

who was a captious critic, in Fitzgerald's judgment Tennyson reached the great climacteric of his poetry in 1842, for the "Idylls," and the later moral and didactic strain of verse were not to his taste, though he wrote to Tennyson in 1873, saying that he admired many passages in the "Idylls." Of Tennyson's plays Sir Alfred Lyall tells us that "The Cup" enjoyed by far the longest run on the stage. While not in possession of data to dispute this, we can only aver that "Queen Mary," "Harold," "Becket" and "The Falcon"—unless, as is possible, there has been a revival of "The Cup"—must have had exceedingly short runs. We were present, a quarter of a century ago, on the second night of the presentation of "The Cup," and though we thought the play superbly staged and acted, we felt confident that it was too classic to take hold of the average theatre-goer. A month later, if we remember rightly, though, as an after-piece, was presented that fine old comedy, "The Belle's Stratagem," and the play was withdrawn, as its continuance would have spelt ruin to Irving. No greater contrast can possibly be imagined than Miss Terry in the roles of Camma, the priestess of Artemis, and the village hoyden of Mrs. Crowley's delightful comedy. In 1878 Lionel, Tennyson's youngest son, was married to Miss Locker, and in 1885 they journeyed to India. Then came to Tennyson one of his greatest sorrows, for Lionel Tennyson died on the homeward journey of a fever contracted in India. Tennyson's beautiful lines to the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava were written in recognition of that distinguished diplomatist's kindness to his invalid son in India—

"But while my life's late eve endures,  
Nor settles into business grey,  
My memories of his brighter years  
Will mix with love for you and yours."

In 1883 a peerage was offered by the Queen, and, on the advice of Gladstone, accepted. In 1884 Tennyson took his seat in the House of Lords as the first representative of a purely literary qualification. He voted for the franchise, upon receiving a pledge from Gladstone that the constituencies should be redistributed. Though Tennyson is said to have had a great affection for Gladstone personally, he detested his politics. In 1892 "The Death of Oenone" and "Akbar's Dream," and a few minor pieces, closed the long series of poems that had held two generations under their charm. On the whole, Tennyson's later work falls short of the perfection shown in his prime, which is only to be expected, owing to the profound melancholy that overclouded his later vision. That a remnant of the Divine spark of genius was left is shown by the writing of "Crossing the Bar," which shows clearly, too, that at the last, his soul was in tune with the Infinite. The final chapter of the "Memoir" gives briefly some of his latest sayings, and describes a peaceful ending. He found his Christianity undisturbed by contentious sects and creeds, but he said: "I dread the losing of forms; I have expressed this in my 'Akbar.'" On October 6, 1892, at midnight, with his hand resting upon his beloved Shakespeare, he "crossed the bar" with the tide that "moving seems asleep." For Tennyson it may be claimed that he not only purified and raised the tone of English poetry from the decadent, artificial, pseudo-romantic, and conventional depths into which it had fallen after the death of that brilliant and illustrious group who, in the first quarter of the century, raised English poetry to a height far above the classic elegance of the eighteenth century, and beyond the domestic, Nature-loving verse of Cowper and Crabbe," but gave it a standard higher than had been hitherto reached since Shakespeare. That Swinburne has, in some ways, overtopped it only shows how high was the standard raised. Of Tennyson's title to immortality, time will show. We are greatly indebted to Sir Alfred Lyall's "Life of Tennyson" for a great deal of the information that has gone to the compilation of this centenary notice.

**BOOKSHELF NOTES AND SHORT REVIEWS.**

August 20, 1900, marks the centenary of the American poet and essayist, Oliver Wendell Holmes, author of "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" and other genial essays and poems. Though born with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth, he pursued, for love's sake, the art of literature. He was born in Cambridge (U.S.A.), but made his home

in that hub of American intellect and culture, Boston. Some idea of the innate humility of this whimsically humorous writer may be obtained by the perusal of a letter written by him to Tennyson in 1890, in which he says:—"I am proud of my birth year, and am humbled when I think of who were and who are my coevals—Darwin, the destroyer and creator; Lord Houghton, the pleasant and kind-hearted lover of men of letters; Gladstone, whom I leave it to you to characterise, but whose vast range of intellectual powers few will question; Mendelssohn, whose music still rings in my ears; and the Laureate, whose 'jewels five words long'—many of them a good deal longer—sparkle in our memories."

Those readers who remember Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice," and her "Sense and Sensibility," will be delighted with Mr. A. C. Benson's paper on Jane Austen at Lyme Regis, which is to be found in the current number of the "Cornhill."

Apròpos of the Tennyson centenary, the "Girls' Own Paper" has a good article on the "scenery that influenced Tennyson." The article is profusely illustrated with photographs of scenes in the New Forest, Haslemere, Malthorpe, the Needles, Freshwater, and other localities in which Tennyson either lived or visited.

Mrs. Steele, whose knowledge of Indian life and character may be said to be expert, contributes to the "Windsor" a very clever character study of the Babu. Parrot-like, the Babu learns quickly, but digests so slowly as to make perfect assimilation very rare indeed.

