

LITERARY CHAT

THE NEW POET.

Two months ago we gave, by mistake, a translation from Victor Hugo as one of Francis Thompson's original poems. Several of our readers were clever enough to notice our slip, and kind enough to let us know of it. It was hardly fair to Victor Hugo, and more than fair to Mr. Thompson. His poems, which have been put out in most sumptuous form, are still being held aloft by the admiring London critics, but people who are not utterly tired of the old will wait a little while before they pronounce him immortal.

He has many of the faults which we find unpleasant and puzzling in George Meredith and Browning, and his rhymes are often false. We are inclined to remember our own American Edgar Saltus with his dictionary rakings, as we have to swallow such Latinisms as "trepidant" and "thurifer."

Yet Francis Thompson can be original, if we will not allow that he may be great. But at his simplest and best we will not allow that he is a whit better than dozens of the minor English and American poets.

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray ;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy flower that day.

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face !
She gave me tokens three :—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
A still word—strings of sand !
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
Fly down to her little hand.

For standing artless as the air,
And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand,
And the love with her sweet eyes.

LITERARY LONDON.

THERE is no place on earth so "cliquy" as London, perhaps because there is no place quite so large. We hear of "Literary London," and the novel of literary London ; and the interviewer, aided by our own active imaginations, has taken us into a realm where all the novelists—everybody but novelists being strictly tabooed as uninteresting—whose books we read, sit about and say clever things to each other and the fortunate listener.

There are some of the literary cliques in London who fancy themselves to be like this, but the real centers are few and far between. The nearer the literary clique comes to being like ordinary people, the pleasanter it is ; and the farther it gets away from the manners and customs of conventional society, the frumpier it grows, and the more certain it is to be filled with lesser lights.

One of the "good" houses to enter is that of Max O'Rell. Most foreigners of distinction like to go there, and except for the fact that the company is very cosmopolitan, and that Sir Augustus Harris' operatic stars often go there to assist in entertaining the guests, it is much like any other drawing room.

The haunt of real Bohemia can be found at the Douglas Sladens'. Sladen is secretary of the London Authors' Club, and his apartment is known as Liberty Hall. Here everybody goes who wants to see "literary Bohemia." There are brandy and soda, cigar smoke, the last ballet dancer, and the interviewer ; but the real book writers are never here. They are serious folk, who wear respectable, well made clothes if they can afford them, and would no more think of velveteen breeches or an embroidered tea gown than of smoking at an evening party.

AN ENGLISH POET.

MR. AUSTIN DOBSON is the leader of one division of English poetry. It is a sort of poetry which has been more readily recognized in the United States than in England. Many of the younger American verse writers have given him the sincere flattery of a very palpable imitation.

Mr. Dobson's verse is Gallic in its lightness and delicacy of touch, and shows the vivacity he must have inherited from his French grandmother. For a number of years he dabbled in his profession of civil engineering, painted a little, wrote a little prose, and at last, under the advice of practical, common sense Anthony Trollope, who was then editor of *St. Paul's Magazine*, Dobson settled down as a serious writer of verse, if not altogether a writer of serious verse.

It was in 1873 that his first book, "Vignettes in Rhyme," was published. If it did not make him famous, it caused Thomas

Bailey Aldrich to say of him that "he has the grace of Suckling, and the finish of Herrick, and is easily master of both in metrical art."

His great charm is in his lyric meter. His verses sing themselves into the memory. There is not a sickly or morbid line in one of them. They are as wholesome as the summer skies. E. A. Abbey, the artist, has

When the north wind howls, and the doors are shut—

There is place and enough for the pains of prose;

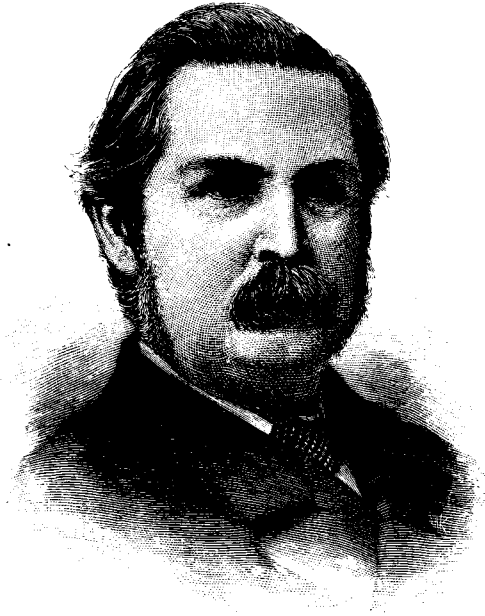
But whenever a scent from the whitethorn blows,

And the jasmine stars to the lattice climb,

And a Rosalind face at the casement shows—

Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,



Austin Dobson.

