles Evening Express)

"Is it true that you will publish a volume of memoirs of Mr. Stevenson?"

"No, I never wrote."

"Did you not assist Mr. Stevenson in his work—do a great deal of copying for him?"

"No. Rose, my daughter, did that. My eyes are too weak. I know it has been repeatedly stated that I helped my husband in that way, but it is not true. A magazine article published just after Mr. Stevenson's death had as one of its illustrations a picture of Rose copying for my husband. This picture was caught by a friend's kodak. When we heard that the article was to appear and that this picture was to be used as one of the illustrations, Rose said, 'Well, at all events, I shall go down to fame in the role of Milton's daughter.' But when the article was published, underneath the picture appeared the words, 'Mrs. Stevenson, copying for her husband.' This, however, was nothing to other annoyances we have had. Private letters have been sold by people whom we deemed our friends. It has seemed, with a long-drawn sigh and a tightening of the hands on the arms of the chair, 'as if the whole writing world had tried to make money out of the death of my husband. There was one woman here in San Francisco who came to see me. At first I said, 'No,' but relenting when I saw how disappointed she was. She went away and wrote an article, putting my expressions in my mouth I never dreamed of using. It was terrible."

"What do you consider Mr. Stevenson's greatest work?"

"I think the story he was writing when he died, 'Weir of Hermiston,' the strongest thing he ever wrote. It is a great loss to the world of romance. He read me a chapter last day—just before he died.'—Mrs. Stevenson paused abruptly.

"Is it true that some one—Mr. Osbourne perhaps—will finish it?"

"Oh, no! very merrily. 'No one could finish it.' I have repeatedly seen it stated that your son would finish the novel for Mr. Spence. Some letters Bepassom".

"That is not true, and you will oblige me by contradicting such statements. I repeat that the whole writing world has appeared to league together to make material out of Mr. Stevenson's death."

In comment on the interview from which the above extracts are taken, M. L. B. W. writes to us from Santa Barbara, Cal.—

"Am I mistaken in thinking that one of Mr. Stevenson's works, the second series of 'New Arabian Nights,' is advertised as having been written in collaboration with Mrs. Stevenson?"

Our correspondent is right: the book is so advertised.

"Mrs. Stevenson and her children sail from San Francisco on Nov. 14, on the Mariposa. They propose staying at Honolulu for four months—till the hurricane season is past—and to return thence to Vaillima, Hawaii.

London Letter

NOW IS the hour of the lecturer. With the lengthening of the evenings, local Athenaeums take on a studious habit, and prominent men-of-letters are invited down into the provinces to discourse sagaciously upon topics kindred to their profession. Last night for Mr. Spence, Sir Walter Besant was at Aberdeen, and who better qualified to speak of the ups and downs of "The Literary Life," about strange places he himself has studied from his youth up? It was a sane and helpful lecture, distinguishing tactfully between the artistic and commercial sides of an author's prowess —though not always discriminated by the modern and self-advertised kind of writer. Sir Walter's plea was all for that preservation of artistic integrity which goes to the commanding of respect. "Without respect," he said, "no author can hope to live beyond his own generation." To this respect the contemporary writer is largely helped by the gradual decay of any sort of contempt for the literary calling. Sir Walter concluded with allusions to the growth of local literature, a useful item, as he conceived it, in the furtherance of "that universal human literature, which boasts so many million readers."

All his friends (and they are many) will hear with the keenest pleasure of the slow but sure return to health of Mr. C. Kegan Paul, head of the well-known firm of publishers, who a few weeks ago Mr. Paul was knocked down by a passing cab, and his accident threatened at one time to have the most serious consequences. It is now hoped, however, that he will be back at his desk in Charing Cross Road in a month or six weeks' time. He can, indeed, be ill-spared there. It is now close upon a quarter of a century since Mr. Paul associated himself as literary adviser with the firm of Messrs. Henry S. King & Co., whose imprint will be familiar to all students of Tennyson. In 1878 he took over the publishing department of Mr. King's business, and commenced for himself under the title of C. Kegan Paul & Co. One of his initial ventures was to start a publication which secured immediate celebrity and has since established itself as the most important review in the English language; I mean The Nineteenth Century. In 1881 Mr. Paul was joined by Mr. A. Chevenix Trench, son of the Archbishop of Dublin, and these two gentlemen carried on the business until the amalgamation of the present company in 1889. Mr. Paul's strength to the firm lay of
course, in his own fine judgment—judgment abundantly evidenced in his scholarly translation of Pascal's "Pensées," and in his Biographical Sketches. Many critics, indeed, have regretted that so much of Mr. Paul’s time has been taken up by his duties as literary adviser, as to prevent him from having a free hand for authorship. The firm took on an invaluable development at the time of the death of the late Mr. Nicholas 1. Tibbitt, when it acquired a sphere wider probably than that of any other English house. For Mr. Trübner had formed a considerable connection with American publishing-houses, was allied with several important British firms, and, by the foundation of Trübner's American Publishing Co., had put himself into the closest touch with Oriental literary interests. He also exported large quantities of paper to Lippincott's and other leading publishing-houses in America, and was agent to the Indian and Colonial governments. It was under his tuition that Mr. William Heinemann first learnt the secrets of success. The present firm of Kegan Paul & Co., which is not under the management of Mr. Spencer C. Blackett, himself a man of many years' experience in the trade, continues its export and import business, its American and its Continental departments, and by a strict system of personal supervision has made a very important branch of its second-hand book-trade. It acts, indeed, as general agent in every department of the business, and is considered by many to be the ablest. And the firm has been able to maintain its own name and the name of the old house, and the firm, through the agency of Mr. Blackett and Mr. Paul, has been able to hold its own with the painters of any country. His "Constance" in this exhibition is a rare portrait, rich in color yet very quiet, frank yet reserved, strong yet exquisitely delicate. The handling is masterly, free and direct, impressionistic, if you will, with dashes of sudden color, but never meaningless and always carrying weight. The same thing is true of the "Sister's Love," by Mr. Kurtz, which, however, less beauty of color than the other. But in both the painter has treated his subject in a manner appropriate to itself. A lovely night scene is like Whistler, and a beautiful "Pastoral" shows Mr. Guthrie in another vein. His pastels emphasize still more his versatility, for he uses that medium and that palette of colors that are irresistible. E. A. Hornel is as different from Guthrie as any man could well be, and no other artist has painted in quite his riotous way. Like Monet, he makes a god of color, and all other qualities pay tribute to that one. But because of this deference, the god is complacent and enables him to produce a work that is original and of the same order and of the same kind as his other work. His "Blackest Night" of "Children at Play," there is an abandon which convinces one of the enthusiasm of the game, but it makes the pictures too much of a jumble to be decorative. In his Japanese scenes there is more restraint. No one else has brought from Japan such gay, brilliant, vivid impressions of the life there. They have a radiance which is widely different and of a character that is almost entirely Japanese. In composition they are often original; indeed, Mr. Hornel is conventional in nothing. His is a most unusual talent, which bids fair to evolve some new harmonies of color, yet undreamed of in our philosophy.

