

# Anecdotes of Literary Workers

## New Departure in Book Prices.

**H**OWARD WILFORD BELL of New York has inaugurated a radical departure in the matter of book prices. The present method of determining the price of a book is a mystery of the trade. It is as uncertain as the shifting winds. Mr. Bell proposes a definite basis as a selling price. Every unit of twenty-five pages in a book is to cost 1 cent. The size of the book and the binding determines the selling price. For example, a book of 300 pages with paper cover would cost 12 cents. If cloth binding is wanted 30 cents is added to the cost, and full leather 50 cents. The total cost of a 300-page book, on the unit basis, would be 12 cents with paper cover, 42 cents with cloth cover and 62 cents with leather.

Sample volumes show a good quality of paper, clear type and good press work. There is nothing cheap about the books but the price. The firm proposes to put on the market reprints of famous books of every description.

## History as it is Written.

Critics are picking flaws in Senator Hoar's "Autobiography of Seventy Years." The Philadelphia Ledger says the work is notable in that it makes famous persons heretofore obscure and ignores persons considered distinguished. In Mr. Hoar's perspective, Worcester county, Massachusetts, looms larger than many a commonwealth of the union. Adin Thayer, "a man quite remarkable," "a big, striking, original and picturesque figure in the history of the commonwealth," gets three pages in this autobiography. Dan Hill, "one of the most remarkable men Worcester county ever contained," is given almost a page. Benjamin H. Hill of Georgia, one of the most remarkable men that state ever contained, is honored by Senator Hoar with a notice of exactly four lines. Benjamin H. Brewster of Pennsylvania, one of the most distinguished jurists in the union and attorney general of the United States, escapes Mr. Hoar's attention, though Elder Brewster is mentioned. Walter Q. Gresham, another learned jurist, and the secretary of state in the second Cleveland administration, contrives to get his name into the index of Mr. Hoar's book, but not into the text of either volume—a unique distinction, to be sure! On page 481 of volume II may be read this entry: "Gresham, Walter Q., II, 248." On turning to the page indicated, Judge Gresham's friends will be interested in reading, in the chapter entitled "Silver and Bimetallism," these significant words: "They (the gold monometallists) justly maintained that, if we undertook the unlimited coinage of silver, and to make it legal tender, under the inevitable law long ago announced by Gresham the cheaper metal, silver, would flow into this country," etc.

## The Cap Fitted.

The seriousness of these proceedings against a writer of fiction who dared to put real and living persons in his book is in sharp contrast with the bouffe quality of certain similar proceedings lately in London, relates the New York Times' Saturday Review. An army officer, Major H. F. Woodgate, published a novel called "The

Unwritten Commandment," in which he portrayed a woman of wicked ways so graphically as to make his book unfit reading for polite persons. A Mrs. Wallis was bold enough to declare that the portrayal of this personage was a libel upon herself and she began suit for damages. The presiding justice chaffed her for putting on a cap which fitted her when she might have honorably avoided defaming her own character; the defendant swore his personages were all "puppets," the crowd in the court room was clearly in sympathy with the novelist, and when the foreman of the jury announced by mistake a verdict for the defendant he was roundly chided. But the verdict was for the plaintiff, who received damages to the amount of \$125. While the result is likely materially to aid the author of the novel, which was not widely known beforehand, but will now be eagerly bought by the curious and indiscriminating readers of fiction, it leaves the woman in a much worse position than before.

