

(1893). But, having occasion lately to look into *Macmillan's* for something else, my eye chanced to fall on the poem there (printed of course from the poet's manuscript), and found "column'd Parthenon." So much for an honest effort on my part to be accurate!

I may add that the fifth stanza in this poem ("Of Knowledge fusing class with class," etc.) was added in the "Tiresias" volume, and some minor changes were made.

Tennyson also wrote to me once—or told me at one of my visits to him—that often what were supposed to be new readings in his poems were really the original ones. I am quite sure that in some cases of the kind they were not the first readings in print, though they may have been in the first manuscript to which he subsequently returned.

It is well known that occasionally he altered his printed text, and was led by the criticisms upon the new reading to restore the earlier one. In "Lady Clara Vere de Vere," for instance, he changed "The gardener Adam" of 1842 to "The grand old gardener," which was generally condemned, and in 1875 he returned to the first reading. The extensive changes made in "The Charge of the Light Brigade" were more vehemently resented by the critics, and the poem now varies only slightly from the earliest printed text.

The reader may remember that in a former letter to the *Nation* (May 6, 1909), I showed that the poet printed no less than four considerable variations of a passage in "Merlin and Vivien," one of which appears only in the first American edition (1857); and three forms of some passages in his works are by no means rare.

I am strongly inclined, moreover, to think that Tennyson sometimes forgot (as Browning occasionally admitted that he did) what he meant in certain figurative passages in his earlier poems; but "that's another story," and I will not dwell upon it here.

Another eminent author, Mr. Gladstone, caused me more than one "bad quarter of an hour," on account of a supposed injustice I had done him, in the notes of my edition of "In Memoriam" (1895). Among the tributes to Arthur Hallam which I had quoted therein, was one of considerable length, ascribed to "W. E. Gladstone"; but when I sent him the book, he wrote to me somewhat curtly, asking on what authority I had mentioned him as having written it. After search through twenty or more books on Tennyson, I found it in Mr. E. C. Tainsh's capital little "Study," of which three editions appeared (1868, 1869, 1870). Then I wrote to Gladstone, referring him to Tainsh, and begging him to inform me whether the passage had been wrongly attributed to him, in order that I might make the necessary correction in my next edition. He did not write in reply, but two years later, when the "Memoir" of Tennyson, by his son, appeared, I found the passage quoted there (Vol. I, p. 299), as from a review of "In Memoriam," "by Mr. Gladstone," which the poet "thought one of the ablest." The quotation was said to be from "Gladstone's 'Gleanings of Past Years,' Vol. II, pp. 136-137." There it is credited to the *Quarterly Review*, October, 1859, with a foot-note stating that the sentence beginning "The writer of this paper," and ending

with the quotation, "I marked him," etc. (from De Vere's "Mary Tudor") "has now (1878) been added." Tainsh had evidently taken it from the "Gleanings," with one slight accidental change ("the rapid, full, and rich development," instead of "the rapid growth and rich development"). It is curious that Gladstone, after reprinting the paper and adding to it in 1878, should have forgotten that he wrote it. His note to me, however, was written when he was eighty-five years old; and he died in May, 1898, less than a year after the *Memoir* of Tennyson was published. I had not troubled myself to write to him again about the matter.

W. J. ROLFE.

Cambridge, Mass., June 21.

#### ENGLISH ROMANTICISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. Mather's able essay on Professor Babbitt's "New Laokoön" raises many points of interest. The doctrine that art should be governed rather by reason than by the emotions is unquestionably a sound one for America to-day. A public which prefers Tchaikovsky to Bach, which dotes on Puccini and neglects Mozart, is in urgent need of higher intellectual standards.

Yet it is unfair to let the reader infer that the so-called romantic movement in English poetry about 1800 was a mere worship of emotionalism. It was rather a loosening of conventional strait-lacings which allowed the poet not only to breathe, but also to think more freely. The result was, as Mr. Courthope shows in his "History of English Poetry," an individualism according to the temperament of the given poet; and although each of them went to some extreme, each made a valuable contribution to the future possibilities of the literature by opening a new field of thought or developing a new method of expression. Thus Wordsworth enriched our contemplative joy in nature for all time, and Shelley gave us visions of political perfection, many of which have come true since he wrote. These two poets widened the thought as well as the emotional range of posterity. Nor should we forget that this was the period of our most inspiring critics: Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey.

