

highest grade, he was securing a field to which first-rate teachers—on whom the fame and usefulness of a university finally depend—would be attracted. Having secured them, the standard of teaching in the lower departments is practically guaranteed. Experience has taught that the college, too, whose existence seemed lately uncertain, is indispensable: first, in order to give to a large number of prospective American citizens the rudiments, at least, of culture; and, next, in order to prepare the smaller number of youths who desire to go into the professional schools. This new college will not be like the old; it will be neither English nor German, but thoroughly American, an outcome, just as the old was, of American needs and ideals. That it will be possible to create this institution without retaining the largest amount of liberty compatible with efficiency, is not believed by any one familiar with the American and the Harvard spirit. *Hoc opus, hic labor*; and, we may add, *facilis descensus Averno*.

If President Lowell shall succeed in this, he will confer an immense benefit on American intellectual life, for it is not by a few preëminent scholars, but by the high cultivation of a large section of the people that a nation's capacity is judged. Thanks to President Eliot, he will inherit the tradition of publicity, of truth-speaking, of freedom in teaching, not less than the prestige of primacy which have distinguished Harvard since 1869. He finds Harvard international in the provenance of her students and teachers, national in her ideals. He himself has vital contacts with the dominant ideas of to-day and foresight of the principles which shall rule to-morrow. None of his predecessors entered upon the presidency of Harvard with brighter hopes, or with a more general approval.

SOME FRENCH BOOKS OF VERSE.

PARIS, January 1.

"France, where poet never grew," was Emerson's summary dismissal of French verse. Taine, after laboring through English literature, avowed: "To Alfred Tennyson I prefer Alfred de Musset." The numerous verse-books which crowd each year from the Paris press will never settle for English readers this difference in national emotions and emotional rhythms. But those who can read French aloud well enough to get the swing and cadence of it, and who understand when perhaps elementary thoughts are put in fresh, colored, vivid words, will find a good deal of poetic enjoyment among the fifty-three recent poets, from whom extracts are given with biographical and bibliographical notices in the two volumes of the new revision of "Poètes d'aujourd'hui" by Ad. van Bever and Paul Léautaud (Mer-

cure de France). One word of caution is needed—the reader should strip his mind of all the technical slang about poetic schools, Symbolists, Decadents, and the rest, although Catulle Mendès, who named more than forty years ago the oldest of all, Parnassians, is still vigorous. Somehow these lyric coteries have vanished amid the storm of present strenuous strife. They were never much more than decorative introductions for young men making a noise to apologize for their poetic existence.

It was last century in more than the mathematical sense when Jean Moréas, the Greek who wrote French verses in a fascinatingly curious language which demanded a dictionary of the *Pléiades* for its interpretation, strode with his band of neophytes into a café, and halted before his reflection in the glass to proclaim his self-enthusiasm: "Je suis beau!" The play of youthful spirits gave way in Moréas to work for which his native language prepared him—"Iphigénie" and living reanimations of great Greek tragics. His new volume, "Esquisses et souvenirs" (Mercure de France), cannot but be interesting, though he is past fifty and his youthful following has disappeared—automobil-ing or playing at politics to-day in all likelihood. Many of those who gave promise have dropped out as poets. Henri de Regnier had for a time a new and noble march to his verse and thought. Henry Bataille had lines touching deep as Cowper to his Mother's Picture; but his ability has gone into unpleasant plays. In these versified plays, with Rostand and André Rivoire and others, most of the effective recent French poetry has to be sought. And yet there are solitary voices like Francis Jammes, piping woodnotes wild or lays of peaceful hamlets where church-bells are still ringing, which should please our English religiosity of higher emotion.

Another volume with edited texts and bio-bibliographical notices by Ad. van Bever, is "Les Poètes du terroir" (Dela-grave)—French patois and province poets from the fifteenth century to our own day. It takes in order the old division of regions, which was founded in the common character of the inhabitants—Alsace, Anjou, Auvergne, Béarn, Berry, Bourbonnais, Bourgogne, Bretagne, and so on—giving not only formal poetry, but also the often far more valuable popular songs. With the patois the French text is given a new utility for philologists, as well as for common readers.

"Nos Femmes de lettres" (Perrin), by Paul Flat, editor of the *Revue Bleue*, has three who are poetesses out of five—Comtesse de Noailles, who was born a Rumanian princess, but whose books of French verse have had perhaps more vogue than any other poetry books of late years; Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, wife

of the Egyptian doctor who has published the immense and astonishingly literal translation of the Cairo Arabian Nights; and Renée Vivien, a name which, I believe, conceals an *américaine* of Paris. Another, Madame Henri de Regnier, is a daughter of Heredia. She is perhaps best known for her prose novels, though her occasional verse is worth collecting. In general, these women poets have not yet, like the latest generation of men, enlarged their muse's outlook beyond Love-Love-Love. A book of woman's poetic invention of other days, though not in verse, should be noted here. "Bonnes Fées d'autan" (Calmann-Lévy), by Edmond Pilon, is a choice of the fairy tales of Mesdames d'Aulnoy, de Murat, de La Force, de Beaumont, L'Héritier, and others who wrote for hearts not born cynical—of which there must still be many.