Engraved by William Klassen from a photograph by Elliott & Fry, London.

declared that "nature illustrated Dobson's poetry."

He once wrote, for a young poet, "Twelve Rules of Familiar Verse":

1. Never be vulgar.
2. Avoid slang and puns.
3. Avoid inversions.
4. Be sparing of long words.
5. Be colloquial, but not commonplace.
6. Choose the lightest and brightest of measures.
7. Let the rhymes be frequent, but not forced.
8. Let them be rigorously exact to the ear.
9. Be as witty as you can.
10. Be serious by accident.
11. Be pathetic with the greatest discretion.
12. Never ask if the writer of these rules has observed them himself.

But we cannot deny that Mr. Dobson has, in his beautiful—

BALLADE OF PROSE AND RHYME.

When the ways are heavy with mire and rut,
In November fogs, in December snows,

When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a "formal cut"—

There is place and enough for the pains of prose;

But whenever the May blood stirs and glows,

And the young year draws to the "golden prime,"

And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose—

Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

In a theme where the thoughts have a pendant strut,

In a changing quarrel of "Ayes" and "Noes,"

In a starched procession of "If" and "But"—

There is place and enough for the pains of prose;

But whenever a soft glance softer grows,

And the light hours dance to the trysting time,

And the secret is told "that no one knows"—

Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

ENVOY.

In the workaday world—for its needs and woes,

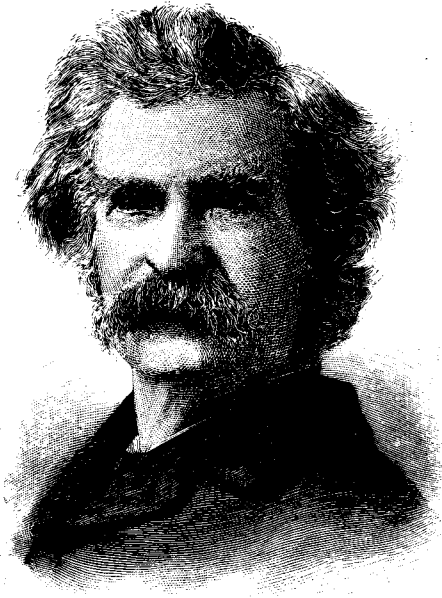
There is place and enough for the pains of
prose;
But whenever the May bells clash and chime,
Then hey!—for the ripple of laughing rhyme.

MARK TWAIN.

MARK TWAIN has gone to Europe again. The publishing house of Charles L. Webster & Company, which made a fortune by

of Mark Twain, which are soiled with much knocking about the world. There are editors clever enough to print what the people want, irrespective of name, and sometimes their success equals their courage.

The pure, good natured American humor which made Mark Twain famous has had mixtures, these late years, of the bitter stream of prejudice. He isn't so joyous as



"Mark Twain."

Engraved by William Klaven from a photograph by Sarony, New York.

the sale of Mr. Clemens' books, has lately made an assignment; and it is beginning to be generally known that Mark Twain, notwithstanding the large sums which he has made by his pen, is comparatively a poor man. "Pudd'nhead Wilson," in his "Calendar," advises putting all your eggs in one basket, and "watching that basket." This is a bit of wisdom which his author has learned from sad experience. It is said that there isn't a scheme too wild for Mark Twain to embark upon, if he has confidence in its promoters; and it has been in many baskets that his eggs have been broken.

There is a fiction afloat that anything a man like Mark Twain writes is accepted and paid for handsomely. Certainly whatever is accepted is paid for. He receives something like two hundred dollars a thousand words for a short story—sometimes. But among the secrets of editorial rooms are manuscripts with names as famous as that

he once was, so light hearted. We forgive him, but we turn about to look for the new man who has the qualities Mr. Clemens lacks. When we laugh we want to laugh with the world, not at it.

THE ENGLISH FEMININE EPIDEMIC.

WHENEVER we hear of a new book by an English woman, particularly if she is a young English woman, we know with a dreadful foreboding that it is going to deal with "the questions of the hour." The modern English feminine view of "the questions of the hour," or "the deeper problems of the day," seems to be confined to a rapid and hysterical impression of some phase of the relations of the sexes. It is as though the "revolting daughters" of whom we hear so much in English reviews, in their determination to be just as naughty as they could be, had found their way into the small but select family library of medi-

cal lore, and then had gone shrieking out, terribly excited, to tell an anxious world all about it.