Perhaps we can best gauge the value of the romantic poets by observing their influence on the more classic of the Victorians. Tennyson and Arnold till the soil broken by Keats and Wordsworth; or we might call the romanticists the pioneers and the Victorians the settlers. Again, what a charm is added to Augustinism by a fresh personal impulse, as in the lyrics of Mr. Austin Dobson! In his rondeaux and ballades we have all the dainty perfection of "teacup times," combined with a wistful touch of feeling that is original and captivating.

CHARLES WHARTON STORK.

University of Pennsylvania, June 22.

#### PARTY PLATFORMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have long been contemplating the suggestion that our political parties are too diffuse in their platforms, and that only one or two issues should be set forth and continued until they are

fought to the finish. The old parties will hardly consent to this—the present old party leaders I mean. Why not the Progressive party?

Let the tariff issue or the conservation issue or the corporation issue be taken up—perhaps all three—and placed in the platform of each Congressional district this autumn. Then have the general statement made that all other issues which happen to come up in Congress will be referred to the Progressive constituencies for their approval before final action is taken upon them by the Progressives.

In addition then to the one—or two—issue platform, we would have the referendum introduced.

Here is a solution of our present political difficulties.

CHARLES A. WENFIELD.

Providence, R. I., June 20.

#### CHAR-À-BANC.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: What is the earliest date of the appearance of *char-à-banc* in an English book? The first example cited in the Oxford Dictionary is dated 1832. But the following passage from James Edward Smith's "Sketch of a Tour on the Continent," III, 174-5 (second edition, London, 1807), shows that the word was used in England at least a generation earlier:

Sept. 4, [1786]. From hence I sent back the mules of Chamouni, hired at Salenche, with their owner, and proceeded to Villeneuve in a *char-à-banc*, a singular species of vehicle, in which one rides sideways very little raised above the dirt or dust of the road, and quite open to it.

WILLIAM EDWARD MEAD.

Middletown, Conn., June 23.

## Literature.

### ALASKA AND THE FAR NORTH.

*Cruises in the Bering Sea, being Records of Further Sport and Travel.* By Paul Niedieck. Translated from the German by R. A. Floetz. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$5 net.

*Trailing and Camping in Alaska.* By Addison M. Powell. New York: A. Wesels. \$2 net.

*The New North, being Some Account of a Woman's Journey through Canada to the Arctic.* By Agnes Deans Cameron. New York: D. Appleton & Co. \$3 net.

*Handbook of Polar Discoveries.* By A. W. Greely. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. \$1.50 net.

*Tent Life in Siberia.* By George Kennan. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.50 net.

*An Explorer's Adventures in Tibet.* By A. Henry Savage Landor. New York: Harper & Bros. \$1.50.

Mr. Niedieck describes a journey to Kamschatka and Alaska, in the summer of 1906, with a passing glimpse at Japan. About half the book is devoted

to Kamschatka, and the balance to Alaska. While the primary object of the expedition was to hunt bears and big-horn along the Siberian coast, and moose on the American side, its chief value lies in the author's interesting notes on the geography, fauna, and ethnology of the region about Bering Sea. His account of the Siberian coast is particularly welcome, the available literature on that subject being very meagre. We have had better opportunities of becoming acquainted with Alaska, but this book offers an excellent summary of the history and development of the territory, and at least in the chapters on the manners and customs of the aborigines, and their mythology, contains much that has not hitherto appeared in print. A synopsis of the animals collected during the expedition is given in an appendix, and the book is illustrated by a large number of excellent photographs, as well as a chart.

With every desire to see the good points of "Trailing and Camping in Alaska," the reviewer fails to discover the reason for its writing. It is almost everything that a book of description and travel should not be. In his introduction, Mr. Powell tells us that "many incidents which were commonplace to the author, but which might have proved interesting and unusual to the reader, have been curtailed or withheld in order not to interfere with the general character, or to become tedious by their added length." Unfortunately, his book is packed with commonplace incidents. That in itself is no fault. Commonplace incidents may be made highly entertaining. These are not. That Mr. Powell knows Alaska one can have no reasonable doubt; but he lacks the gift to make his knowledge either serviceable or interesting to others. One gets the impression of a collection of unrelated notes, strung together in narrative form; a jumble of history that is common knowledge, anecdote that is lifeless, and facetious comments that do not amuse. The one redeeming feature is the photographic illustrations, many of which are admirable.