## Tennyson's Weakness.

"I had the good fortune to know some very eminent authors and can give them a very decent character," writes Sir Leslie Stephen in the Atlantic. "If they suffer a little from the author's disease—self-consciousness and vanity—they often take it in a mild form; Tennyson was, perhaps, an instance. Many years ago I paid some visits to Freshwater, then—for alas! it has been grievously injured by the growth of the usual watering-place surroundings—the ideal place for the poet of 'In Memoriam.' It is still, however, 'close to the edge of a noble down,' and the old girdle of woods, round which cockneys used to wander in hopes of a glimpse of the barn, still encloses the picturesque lawn and gardens to which the fortunate few found admission and might listen to Maud or an Idyll, gaining new force from the lips of the author. In my day a little group of reverent admirers was generally gathered there to render acceptable homage. It was impossible for the cynic not to catch a certain comic side to the proceedings—though, of course, it was very wrong. I remember a dinner from which I fled precipitately in company with a man highly distinguished in official life and solid literature. \* \* \* Such a steam of incense creates a rather unwholesome atmosphere for a man of specially sensitive nature. Tennyson perhaps suffered a little. He had a right to complain if a certain article in a popular newspaper contained, as he told us, three lies about him in one column, but I did not want to hear the statement repeated daily for a week."

## Balzac's Plan Didn't Work.

When Miss Marie Manning, author of "Judith of the Plains," was a girl at boarding school, she and her "chum" determined to devote their lives to the pursuit of literature. They decided to follow the plan of Balzac—namely, to eat a substantial dinner in the evening and retire at once to sleep until midnight. Upon the stroke of that hour they would rise and devote the rest of the night to labor, thus securing the most quiet hours for

work. The plan worked admirably so far as eating the dinner was concerned. They then retired. An hour passed. Then a voice broke the silence. "Are you asleep?" "No," was the reply, "can't." Another hour passed. "Are you asleep?" said the voice again, softly. "No, can't close my eyes," came the gloomy reply. At midnight, however, they arose, and prepared for the night's labor. But they had scarcely arranged their writing materials and clad themselves appropriately than they immediately became too sleepy to work. "Are you awake?" said the voice again. "Yes, but I can hardly keep my eyes open." "Let's go to bed." "Very well." And the two discouraged litterateurs retired to the slumbers of the young and healthy. Thus Balzac's plan failed.

## Getting Local Color.

Some years ago when Richard Harding Davis penetrated the transmississippi region to gather material for his book, "The West from a Car Window," he stopped over in a small Indian Territory town where he was assured there were extensive local color deposits. Proceeding along the street he met two men, apparently just in from some ranch. They were tall, untanned, intoxicated and "bad." Placing a hand of size on Mr. Davis' shoulder one of them said:

"Young feller, is there a jail in this yere town where they lock up men?"

Mr. Davis saw his best chance of avoiding trouble was to meet the man on his own ground, so he looked up and said carelessly:

"Guess not. I've been here two days and I—"

"There ain't none, then," broke in the man, with a tremendous thump on the author's back. "You'd 'a' been in it 'fore this time if there was!" And they passed joyously on, leaving Mr. Davis with another tube of the desired local color.

## A Venerable Optimist.

In his "Autobiography of Seventy Years" Senator Hoar of Massachusetts takes a bright and cheerful view of the world's future, combining the hopefulness of the boy and the wisdom of the sage and philosopher. He says: "The lesson which I have learned in life, which is impressed on me daily, and more deeply as I grow old, is the lesson of good will and good hope. I believe that today is better than yesterday, and that tomorrow will be better than today. I believe that in spite of so many errors and wrongs, and even crimes, my countrymen of all classes desire what is good, and not what is evil."

## Treasures of the Vatican.

Pope Pius X is earning the gratitude of scholars by continuing the policy of Leo XIII in respect to the archives in the Vatican. In receiving Dr. Pastor the other day he announced his intention of granting all competent investigators, regardless of nationality of religion, free access to all documents in the archives. Apropos, it may be mentioned that Padre Boffito has just unearthed in the Vatican a valuable manuscript of the early fourteenth century. It is an astrological manuscript of Francesco Stabili, or, as he was popularly styled, Cecco d'Ascoli, the contemporary and emu-

lator of Dante. Stabili has been supposed to have left behind him only two writings, and the third now discovered is expected to throw much light on the career of the writer, who in 1337 was broken on the wheel in Paris as a heretic.