S. D.

Correspondence.

THE REPEAL OF THE DUTY ON BOOKS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: At the meetings of a number of the societies of scholars held during the Christmas vacation resolutions were adopted favoring the repeal of the duty on books printed in English. In some cases, I fear, the matter ended there; secretaries have thought that a strong expression of opinion on a question on which all scholars agree was quite enough. I venture to suggest, however, that all such resolutions should be sent to the House Committee on Ways and Means at Washington, addressed to the chairman, the Hon. Sereno E. Payne. The Archaeological Institute of America requested the secretaries of the local societies in all parts of the country to present the matter to their own Congressmen and Senators. It would be well if all interested in the subject should write to those having a hand in shaping the new tariff. Strong proposals have already been made to increase and widen the scope of the present illiberal duty.

By the copyright law both printers and publishers in this country are well protected; no book may be copyrighted here which has not been manufactured in the United States. Any English publisher of a book likely to have a large sale in this country has it reproduced here in order to secure copyright and generally sells it at the price charged in England. If a book is not likely to secure large enough sale in this country to justify getting out an American edition, it is imported; such imported copies may not be copyrighted, and pay 25 per cent. duty. Unfortunately, it is this class of books which the scholar needs, not the reprints of popular stories and the like. The income to the government from the duty is small, but the burden to the individual scholar is a great one if he has occasion to use many books printed in England.

W. F. HARRIS.

Cambridge, Mass., January 12.

JUSTICE FOR THE EARTHQUAKE SUFFERERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Messina and Reggio, centres of a large district whose chief products are oranges and lemons, found their best markets in our Eastern cities until the tariff of 1897 added to a duty of one cent per pound on oranges, lemons, and similar fruit the following provision:

Boxes, barrels, or other articles containing oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, shad-docks, or pomelos, 30 per centum ad valorem: *Provided*, that the thin wood, so-called, comprising the sides, tops, and bottoms of orange and lemon boxes of the growth and manufacture of the United States, exported as orange and lemon box shooks, may be reimported in completed form, filled with oranges and lemons by the payment of a duty at one-half the rate imposed on similar boxes of entirely foreign growth and manufacture.

This paragraph in the tariff proved prohibitive. It fell disastrously upon the Sicilian and Calabrian peasants, and deprived the consumers of a good quality of fruit, differing in flavor from that raised in Florida and California.

It would be an act of social justice for our tariff reformers to remove this provision whose benefit to Americans is doubtful or insignificant, and it would encourage an afflicted people now forced to accept our alms. It would also tend to decrease the number of Sicilian and Calabrian peasants forced to emigrate.

A. HAYES.

Rome, Italy, December 31.

POE ECLIPSED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The enclosed item from a Cleveland paper you have perhaps already seen. It is hard to tell whether it is humorous or pathetic. The University of Virginia, which seems to depend upon a sprinter for its reputation, is entitled to sympathy.

EDWARD DICKINSON.

Oberlin, O., January 11.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va., January 8.—Although President Roosevelt has written a personal letter to "Jim" Rector, urging him to another race with Walker, the man from South Africa, Rector cannot take part in such a contest without endangering his life. Rector, who is taking law here, and has done more to bring the University of Virginia into popular notice than any man since the days of Thomas Jefferson, founder of the college, has been warned that he cannot live two years if he continues in training.

THE HETCH HETCHY VALLEY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your issue of January 7, 1909, has an appeal from George Edwards to the *Nation* and its readers to assist in blocking the city of San Francisco and the other cities about San Francisco Bay in their efforts to obtain the use of Hetch Hetchy Valley as a great reservoir for water to supply those cities. We are familiar here with the arguments with which Mr. Edwards supports his appeal. They have been urged by John Muir and some others who are genuine lovers of nature and undoubtedly believe the scenic beauty of Hetch Hetchy Valley will be diminished by turning it into a mountain lake. But the fight against San

Francisco and the other bay cities is made principally by the Spring Valley Water Works, a private corporation that has heretofore had a monopoly of the water supply for the city of San Francisco. Some of us who are sincere lovers of the mountains and of mountain scenery, and have given much time and labor to securing forest reservations in the Sierras, have been amazed at the arguments of persons who apparently have no connection with the Spring Valley Water Works. A fair sample of those arguments appears in Mr. Edwards's letter.