Alma Tadema's daughter is the latest prophetic to burst from the closet. While her book is not out yet, it is being advertised as being another discussion of these deep, deep subjects. If this class of young women do nothing else, they add a new

the rolls to a typewriter, who makes the manuscript.

We must believe that it is in depicting real life, which he sees with the fine, honest thoughts of a man who has the heart of a gentleman, that he most enjoys himself.

A WESTERN REALIST.

A NEW YORKER coming up in the ele-



Captain Charles King.

Engraved by William Klasen from a photograph by Gilbert, Philadelphia.

frill to the picturesque history of the end of the nineteenth century.

THE SWORD AND THE PHONOGRAPH.

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING has made the success of his life in writing a book for boys. It is a story of the Military Academy, and he has come near doing for the West Point of his day what Thomas Hughes did for the Rugby of his.

Captain King began by writing sentimental love stories, as healthy and sweet—and as cloying, after a while—as sugar candy. They sold to the same sort of people that other confectionery went to, but there were better things in him. General Wolseley has said that his description of the battle of Gettysburg, in "Between the Lines," is the best description of a battle ever written.

Captain King never touches a pen, and he frankly tells his stories for money. He talks all of them into a phonograph and sends

vated train; the other day, saw a young woman—a fashionably dressed young woman, with the air and manner of a society girl—reading "Main Traveled Roads," by Hamlin Garland; and he has been going about lecturing upon the text ever since. He does not wonder that the most fashionable gathering place in town was chosen as the headquarters of the Woman Suffragists, when such girls are reading Hamlin Garland's stories.

Garland is a realist who glosses nothing. He presents the stern, bitter, sordid facts of life. It is not a case of "be good and you will be happy." We are not given the picturesque half light which hides the squalor, and brings out the beauties of resignation. He turns on the full glow of day, and we see all the mean and petty details, all the hard facts to which we shut our eyes when they are in the lives of other people.

No author has ever made such an appeal



Hamlin Garland.

Engraved by William Klassen.

for the education of the people as Hamlin Garland. The life that he depicts is only mean and sordid, because the people who live it have not the eyes to see its beauties, and the knowledge to soften its hardships. He himself came from the Western farms, and from the honest, homely people of whom he writes. Perhaps he himself is too recently from the soil to see in it anything except the familiar enemy.

Take men who have been brought up in luxury—sons of English lords or New York merchants. They go to the West, often taking with them wives who have known only the usual life of a well brought up young girl. The trials which make the farmer's wife an old woman at forty, these young people make into a frolic. The sun comes up in a glory for them. The mountains are grander than palaces and pictures. They do not put their milk on the table in a tin pan, nor fry their food; and they know the spiritual uses of a daily bath.

It is not legislation that is to better the condition of Mr. Garland's people, but education; and for that, for an opening of the gates of understanding, his stories are the strongest plea.

MRS. LANGTRY'S NOVEL.

MRS. LANGTRY is writing a novel. She has been writing a novel ever since she

found it necessary to advertise herself, because she never has neglected any of the ways to do this in the most effective manner. But the late Edmund Yates is authority for the statement that Mrs. Langtry's novel is a good one. He was called in from time to time to consult upon various incidents, and Mrs. Langtry frequently reads extracts and anecdotes from it to her friends. The book has become a sort of passion with her, her friends say, and she is constantly talking about it. She will not allow any publisher to have it, but will print and circulate it herself.

It will be curious to see if she who has lived so much, feels called upon to discuss any of "the burning questions of the day." She has probably lived too near the fires to care to discuss some of them. But of this Mr. Yates left no information.

JOHN RUSSELL YOUNG.

JOHN RUSSELL YOUNG is a rare instance of the man of letters who is also the man of affairs. Besides the qualities that have won for him distinction in public life, he combines with unerring editorial judgment, and the peculiar talents that go to make up a journalist, the ability to write in a style which as great an authority as Wendell Phillips compared favorably with that of Macaulay and Channing.

Mr. Young began his journalistic life as a boy on the *Philadelphia Press*. It is the theory of most editors that to become a great journalist, a boy must have been brought up on printer's ink. He was a reporter until 1860, when Colonel Forney took him to Washington as his private secretary. His earliest famous piece of work was the description of the first battle of Bull Run.