## Death Creates No Boom.

The death of a famous writer has in years past nearly always led to a revival of interest in his books. Today this is not the case. That, at any rate, is the conclusion of the editor of the Academy and Literature, who says in the current number: "A careful analysis of the book-sellers' returns show, for instance, that the English sale of Zola's novels remained practically unaffected by the sudden and tragic death of their author. More recently the same phenomena was noticed in connection with the decease of Mr. Henley. And I hear this week that the death of Mr. Lecky, which, of course, was noticed and lamented all over the world, produced no effect whatever upon the sale of his books."

## Notes.

According to a recent dispatch from Russia Count Tolstoy has written a treatise on Shakespeare. In this, it is said, he criticizes the works of the dramatist "rather adversely."

Colonel George B. McClellan, the newly elected mayor of New York City, has written a book entitled "The Oligarchy of Venice," which is to be published next spring by Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

A rather queer literary coincidence is that a day or two after the publication of Elias Carmen's new volume of poems, "The Pipes of Pan," Mrs. Craigie copyrighted her latest play called "The Flute of Pan." With the sale of "Naulahka" the last hope that the Kiplings will ever return to live in the land of the Balestiers has vanished. New England will still have to depend upon indigenous growths to supply material for its literary industries.

"He threw away the stump of his after-luncheon cigar with a gesture of pleased relaxation," says one of our delightful fiction writers. Now, why doesn't he go on and tell us about his performances with his toothpick? Nothing can equal the elegance of the stories of today.

Fleming H. Revell Company reports second editions of "The Bondage of Ballinger," by Roswell Field; "Eleanor Lee," Mrs. Sangster's new romance of married life; "West Point Colors," by Anna B. Warner, and "The Flame of Fire," by Joseph Hocking.

G. P. Putnam's Sons have issued the sixteenth and last part of the "Talmud Dictionary," edited by the late Prof. M. Jastrow. This book brings to completion a work which will, it is thought, be accepted generally as a distinctive monument to the scholarship, industry and public spirit of its editor.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have released in two beautiful volumes John Fluke's "Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America." Peter Stuyvesant's face greets one who opens the first volume, William Penn's the second. Other illustrations are admirable, contributing not a little, as they do, in making the work attractive from every viewpoint.

In a novel just issued by a London publisher Frank Richardson, the author, makes his characters utter these more or less philosophical observations: "Most men are honest, three things make them otherwise—women, poverty and ambition." "A handsome old man looks as if he had a past and behaves as though he were sure of a future." "A mistress' secrets are the most valuable of a maid's perquisites." "No man worth the buying can be bought."

Mr. John Morley is to visit the United States next year, coming to deliver an address at the opening of the Technical college at Pittsburg in October, 1904. It is to be hoped that he will find it agreeable to make other public appearances in this country, which he has not visited for more than thirty years. A lecture on Gladstone by Mr. Morley would take the country by storm, and he would be sure of appreciative audiences if he would speak on literary topics.

## New Books Dealing with Fine Arts

**B**ARBIZON DAYS," by Charles Sprague Smith. The design of the author in producing this beautiful book is best explained in his own introduction.

"A decade of years ago we pitched our summer tent at Bourron, a little hamlet on the borders of the forest of Fontainebleau; or rather we occupied another's tent, for our dwelling was a gray stone cottage similar to that of the peasants—our neighbors and friends. The forest itself was only a few rods distant and my study the summer through was in the open air and under the boughs of one of its noble trees. Sitting at my neighbors' board when their day's work was done, roaming the woods in all directions, searching out especially the haunts of the artists, the months glided away all too fast. There were not hours enough in which to write of all the artists' haunts I would have selected as themes. These sketches are not art criticism, they are but the chronicle of that summer. If they make clearer the relation between nature and art, suggest that art's alphabet is everywhere awaiting only the seeing eye, or if I have been able to give again in part the inspiration obtained from that summer's converse with the strong, this record of Barbizon Days will have accomplished its purpose."