San Francisco now has a population well on towards 500,000, and other cities about the Bay of San Francisco aggregate nearly as much more. The sources of supply of water in the neighborhood are not sufficient for a great population, and those sources of supply are held in private ownership. These facts are sufficient to show any reasonable person how serious the situation is for our people. The Spring Valley Water Works owns the principal local sources of supply. There is only one other corporation now engaged in the water supply business, viz., the company that furnishes water to the cities of Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, etc. We are willing to pay a fair value for the plants of these companies. Recently I served a term as Mayor of the city of Oakland, and my experience has convinced me that the water companies furnishing water to the cities around the bay have been heretofore (not now, however) the most baneful sources of municipal corruption with which we have had to contend. Lovers of civic righteousness should give us their sympathy and assistance to free ourselves from this burden that may at any time under different corporate management be imposed upon us.

Mr. Edwards probably refers, when he mentions other sources of supply, to other streams than the Tuolumne flowing from the Sierras into the great San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys, but unfortunately for his argument the waters from all those streams have been appropriated by different corporations for power, mining, and irrigation purposes, and any man versed in practical affairs knows that it will be impossible to utilize the waters of any of these other streams without condemnation and paying immense sums of money. But as to the Tuolumne River, while it is the largest one of all that can be utilized for our purposes, there are probably no valid claimants to the use of its waters, except two irrigation districts in the San Joaquin Valley. These districts are provided for to their satisfaction in the agreement exacted by the Secretary of the Interior when he granted the privilege to the city of San Francisco to impound waters in the Hetch Hetchy Valley.

The Tuolumne furnishes, and is the only stream that does furnish, a sufficient supply of water to meet the needs of the cities around the Bay of San Francisco for all time to come, and also meet the needs of farmers whose lands can be irrigated therefrom. I believe all disinterested engineers agree in the proposition that the waters of the Tuolumne River are the most available source of supply for the bay cities. One reason they are the most available is because none of them has a natural site for reservoir purposes equalling the Hetch Hetchy in excellence. These mountain streams run down deep cañons, with now

and then a little valley of a high gradient, and not one of them, I believe, and my knowledge is reasonably full, has a really good reservoir site large enough to meet the requirements of the situation, excepting only the Tuolumne River. This river, heading on Mts. Lyall, Dana, etc., flows through extensive tracts of comparatively level land, known as the Tuolumne Meadows, at an elevation of about nine thousand sand feet, and then pitches into a gorge which is about twenty miles long. At the lower end of this gorge the walls of the cañon expand and include Hetch Hetchy Valley, with a floor almost level. At the lower end of the valley these walls come together again, and you can easily pitch a stone across the stream where the dam will be located, with perpendicular granite walls rising on each side. A high dam can therefore be made at comparatively small expense; and, as the floor of the valley is level, the amount of water that a dam 250 feet high will retain is enormous. I venture to say there is not on this earth so fine a site for a reservoir. The conditions are ideal, and nature was kind to the millions who will inhabit the cities around San Francisco Bay by providing such a place for them to get water from.

This brings us to the second ground of objection, viz.: that the valley is now a beautiful meadow, and to change it into a mountain lake will destroy its beauty. It will undoubtedly destroy the meadow, but the lake that will be created will be a much greater natural attraction than the valley is in its present condition. The lower end is wet, and the mosquitoes are a frightful pest. In ordinary seasons it is not until late in July that people can camp in the valley, with any degree of comfort. Very few people visit the valley. It can be reached only by a trail. I spent eight days in the valley last summer, after the mosquito season had passed, and I do not believe more than twenty-five persons visited the valley during the time I was there. If the recommendation of Mr. Pinchot, who has done so much for forest scenery and for preserving the forests, and the recommendation of Secretary Garfield and President Roosevelt are adopted, San Francisco will turn this beautiful but mosquito-breeding meadow into a beautiful mountain lake, whose attractions will be unique in character, and probably as great as that of any lake of its size in the mountains of any country. It will be necessary for San Francisco to build good roads to the lake, and this will enable lovers of natural scenery to get to it. The charms of Hetch Hetchy Valley have been known for more than forty years, but it is rare to find any person in California who has taken the trouble to ride over the mountain trails in order to see it. If good roads are built into the valley, this mountain lake will then become accessible, and will be visited by thousands who will never see it if left in its present condition.

The only other objection of Mr. Edwards and those who agree with him, worth considering, is that when the watershed above Hetch Hetchy is made accessible by good roads, then there will be such a crowd of people desiring to go there that the city of San Francisco will attempt to restrain them, on the ground that they are polluting the waters of the river. How can San Francisco keep people from going into the mountains above Hetch Hetchy? The head-