

# THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

ESTABLISHED JUNE 19, 1871.

OMAHA, TUESDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 21, 1897—TWELVE PAGES.

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## SOME BOOKS OF THE YEAR

**Sarah Grand's New Novel of English Life and a Strange Woman.**

**VOLUME BY AN OMAHA WOMAN**

**Journey Down the Ohio River—New Story by Charles Egbert Craddock**

—**Stockton's New Novel—A Story of the Lakes.**

The second effort of a novelist to score a success in one particular field is apt to be a failure. Sarah Grand, in "The Beth Book," has not made a failure by any means, but the first criticism of every reader of the book will be that it is too much like "The Heavenly Twins." In one respect particularly, it is like the earlier work—it is too long, too many words are used, too much white paper covered, needless attention to detail is shown. The reader prefers sometimes to be left to his own imagination to supply some of the details of the story he is following. But Sarah Grand begins with the birth of her Beth and follows her through childhood and girlhood with minute detail. There is much about the story of Beth to remind one of "The Heavenly Twins." There are the same wayside scenes, the same lanes and tenements and little shops; the people are the same, women who are either wild and rakish and often impudent or who are sniveling slaves; men who are all good or who are sullen brutes. Beth is a willful, hardy, strong girl, but she is a mother under her, she finally makes an impression on her father but he dies before he has helped her to start life, her mother treats her shamefully up to the time of her marriage and forces upon her a man who is not fit for her. Beth is a wife more than she has suffered as a child and finally she breaks her bonds and hastens to London to become an agitator, an author, a champion of the new woman. Beth is always bright and witty and the reader wonders why she has not the strength to make her way in the world. She is unhappy in her marriage. She is always attractive for herself despite the surroundings that are often repulsive. There is a great amount of unnecessary coarseness in the book, as if to make genius shine it must be placed in contrast with vulgarity.

"Guarding the Border" is a story of the era, based by Everett T. Johnson, who has essayed to furnish the young American mind with an accurate historical account of the causes leading up to and the events transpiring during the war of 1812, and he gives a type of juvenile literature that is of inestimable benefit to the youth of the land. It is well written for young principals of Rutgers academy, and he is quite conversant with the character of literature that is most desired by the youth, and he is also a judge of the manner of presentation that will best hold the attention of his readers. This is the fifth volume in the series relating to the year 1812, and it will be followed by others. Lee & Shepard, Boston, \$1.50.

### Books Received.

Lochinvar, by S. R. Crockett. Harper & Bros., New York, \$1.50.  
Prayer, Ancient and Modern. Doubleday & McClure Co., New York.  
Vivian of Virginia, by Hubert Fuller. Lippincott, Grambo & Biggs, \$1.75.  
Gloria Victoria, by J. A. Mitchell. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, \$1.25.  
The French Revolution, by Justin McCarthy, Vol. II. Harper & Bros., New York.  
Hawaii, Our New Possessions, by John R. Muir. Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York, \$2.  
God's Foundling, by A. J. Dawson. D. Appleton & Co., New York, 50 cents.

### Minor Mention of Literary Topics.

Gilbert Parker's novels are appearing in a new edition from the publishing house of the Appletons.

The holiday number of Town Topics, of New York, contained seventy-two pages of choice reading.

Kalee, the goddess of the Thugs, furnishes the motif of Grant Allen's latest book, entitled "Kalee's Shrine."

Russell Sturgis, the eminent art critic, will hereafter conduct the art department of Scribner's Magazine, which has long been a tractus for himself despite the surroundings that are often repulsive. There is a great amount of unnecessary coarseness in the book, as if to make genius shine it must be placed in contrast with vulgarity.

Bret Harte writes a ballad in the January Scribner's in a new poem. It is the legend told by the Saxons of the old English town of Cirencester.

There is to be a revival of interest in John Brown, and the publishers of Peterson's Magazine report a series of papers for next year on the hero of Osawatomie from the pen of Will M. Clemens.

Leonard Huxley, son of the great Prof. Huxley, has contributed a series of reminiscences of his father to the Century. The article in the January number will be accompanied by a fine portrait of the biologist.

John Muir, whose name is a synonym for the imprint on the title page of a plain looking book in green cloth with gilt title, attracts the attention of the book reviewers. Their title "Gathered Thistles" gives no hint of the nature of the book, but the reader has only to scan a few pages to discover that it is a story and to have his attention fixed by something more substantial than the fact that the book was issued from a printing office. One could wish that she might have reached her position by some pathway not so thorny. Yet the brilliancy of Sarah Grand is never completely hidden in view of the opportunities through the hundred of pass cheeryfully. D. Appleton & Co., New York, \$1.50.

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