Turning the page we find entitled, "A Group of Jules Dupre." The group is of three gnarled and ancient trees, fronted by an open green, and with a background of low shrubs and undergrowth. A dreamer lies at the foot of the central giant and his dream penetrates to the intelligence of the sympathetic mind without the necessity of words. The engraving is one of many choice reproductions of the paintings of the masters.

The frontispiece is a head of Millet in

sepla colors.

Mr. Smith devotes twenty-four pages to descriptions and reminiscences of the forest itself, a poetic, artistic and accurate account of its subtle beauties of tree and pool and sunlight falling through the leaves. Then follow biographies of Millet, Carot, Rousseau, the Bayre, accompanied by copies of the choicest work of each. He dwells with loving appreciation and tender sympathy on the forest experiences of each and to him who loves the good, the true, the beautiful the book will prove a source of unmixed delight.

Superbly bound in cloth it extends to 232 pages of elegant hand made paper. No more appropriate gift might cement the friendship of book lovers than Barbizon Days. A Wessels & Company, Publishers.

Lovers of music and art will be very much interested in the book of "Music in Art," by Luna May Ennis, who says that her object "was to suggest an outline—a starting point at least, for further study, to all lovers of music and art." Briefly she has given us the story from Apollo and the "great god Pan" down through the Christian centuries. She gives us an opportunity to study for ourselves the important part music has played in all ages in youth, in love, in patriotism and in worship. The book is illustrated with thirty-three excellent reproductions of celebrated paintings, including Barrias' "Death of Chopin," "Burne-Jones," "Golden Stairs" and "St. Cecilia," by five different artists of great note. The book is furnished with a bibliography and index of the authors mentioned. L. C. Page & Company are the publishers.

"The Art of the Pitti Palace," by Julia de Wolf Addison, is one of the books of

the season which will be very much appreciated by lovers of art. The Pitti gallery at Florence is one of the interesting art museums of interest to tourists and art lovers, containing many of the world famous pictures. The book contains an intelligent and systematic description of the pictures of the gallery, room by room, with forty illustrations, including five Madonnas. The book is good for reference as well as contemplation. A short history of the building of the palace, as well as of its owners, is included. L. C. Page & Co. are the publishers.

## Pointed Paragraphs

No man is in business for himself if he is married.

A poor excuse is better than none—if it goes with the boss.

The ticker doesn't tell everything that happens in Wall street.

Champagne drinking affects the eyes; it makes \$5 look like 30 cents.

A man is sometimes known by the things he might have done but didn't.

Too often the man who pushes himself along in the world shoves others aside.

Opinions should be formed with great caution and changed with still greater caution.

A woman will forgive a man almost anything except his failure to ask to be forgiven.

If a music teacher can't make anything else out of the voice of an heiress he can make money.

During the courtship a man tells a woman he can't live without her, but after marriage he often discovers that he can't live with her.

## WHEN IN DOUBT...

As to what to give for Xmas

## ..GIVE BOOKS..

A Few Suggestions at Popular Prices—

## \$1.50 BOOKS AT 50c

Castle Cranecrow—Ordeal of Elizabeth—Helmet of Navarre—Uncle Terry—Trail of the Grand Seigneur—Miss Petticoats.

## ..BOOKS..

That usually sell from \$1.25 to \$1.50.

We have hundreds of titles—the following will give you some idea of what can be picked from our 50c table:

Resurrection—Blennerhasset—Cardinal's Snuff Box—Patience Sparhawk—Quest of the Golden Girl—Checkers—Hounds of the Baskervilles—Sherlock Holmes.

E. P. ROE'S WORKS—

3 for.....\$1.00

THE FORTUNES OF FIFI—The prettiest holiday book of the

year—only.....\$1.20

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