The extent to which a writer may make or mar a good subject is strikingly illustrated in the book just mentioned and in Miss Cameron's "New North." The same elements are present in both, but the result is very different. Miss Cameron describes a journey from Edmonton to Athabasca Landing, and down the Athabasca, Slave, and Mackenzie rivers to the Arctic. The incidents of the journey are often commonplace, but she has made them intensely interesting. Her history and anecdotes are always well told, and to the point; the narrative is enlivened by touches of humor that is spontaneous and real; and the whole is presented in a style that lifts the book well above the average story of travel. She describes the

life of fur-trader and Indian, missionary, Eskimo, and whaler, with a touch that is sympathetic, vigorous, and compelling. She reveals to us a new field of achievement, full of human interest; and incidentally opens to the traveller a virtually undiscovered country, readily accessible, and most attractive from every point of view.

In the fourth edition of his well-known handbook, Gen. Greely has added the results of Arctic and Antarctic discoveries within the last few years. One scarcely realizes the extent and importance of recent explorations until one compares this with the previous edition. The twentieth century has already been marked by achievements in these fields surpassing those of many previous centuries. Abruzzi, Amundsen, Ericksen, Peary, and Sverdrup, in the north, and Bruce, Charcot, Nordenskiöld, Scott, and Shackleton, in the south, have thrown a flood of light upon hitherto unknown regions; the North Pole has been actually reached, and the South Pole brought within measurable distance. Generally speaking, comment is unnecessary upon the character of the book as a work of reference. It has long since taken its place as an indispensable companion to the student and general reader. It must, however, be matter of regret to the compiler that he did not await the issue of the dispute touching Dr. Cook's alleged polar discovery. The standing of his work is seriously impaired by the unreserved acceptance of Dr. Cook's claim to the discovery of the North Pole.

As long ago as 1870 Mr. Kennan issued his narrative of life and adventures in Siberia, and because of the readable qualities of the book, as well as the interest of the subject, it has never since ceased to find readers. He has now revised and enlarged his narrative, and added a considerable number of excellent illustrations. "Tent Life in Siberia" embodies a history of the explorations and surveys of the Russian American Telegraph Company, on the Siberian side of Bering Strait. Although first issued so many years ago, Mr. Kennan's account of the country, its scenery, and the manners and customs of its people, is still valuable, and has been made more so by the addition of several new chapters, notably one embodying the incidents and adventures of a winter journey overland from the Okhotsk Sea to the Volga River—a "straight-away sleigh-ride of more than five thousand miles."

In his larger work, "In the Forbidden Land," Mr. Landor gave a detailed account of the scientific results of his memorable journey through Tibet in 1897. The intensely dramatic story of the journey itself, stripped of scientific data, is now made available in "An Explorer's Adventures in Tibet." Seldom indeed has any traveller lived to tell

such a tale of privation, suffering, and hairbreadth escapes. The story is one of unconquerable pluck and endurance, under extraordinary difficulties. Although his presence in Tibet was known from the moment he crossed the boundary, and troops of soldiers were constantly searching for him, Mr. Landor almost succeeded in his mad attempt to reach the sacred city of Lhasa, before he was finally captured. He was cruelly tortured, but by rare good fortune his life was spared, and he was conducted back to the boundary. Of the many important geographical results of his journey, perhaps the most interesting was the discovery of the sources of the Brahmaputra and Sutlej Rivers.

#### ·CURRENT FICTION.

*East London Visions.* By O'Dermid W. Lawler. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

Imagine a combination of "Sartor Resartus" with the "New Arabian Nights," the blend slightly tintured also by the "Vita Nuova," and you will gain some notion of the most oddly fascinating book that for many a day has come under one reviewer's eye. Ostensibly, this is the autobiography of a star-gazing young poet struggling with the conditions of East London. Many of the characters are plainly drawn from the life. Admirable is the picture of the hero's sardonic, friendly, irascible father. Even more massive is the effigy of the Jew Abzedion, lord of his alley and keeper of a fried-fish bar. Vastly amusing and pathetic is the confession of an evangelical clergyman who without a faith, by the shifts and turns of the comedian, "keeps the show going." The women, however, are almost without exception symbols of the religious life. Indeed, the book, taken broadly, is an allegory of the search for a faith.

What redeems it from the aridity of its kind is the foundation of urgent realism and the passion with which the symbolism is created and unwound. This book has eloquence and emotion, and its texture is of a cunningly varied interest. It is humorous withal, with something of the rich extravagance of a Sterne or a Carlyle. We have found its mixture of the sublime with the topsy-turvil always refreshing. Obviously, the widely assorted ingredients of the work make the task of the critic a difficult one. What strikes him as racy and enjoyable in an aesthetic sense, may to another reader seem of oracular importance; to a third, sheer nonsense. We prefer, then, to avoid the judicial duty, merely recording a keen personal enjoyment and representing the temper of the book by an extract.

The author, metamorphosed in a vision into a bird, flits above the haunts