

brook, of a refined, scholarly, cheerful, nature-loving mind. Another first book, with an accurately descriptive title, is Margaret Deland's "The Old Garden," a book to which the generally misapplied term of "quaint" may fitly and with praise be applied. Like the old shawls in the poet's attic, there is here

"The scent of cedern chest . . .
And ling'ring sweetness of dried lavender,
Or pale pressed rose-leaves."

If this were a review of all the recent American books of poetry which deserve attention, something should be said of the lighter touch, often most happily successful, of Clinton Scollard, Oscar Fay Adams, and Samuel Minturn Peck. But without further reference to these, or anything more than a reference to the latest volumes of the veteran Whittier and the younger veteran Cranch, we prefer to close this sketch with especial mention of two anonymous books of verse which have recently appeared, so far as we are aware, with little or no heralding. The author of "The Heart of the Weed" writes sonnets that are not dull: that itself is something; but to write sonnets so genuine in feeling and with such firmness and purity of expression, that tell the impersonal story of a woman's heart so freshly, so poetically,—this is to make a real addition to the literature of the emotions. (Read "Grief," "I'd Give Release," "A Prisoned Bird," "Song," p. 34, "I give Thee Naught," "A Year," "Return," "To —," p. 56.) Entirely different, more imitative, more immature in its grasp of life, but with a marvelous lyrical sense and at times an astounding imagination and passion, is the poetry of the anonymous

author of "Sylvian and other Poems." Surely the author, among the "other poems," of "To One having a Talent for Music," "Love Unspoken," "Written at the End of a Book," and "Mary, the Mother, sits on a Hill," has already done enough to win the gratitude of all who have the *flair* for the real thing in poetry. But the chief interest in "John Philip Varley" (the name that goes with "Sylvian") is his promise. If we may assume that the author is young, then all his volatility and imitativeness may be forgiven, for the virility and music of his verse.

We have not attempted to criticise, but rather to furnish data in proof of the statement as to the present extraordinary diffusion of the poetic talent in this country.

Many books of verse issue from the press in which there is scarce a notable stanza from cover to cover. But though all the writers noted here are by no means on a plane of ability, though some of the collections mentioned are extremely unequal in quality, we have named not a single writer whose work does not somewhere show an artistic sense. It is not, of course, necessary that poetry should be great in order to be good; there is, we hold, a vast amount of good at this time. How much, if any, of current verse is likely ever to be ranked as a permanent part of our literature it is not possible to determine. But the sentiment and workmanship of casual verse is improving; certain individuals among the younger writers rise into a high region of thought and expression; and a smaller number, still, give unusual promise of distinguished future performance.

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BRIC-À-BRAC.

Applied Astronomy.

HE took me out to see the stars,
That astronomic bore;
He said there were two moons near Mars,
While Jupiter had four.

I thought of course he'd whisper soon
What fourfold bliss 'twould be
To stroll beneath that fourfold moon
On Jupiter with me.

And when he spoke of Saturn's ring,
I was convinced he'd say
That was the very kind of thing
To offer me some day.

But in a tangent off he went
To double stars. Now that
Was most suggestive, so content
And quite absorbed I sat.

But no, he talked a dreary mess,
Of which the only fraction
That caught my fancy, I confess,
Was "mutual attraction."

I said I thought it very queer
And stupid altogether,
For stars to keep so very near,
And yet not come together.

At that he smiled, and turned his head;
I thought he'd caught the notion.
He merely bowed good-night and said,
Their safety lay in motion.

Esther B. Tiffany.

An Epitaph.

A LADY (who will doubt her home?)
Whose blood was Bay State's bluest,
Once near St. Botolph's town did roam
Among its suburbs newest.

Beside the way she saw a stone—
Small, neat, of plainest granite;
And on one side, with moss o'ergrown,
A lettering: thus ran it—

"I'M FROM BOSTON"—"Ah!" she cried,
"What more could he desire
When, after Boston's joys, he died
And went up one step higher.