During the Arthur administration he served as United States minister to China. Resigning after the election of 1884, he returned to America and was for two or three years the leading editorial writer of the *New York Herald*. Since then, although he has a proprietary interest in the *Evening Star* of Philadelphia, where he resides, he has not undertaken any regular journalistic connection. His time has been devoted to



John Russell Young.

Engraved by William Klaser from a photograph by Gilbert, Philadelphia.

At the end of the war he went on the *New York Tribune* with Horace Greeley, who trained more great editors than any other journalist that ever lived. In 1870 he was sent abroad by the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Boutwell, upon a mission concerning the finances of the United States. He saw the rise and fall of the Commune, and no man has written such a description of the event.

Mr. Young lived abroad for five years, becoming the friend of almost every great statesman in Europe. While in London, General Grant invited him to accompany him on his tour around the world. He was for two years a member of the Grant family; and great soldier and famous man as Grant was, the tactful genius of Mr. Young contributed not a little to the unbroken series of triumphs that marked the general's progress.

occasional literary work, to his private affairs, and to his duties as president of the Union League Club of Philadelphia, and at one time as a vice president of the Reading system of railroads.

"THE YELLOW BOOK."

THIS new English periodical, which sets itself up as being everything that a periodical should not be, and lacking every quality which a periodical should have, has a young American writer, Mr. Henry Harland, for an editor. *The Yellow Book* cannot properly be called a magazine at all. Its first principle is to print nothing of contemporary interest; or at least nothing which will come as "news" to the reader. Its life is limited to three years. It is to be hoped its owners have money enough to keep it going for that length of time.

Mr. Arthur Beardsley, the latest English

fad, has designed the cover. A young lady is represented as playing the piano in the middle of a wheat field. The whole thing would strike one who did not belong to the "decadents" as bearing some resemblance to the vagaries which *Alice* discovered in Wonderland.

But there is no doubt about Mr. Henry Harland being a very clever story teller when he takes a holiday from *The Yellow Book*. His latest collection, "Mademoiselle Miss, and Other Stories," is as readable as anything he has done since "As it Was Written." It was long supposed that "Sydney Luska"—the *nom de plume* under which his first books were written—was a Jew, as he so persistently chose Hebrews as his subjects; but it was all a youthful pose from which he has recovered.

One or two of the stories in this new book, particularly "The Funeral March of a Marionette," are almost like translations from the French.

Zizi, the marionette, is a grisette of the type which Frenchmen know so well how to draw. She leaves the world like a poor little tawdry Columbine whose Pierrot may be a trifle soiled.

ROBERT BUCHANAN'S RUSE.

SOME of the newspapers are telling the story that Robert Buchanan published his latest book anonymously so that the reviews would notice it—a thing they would never do had it been printed over his own name. The ruse succeeded, for they praised it warmly. This was no more than so high an authority as Dante Gabriel Rossetti had done years before.

Hall Caine says that although Buchanan had published years before an article upon Rossetti, called "The Fleshly School of Poetry," that almost the last thing Rossetti read was Buchanan's verses, and that he called them a work of genius.

MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL.

MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL is a survival of old Virginia conditions, just as her "Maid Marian" was left over from the Elizabethan days. She is a grand niece of President Tyler, and all her girlhood was spent in "The Shelter," the old home of the family in Gloucester County. The war made little change in this old house. While Miss Seawell was growing up, the negroes still remained on the place, and there was very little difference in her bringing up from that which had been given to her mother and grandmother.

Her father was a distinguished lawyer,

and he gave his daughter "courses of reading," in the good old Virginia fashion. Fortunately these embraced a thorough study of old English literature. She was not allowed to read fiction; and when she was seventeen, her only novel had been "The Vicar of Wakefield."

It was her ambition to live on the largest plantation in the county; but her father's death came when she was about twenty, and the old home in "The Shelter" was broken up. The family spent some time in Europe, and then established themselves in Washington. For some years Miss Seawell wrote for the press under several names, until at last "Maid Marian" was written, and people began to ask for the author.

Every one knows the story of the Elizabethan picture of the beautiful young girl that "came alive," and the comical incidents that followed her introduction into a modern hotel. The story was made into a play which Rosina Vokes was playing when she was seized with her fatal illness. But Miss Seawell's most successful work has been a series of stories of the American navy, for boys. They are full of humor, pathos, and kindness. "Little Jarvis" and "Midshipman Paulding" are delightful children's books.

