

POEMS BY ALICE CAREY. In one volume of Three Hundred and Ninety-Nine Pages.
BOSTON: TICKNOR AND FIELDS.

THE sisters CAREY, the gifted poetical writers of the West, have made their names current 'in mouths of wisest censure.' For masculine grasp of mind, and the power of winging a sustained flight, perhaps the general verdict is, that PHOEBE CAREY excels her sister; but to our conception, ALICE CAREY, in tender conceits, accurate observation, and felicitous description of nature, and in the musical flow of her verse, is no whit behind her elder 'sister of song.' The compact and capacious volume before us will confirm the justice of this praise. It has nearly an hundred and fifty separate poems, longer or shorter, and although we have not read them all, we have not found an indifferent piece in any that we have found leisure to peruse. We have already devoted so much space to poetical extracts in this department, that we must limit our selections from the present volume, which reaches us last of all. From a small collection of '*Annularies*' we take these touching thoughts of the dead, as connected with the aspects of outward nature:

'LISTENING and listening for the fall
Of his dear step, the cold moon shines
Betimes across the southern hall,
And the black shadows of the vines
O'erblow the mouldy walls, and lie
Heavy along the winding walks —
Where oft we set, in Mays gone by,
Streaked lady-grass and holly-hocks.

'Within a stone's-throw seems the sky
Against the faded woods to bend,
Just as of old the corn-fields lie;
But we, oh! we are changed, my friend!
Since last I saw these maples fade,
The locusts in the burial-ground
Have wrapt their melancholy shade
About a new and turfless mound.

And one who last year heard with me
The summer's dirges wild and dread,
Has joined the peaceful company
Whom we, the living, mourn as dead.
Turning for solace unto thee,
O Future! from the pleasures gone,
Misshapen earth, through mists I see,
That fancy dare not look upon.

'God of the earth and heaven above,
Hear me in mercy, hear me pray:
Let not one golden strain of love
From my life's skein be shorn away.
Or if, in Thy all-wise decree,
The edict be not written so,
Grant, Lord of light, the earnest plea
That I may be the first to go.

'And when the harper of wide space
Shall chant again his mournful hymn,
While on the summer's pale dead face
The leaves are dropping thick and dim:
When songs of robins all are o'er,
And when his work the ant forsakes,
And in the stubbly glebe no more
The grasshopper his pastime takes:

'What time the gray-roofed barn is full,
The sober smiling harvest done,
And whiter than the late-washed wool,
The flax is bleaching in the sun; [times
The friends who sewed my shroud, some—
Shall come about my grave: in tears
Repeating over saddest rhymes
From annularies of past years.'

Pleasant specimens of Miss CAREY's artist-powers as a word-painter are given in '*The Sugar-Camp*,' '*Annie Clayville*,' '*Nellie Watching*,' and a dozen other gems, which we can only name without quoting. We can but commend the book, in its tasteful garb of rich blue and gold, to the affections of our readers. The longest poem which it contains is based on an episode in PRESCOTT's '*Conquest of Mexico*,' but in our judgment it is not the best. We say nothing of the theme, and are quite willing to admit that 'human nature is nearly the same in all conditions, and in every condition has elements of beauty, not less poetical because displayed sometimes amid barbaric splendors and savage superstitions.'

THE AMERICAN ALMANAC AND REPOSITORY OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE: for the Year Eighteen Hundred and Fifty-Five: pp. 352. Boston: PHILLIPS, SAMPSON AND COMPANY. London: SAMPSON, LOW, SON AND COMPANY.

WE have always regarded the Boston 'American Almanac' as one of the very best works of its kind ever issued in America. It is truly what it purports to be, a vast 'repository of useful knowledge,' presented in a volume of convenient size and easy reference to all its departments. Proceeding from the Cambridge Observatory, the first of its class in the United States, the 'Astronomical Department' has already won an established fame for fulness and correctness; and 'unwearied pains have been taken to collect full, authentic, and varied information concerning the complex affairs of the general and State governments;' in proof of which, glance at this synopsis of the second part of the volume:

'IN it will be found full lists of the Executive and Judiciary of the General Government, including the chief officers and clerks of the several Departments; of Collectors of Customs, of Post-masters in the principal cities, of Army and Navy Pension Agents, and of the Indian Superintendents and Agents; of the Inspectors of Steam-boats and their Districts; of the Army, and the various Military Departments and Posts under the new organization; of the Navy, the public vessels, and the Marine Corps; of our Ministers and Consuls in Foreign Countries, and of Foreign Consuls in the United States. These have all been corrected from official sources to the latest dates possible for publication. Later changes are noted in the 'Additions and Corrections,' at the end of the volume. The titles, Commerce and Navigation, and Revenue and Expenditure, published each year in the Almanac, are full and complete abstracts of the public documents of the same name, and the tables connected therewith, and with the Post Office, Mint, and Public Lands, show the receipts and expenditures of the Government under their several heads, the public debt, the imports, exports, tonnage, coinage, sales of land, and the operations of the Post-Office Department, for each year since the adoption of the Federal Constitution. The exports for the last four years are given in detail. The rates of postage are under the new laws; and these, with the inland and foreign mail service, are believed to be complete and correct. The Titles and Abstracts of the Public Laws and Joint Resolutions have been carefully prepared, and are sufficiently full, except for professional use. Among those this year of special interest are the acts relative to the Warehousing System and the establishment of Private Bonded Warehouses; to organize the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas; to regulate the pay of Deputy-Postmasters; concerning the surveying of the public lands in New-Mexico, Kansas, and Nebraska, and donations to actual settlers therein; making provision for Postal Service in California, Oregon, and Washington; to graduate and reduce the price of the Public Lands to actual settlers and cultivators; to increase the pay of the rank and file of the Army; and to carry into effect the Reciprocity Treaty between the United States and Great Britain. The tabular view of the rail-roads in the country is continued from the last volume; and the comparative view of the debts, property, and general financial condition of all the States, has been corrected with great care from the latest official returns. The information concerning the Individual States is as full as in former years. It is believed that nowhere else can be found such full details respecting the Executive and Judiciary, the finances, schools, charitable institutions, and pauperism and crime of the several States. The European part of the work, revised from the best authority to late dates, gives the several States of Europe, with their form of government, the name, title, and date of accession of the reigning sovereigns, the area and population of the several countries,' etc., etc.

To our citizens at home, the value of such a work as this strikes us as scarcely appreciable; while to our countrymen abroad, or going abroad, it is almost a *vade mecum*. An American in Europe, where there is now so much inquiry in relation to the *facts* of our country's condition, growth, and institutions, could have no better prompter of his memory, or 'backer' of his pride of country, than this same modest but most meritorious 'American Almanac.'