

LITERARY.

"Every one is as God made him, and oftentimes a great deal worse."—*Cervantes*.

* * *

"The first king of France was Pharamond, and imaginary being who had never existed. He was succeeded by his son."—*Drury's History of France*.

* * *

When *Education* announced that the November number would be devoted to philology, we expected something good. This was not because the magazine makes a practice of issuing good numbers, for we would not be justifiable in making so rash an assertion; but, with such a subject and so many competent and enthusiastic writers, we thought that even *Education* might furnish us with a good discussion. Barring the first paper, our expectation is more than fulfilled. "How the Germans Study Philology," is certainly a good subject for the opening of the discussion, but we have carefully examined the nine pages devoted to the theme without gaining the slightest insight into German methods. The paper reminds us of Artemus Ward's celebrated lecture on "Africa," in which the subject was mentioned just once, and then incidentally. Professor Merrill begins by naming three German works on philology; then he branches off into a definition of the term, and from that he continues to branch until the end, going farther from his subject with each paragraph. Hideously botched Greek and German are not the least noticeable features of the paper, but as this botching occurs in almost every foreign sentence throughout the number, we cannot blame the author. For the remaining articles, we have nothing to offer but words of praise, and we would notice especially "The Literary Value of Classical Study" and Professor Fisher's paper on "The Teaching of Latin," which latter is full of good ideas tersely and forcibly expressed. In conclusion we would make two suggestions. We would say to Professor Merrill, "Try it again," and to *Education*, "Before you attempt another philological number, please rent a proof-reader who has some knowledge of Greek and Latin, at least."

* * *

The revived *Scribner's* is worthy of its honored name. From the first number it has seemed well suited to be the favorite of American magazines, and the character of the contents is ever improving. The December number, as is usual with magazines, is especially good. In this instance we fail to find a bad, or even a moderately good piece of work, literary or artistic, from the frontispiece to the last tail-piece,—all is of the first merit. It would indeed be difficult, among the many excellent writers the great present affords, to select a list more widely and favorably known than those here set before us. The first number is a poem by Robert Louis Stevenson which is vague and suggestive enough to be a favorite with Poe, were he living to enjoy the reading of it. It is long since an equal to "Ticonderog" has appeared. Mr. William Hole, in his interpretation of

"Out of the night and the other world
Came in to him the dead,"

has produced an illustration that Dore might be proud of.

* * *

In May of last year a party of biologists sailed to Green Turtle Key in the Bahamas for the purpose of making observations on the life of the sea. Fortunately for the great majority who think the study of mankind of more importance than learning the domestic relations of the coral animals, one representing this great majority, but still a biologist, accom-

panied the expedition. This man is Dr. T. Wesley Mills, and to him we give our thanks for the very interesting paper which heads the contents of *The American Naturalist* for October. Green Turtle Key, with an area of less than one fourth of a square mile, is the home of some six hundred persons, black, white, and of every shade between the two. The forefathers of the present inhabitants have dwelt on this same little island for generations past, and the number of immigrants and emigrants is very small. Consequently the community is in a state of physical, mental and moral degredation. The Doctor, as an M. D., is deeply interested in searching after the precise causes which have brought about this condition, and well he may be. We hope he will not neglect to supplement the paper under consideration with another, giving us a detailed account of the customs and mental traits of Green Turtle Key society. The study of this isolated ocean community would be little less interesting than that of the Pitcairn Islanders, about whom volumes have been written and read with interest. If we had the facts before us we would be willing to do our own speculating as to the causes, although we are pleased to have the opinion of so eminent a man as Dr. Mills.

* * *

It would be hard to find a more beautiful expression of sorrow and faith than the Latin prayer written by Mary Stuart not long before her execution. It is to literature what the Mater Dolorosa is to art. As it is difficult to obtain, we think it well to give it, together with Swinburne's translation, which, although much inferior to the original, is as good as a translation could be. We have seen neither the original nor the English version for months, but we think they are given correctly.

O domine deus, speravi in te;
O care mi Jesu, nunc libera me;
In dura catena, in misera pœna, desidero te;
Languendo, gemendo, et genuflectendo,
Adoro, imploro, ut liberares me.

And here is the translation:—

O Lord, my God, I have trusted in thee;
O Jesus, my dearest one, now set me free;
In prison's oppression, in sorrow's obsession,

I weary for thee:
With sighing and crying,
Bowed down as in dying,
I adore thee, I implore thee,
Set me free.

* * *

The prevalent idea of a genius is a person by nature especially set apart from the rest of his kind through superior mental endowments in some particular line. We add the last phrase because we hope the idea of universal genius is forever dead. Universal talent may possibly exist in very rare cases, but universal genius is an absurd contradiction in terms. Now two minds of exactly the same trend would be about as strange a coincidence as the universe could offer. Each has its own peculiarities of combination. It would seem that the Creator is, and has been for thousands of years, engaged in an unsuccessful search for the precise mental formula after which the mind of the ideal man shall be compounded,—which of the numberless elements to employ, and in what proportions to combine those chosen. Thus each individual so far created is an experiment, has his own personality, and is, in a sense, a genius. So if you have concluded that you are a genius, and even if your friends agree with you, don't for one moment imagine that your intellect is anything phenomenal. You just happen to differ from those around you, and naturally, each differs from you, and probably has better reason to be proud. Now let us suppose