Professor Stanley Jevons, who, by the way, must be getting quite a veteran, as we remember him over a quarter of a century ago as a full-blown Professor of the Victorian University, Manchester, has a paper in the "Contemporary" on "The Causes of Unemployment," which should prove interesting at this juncture. He thinks the primary cause is the false pride of men who prefer idleness to a low wage, though a low wage is as much as their services are worth. Imperfect education, says a writer in the "Literary World," is a truer cause. And in this we concur.

A really full and instructive handbook for lady motorists has been compiled by Miss Dorothy Levitt, who is an accomplished automobilist. It is published by the Janes at the modest price of 2/6 net.

We have had "God's Good Man" from the pen of Marie Corelli, and we found it farce. "God's Good Woman," however, by Eleanor S. Terry, is not only eminently readable, but has some distinctly original situations, though it reminds us of the story of Potiphar's wife.

We are indebted to Messrs. Wildman and Arey and George Robertson and Co. (Melbourne) for copies of "The Quest" (Justus Miles Forman), "Special Messenger" (R. W. Chambers), and "The Letters of Jennie Allen to her Friend, Miss Musgrove" (Grace Donworth). Reviews of these books will be given in our next issue, as space forbids the notice these books undoubtedly deserve.

**Set in Silver:** C. N. and A. M. Williamson. (London: Methuen and Co., 36 Essex-street, W.C.)

The kind of dashing novel that these two clever collaborators turn out, is too familiar to readers to need particularising. Indeed there is such a sameness about them that were it not for the constant change of locale and scenery, they would be intolerable by repetition of plot. As in the Botor-Chaparron, we have a love romance, a false impersonation, and a record of travel. But the trip taken by the Williamsons, in an automobile through rural England, is the trip we have planned ever since we learned to plan and which we fear will never eventuate. And so we are grateful to these writers for the exceedingly graphic description of the country traversed, some of which we are familiar with, and for the beautiful photographs which serve not only to embellish, but illuminate the text of the book. To those lucky owners of automobiles who have leisure, and the wherewithal to pay hotel, garage, insurance charges, purchase petrol, and the silence of the rural Robert's, and who also possess the temperament that knows no fear, we say—go thou and do likewise. We must not, however, forget to express our unqualified approval of the "Dragon" and the heroine, who, a purely Williamsonian creation, is as lovable, unaffected and loyal a damsel as ever graced the pages of a motor novel.

**Brothers All:** Maarten Maartens. (London: Methuen and Co., 36 Essex-street, W.C.)

There are many novelists, but only one Maarten Maartens. "Brothers All," is the text as well as the title of this book of short stories which are primarily studies of Dutch life. Tragedy is rarely absent from these pages, but where it is, it is replaced by a grim saturnine humour that is only a little less intolerable than tragedy. Of the solidity, precision and thriftiness of the Dutch character we thought we knew something, but of the patient endurance, deep-seated loyalty, and tenacity of purpose of this primitive people, we find we know nothing. But when we come to think of the people who founded the Dutch Republic, and drew together the threads that united the Netherlands, then do we understand that there is nothing that is overdrawn in these studies of a people, who if a stolid, and a primitive, have always proved themselves to be a sturdy and an heroic race.

**EPIGRAMS FROM NEW BOOKS.**

**Mind and Work.** Luther Gulick, M.D. (Cassell, April, 1909, 3/6 net)

A good resolution may be treated as a sort of labour-saving device. Its usefulness lies in the fact that it deals with certain practical issues in advance of actual presentation.

Every time you take hold of a thing, meaning to keep hold, and then let go because you can't help it, you are worse off than you were before. You are simply getting practice in failure; and failure is a vicious habit.

I once asked a man who stands to-day in the forefront of contemporary thought, how he managed to get as much accomplished as he did. I knew him well; I knew he was normally lazy. He said: "I load my wagon at the top of the hill, then I get in front of it, and we start down. I have to keep ahead, that's all."

Some of the most successful people have no more than average mental power, but they have more than average driving power—the power for hanging on.

**SOME PLAY EPIGRAMS.**

**Fenelope:** By Somerset Maugham Comedy Theatre. May, 1909.

She is a great friend of mine—and I hate her; I always knew she was a cat. The whole of life is merely a matter of adding two and two together and getting the right answer. . . . During the last few years I have seen you adding two and two together and making them come to seventy-nine.

I notice that when a woman discovers that her husband has been unfaithful to her, her male relations invariably try and console her by confessing how shockingly they treated their own wives.

I have been a perfect angel, I simply worshipped the ground he walked on. I have loved him as no other man was loved before. . . . No man could stand it!

If a man falls in love with a pretty woman he falls out of it—but if he falls in love with a plain woman he'll be in love all his life.

Very nice fellow—quite a gentleman. No one would think he was a solicitor.

It's a great mistake to think that gout is a mark of good family. The porter at my club is a martyr to it—perhaps he's the illegitimate son of an earl!

A doctor says that it's only out of people who've got nothing the matter with them that they get a living. The people who are ill either get well or die, and that's the end of them.

A wise woman never lets her husband be quite sure of her. The moment he is, Cupid puts on a top-hat and becomes a churchwarden.

Your mother, with her unrivalled knowledge of heathen races, will tell you that man is naturally a most polygamous animal.

That's where women have such an advantage over men—their conscience never troubles them until they have lost their figure and their complexion.



ALBERT LEANING

**SIGNALLING TO MARS.**

Why spend £2,500,000 as Professor Pickering proposes, when it can be done so much cheaper?