"A traveler lies here at rest
Who life's rough ocean tossed on;
His many virtues all expressed
Thus simply—'I'M FROM BOSTON.'"

Charles E. Whittemore.

Uncle Esek's Wisdom.

GRAVITY is a weak imposture; wise men never use it, fools don't know how to.

A WISE man believes as much as he can, a fool as little.

RADICALISM is the beginning of decay, Conservatism is the end of it.

WE stand in our own sunshine oftener than others do.

IT is the little things that are the most wonderful and difficult; it is possible for human enterprise to make a mountain, but impossible for it to make an oyster.

THERE is nothing so necessary as necessity; without it, mankind would have ceased to exist ages ago.

THE heart gets weary, but never gets old.

IF a man is right, he can't be too radical; if wrong, he can't be too conservative.

THE silent man may be overlooked now, but he will get a hearing by and by.

METHOD and dispatch govern the world.

YOU can outlive a slander in half the time you can outargue it.

Uncle Esek.

On a Hymn Book.

OLD hymn book, sure I thought I'd lost you
In the days now long gone by;
I'd forgotten where I tossed you:
Gracious! how I sigh.

In the church a thin partition
Stood between her pew and mine;
And her pious, sweet contrition
Struck me as divine.

Yes, remarkably entrancing
Was she in her sable furs;
And my eyes were always glancing
Up, old book, to hers.

Bless you, very well she knew it,
And I'm sure she liked it too;
Once she whispered, "Please don't do it,"
But her eyes said, "Do."

How to speak — to tell my passion?
How to make her think me true?
Love soon found a curious fashion,
For he spoke through you.

How I used to search your pages
For the words I wished to say;
And received my labor's wages
Every Sabbath day.

Ah, how sweet it was to hand her
You, with lines I'd marked when found!
And how well I'd understand her
When she blushed and frowned.

And one day, old book, you wriggled
From my hand and, rattling, fell
Upon the floor; and she — she giggled,
Did Miss Isabel.

Then when next we met out walking,
I was told in tearful tones
How she'd got a dreadful talking
From the Reverend Jones.

Ah me! No man could resist her
In those sweet and buried years,
So I think — I think I kissed her,
Just to stop her tears.

Jones I gave a good, sound chaffing;
Called his sermons dry as bones;
Soon fair Isabel was laughing —
Said she hated Jones.

It was after that I lost you,
For I needed you no more;
Somewhere — anywhere I tossed you
On a closet floor.

Reverend Samuel still preaches;
Isabel her past atones:
In his Sunday-school she teaches —
Mrs. Samuel Jones.

W. J. Henderson.

Adele aus der Ohe.

DECEMBER 23, 1886. (LISZT.)

I.

WHAT is her playing like?
'Tis like the wind in wintry northern valleys.
A dream-pause, — then it rallies
And once more bends the pine-tops, shatters
The ice-crags, whitely scatters
The spray along the paths of avalanches;
Startles the blood, and every visage blanches.

II.

Half-sleeps the wind above a swirling pool
That holds the trembling shadow of the trees;
Where waves too wildly rush to freeze
Though all the air is cool;
And hear, oh hear, while musically call
With nearer tinkling sounds, or distant roar,
Voices of fall on fall;
And now a swelling blast, that dies; and now —
no more, no more.

JANUARY 8, 1887. (CHOPIN.)

I.

Ah, what celestial art!
And can sweet thoughts become pure tone and float,
All music, into the tranced mind and heart!
Her hand scarce stirs the singing, wiry metal, —
Hear from the wild-rose fall each perfect petal!

II.

And can we have, on earth, of heaven the whole!
Heard thoughts — the soul of inexpressible thought;
Roses of sound
That strew melodious leaves upon the silent ground;
And music that is music's very soul,
Without one touch of earth, —
Too tender, even, for sorrow, too bright for mirth.

R. W. Gilder.