Miss Seawell started a loud discussion two years ago by writing an article denying that women had creative faculty. The contest raged for months, and dozens of well known people took a hand, leaving Miss Seawell with a victory which one woman said she "ought to have been ashamed of."

SOME NEW BOOKS.

CONAN DOYLE's new book will bear the title of "The Stack-Monroe Letters," and will be the autobiography of a young physician. Having killed Sherlock Holmes, and the world still being in a clamor for mystery, a doctor has been brought forth, who knows as much as a detective, and possibly is as interesting.

Mr. Besant's new book is called "A Crown Windfall." Clark Russell will soon bring out "A Heart of Oak." Robert Louis Stevenson has done nothing since "Ebb Tide," which the syndicate that owns it is putting out in every conceivable way.

Mr. Stevenson says he dislikes to be interviewed, and he hates "literary" people. His latest grievance is that a young interviewer described him as having "a tall, willowy column which supported his classic head, from which proceeded a hacking cough."

THE SILVER THREAD.*

By Lieut. John Lloyd,

Author of "Captain Adair's Wife."

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS ALREADY PUBLISHED.

A BAND of raiding Apaches has attacked the Broadway mill, near the Arizona town of Tombstone. The savages have seized the mill building, capturing ten miners who were at work there, and are advancing to attack the house, which stands at a few rods' distance.

In the house are ten more of the mill men, and four refugees who have been with a picnic party from Tombstone, and have sought shelter there. These four are Croft, who owns a bank in the town; John Standish, a young engineer who has recently come from New York to save the Lady Jane mine from a threatened influx of water; Jack Torrance, son of the superintendent of the Lady Jane; and Katherine Halloran, daughter of the owner of another mine, the Silver Thread. Croft views Standish with hostility as an interloper in Tombstone, and suspects him of designs upon the Silver Thread mine, as to the rightful ownership of which there is a secret shared by Mr. Halloran, the present possessor, and Croft.

But just now a common danger makes all this forgotten. Croft and Standish are with Miss Halloran on the roof of the Broadway mill house, eager for an opportunity to fire on the advancing Indians, who are cunningly sheltering themselves by making their white prisoners march in front of them. They are close to the house when one of the captive miners, a tall Cornishman named Jacoby, turns, bound as he is, and springs desperately upon the Indian behind him.

VI.

AS Jacoby turned upon his Apache captor, the two men and the girl on the roof involuntarily sprang to their feet. They could hear and see everything. Standish fired, but wildly. He feared that he would hit the white man, but he could not keep his rifle from his shoulder. In his heart there was an awful thirst to kill. He wanted to get into the thick of that fight. His heart beat in his throat, as he saw the giant's struggle.

With his bare hands the Cornishman struck out like a wild beast. An Apache hacked at him, but he tore the knife from the Indian's hands, and with one downward stroke severed the bonds that held his feet together. Standish thought in that instant that they must have bound Jacoby as he slept. He moved like lightning. He gave one shove to the crowd about him, and stooping again, severed the bonds of the man

next to him. Then he turned again to the Indians.

His onslaught had been so unexpected, so much more rapid than words can tell it, that the savages had had no time to recover. They hate a bold warfare. It finds them nonplussed. They want to get behind an ambush to kill. An Indian had lifted his rifle, and aimed it at Jacoby, but Standish sent a bullet into his head before his sight was taken. Again and again the young man's rifle sounded. He was trying to divert the fire of the Indians until Jacoby could free the men and give them some sort of a chance for their lives.

Croft had put his rifle down, and stood watching the conflict with the eye of a spectator. Had Standish looked at him, or given a second to comparisons, he must have thought of a Roman senator watching the gladiators. There was upon his countenance perfect fearlessness, almost amusement.

One black, evil face looked up from the mêlée below, and took deliberate aim at the girl by Standish's side. He put out his arm and pulled her to the floor, almost rudely.

"Let me up," she said furiously. "They will kill him!"

"They shall not kill you, if I can help it. Stay where you are. Can you not see that you are only making trouble?"

Standish seemed to bear a charmed life, for the bullets made a shower about him. That instant had meant everything to the men fighting for their lives. Three of them were dead, but Jacoby had freed the others, and they made a desperate dash for the house. The Indians were driven back by the fire from the roof and the windows below. The gates opened, and the men, wounded and exhausted, stumbled, staggered, fell, into the court. Jacoby's face was red with his own blood.

Katherine Halloran threw down the rifle, and started down the stairs.

"Do not go down there," Croft said.

*This story began in the June number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE. Back numbers can be ordered of any newsdealer, or from the publishers.