T. Millie Dow’s carefully finished work is a marked contrast to most of the others, but he, too, has met with the answer of critics, and The Saturday Review attributed the paper to Mr. Henry Harland, the editor. In response, the publisher inserted in The Saturday an advertisement full of gibes and please, making merry with the paper whose space his manifesto was filling. This sort of thing is becoming fashionable, and it is very vulgar. I hear that The Yellow Book is likely to be thoroughly well "smacked" for its lack of breeding.

Everyone discusses "Jude the Obscure"; no two readers agree in their view of it. It is the book of the week in every quarter; and doubt and discussion make for reputation, it is likely to be the book of the season. Certainly, you hear of nothing else by fireside or by railway.

LONDON, 14 Nov. 1895.

ARThUR WAUGH.

CHICAGO LETTER

THE EXHIBITION which was opened last week at the Art Institute is much the most interesting that has been held here since the Fair. It contains 116 paintings by the Glasgow men, 36 by Dutch artists, and a few by Dagnan-Bouveret, Degas, Thanlow and Whistler. The latter sends three little pastels, delicate and exquisite in color and fine in design. It is a matter of a wing of the butterfly as it flits by. The Degas is a shadowy thing, a gray figure against light; but in its indistinctness lies a greater charm than can be found in the large halo-like woman which Dagnan-Bouveret calls "La Peinture." The Thanlow has the honest, rugged strength of winter, the beauty of vigor rather than of delicacy; it is an admirable piece of work. But it is not these, nor the paintings by Couture, Boudin and Raffaelli, nor the works of the Dunes, which make the exhibition notable.

The Glasgow painters are new; often as we have heard of them, this is the first time a collection of their work has traveled to this country. Charles Reid, who selected these pictures from Scotland and brought them to St. Louis, where they were first exhibited at the annual exhibition. From there they were sent to the Art Institute, which will keep them until Christmas. They make so distinguishable a showing here that the prominence they have attained within a few years no longer seems anomalous to the public. Their touch with Oriental literature and their personal supervision of their own work makes them a very remarkable and distinctive novelty. No man seems even to have studied with another, and it is difficult to trace the origin of their divergent methods. The influence of Whistler is more marked than that of any other, yet they have learned much from France and much in Japan. But they imitate no one, and their sincerity is unquestionable. One is inclined to confine them to their own province and to the influence of Whistler and Japanese art. Each man is a distinct personality, working out his own problems in his own way, choosing the material that interests him most, and treating it without regard to traditions or conventions. And this almost under the shadow of the Royal Academy.

The work of James Guthrie deserves first place in any mention of these Scotchmen, and he would be able to hold his own with the painters of any country. His "Constance" in this exhibition is a rare portrait, rich in color yet very quiet, frank yet reserved, strong yet exquisitely delicate. The handling is masterly, free and direct, impressionistic, if you will, with dashes of sudden color, but never meaningless and always carrying weight. The same thing is true of the "Sister's Love," by Mr. Kurtz, which, however, less beauty of color than the other. But in both the painter has treated his subject in a manner appropriate to itself. A lovely night scene is like Whistler, and a beautiful "Pastoral" shows Mr. Guthrie in another vein. His pastels emphasize still more his versatility, for he uses that medium and that palette of colors that are irresistible. E. A. Hornel is as different from Guthrie as any man could well be, and no other artist has painted in quite his riotous way. Like Monet, he makes a god of color, and all other qualities pay tribute to that one. But because of this deference, the god is complacent and enables him to produce a work that is original and of the same order and of the same kind as his other work. His "Blackest Night" of "Children at Play," there is an abandon which convinces one of the enthusiasm of the game, but it makes the pictures too much of a jumble to be decorative. In his Japanese scenes there is more restraint. No one else has brought from Japan such gay, brilliant, vivid impressions of the life there. They have a radiance which is widely different and of a character that is almost entirely Japanese. In composition they are often original; indeed, Mr. Hornel is conventional in nothing. His is a most unusual talent, which bids fair to evolve some new harmonies of color, yet undreamed of in our philosophy.

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