

Books and Authors

The Century Gallery¹

There has been, perhaps, no more complete and satisfactory exhibition of the resources of modern illustration than that furnished by the "Century Gallery," which is a selection from the immense illustrative material collected by the "Century" and "St. Nicholas" magazines. From this material sixty-four representative illustrations have been selected, have been reproduced either in wood engravings or by process, and are issued in the form of artists' proofs. Even a cursory glance at the collection brings out its representative character. Among the American artists whose work appears here, are Blashfield, Blum, Brush, Bunker, Burns, Birch, Boughton, Castaigne, Chase, Cox, Day, Dolph, Eaton, Edwards, Foote, Fuller, Gibson, Gaul, Harrison, Homer, Inness, Kemble, Low, Macomber, Maynard, Millet, Pennell, Remington, Sandham, Sterner, Taber, Wenzell, Wiles; and among the European artists, Barye, Botticelli, Carriera, Corot, Cuyp, Daubigny, Fillippo Lippi, Fortuny, Gérôme, LePage, Menzel, J. F. Millet, Parsons, Russell, Reynolds, Rembrandt, Raphael, Rousseau, Thornycroft, Velasquez, Vierge, Watts. The originals from which these reproductions are made include all the varieties of art which wood-engraving can reproduce—the etching, the pastel, the aquarelle, the wash drawing, the drawing in gouache, and the drawing on wood and in oil. The subjects also are representative, including landscape, figure pictures, ideal sketches, and studies of almost every sort. Taking into consideration the artists, the variety of work, and the range of themes, it is no exaggeration to say that this collection will hold a foremost place. It would be impossible to praise too highly the printing of the pictures. The printing work of the "Century Magazine" is too well known to need any comment, and comparison of these illustrations with their first presentations shows that they are even better in this form than they were in the magazine. The sixty-four illustrations are contained in a portfolio, and are, therefore, in the best possible shape for transference to the walls; a use which is, on the whole, far more enjoyable and educative than any other to which such a collection can be put. The collection is a true popularization of art in that it brings within the reach of people of educated taste and moderate means the opportunity of possessing specimens of the best work of the foremost artists in the most enduring and perfect form.



Irish Idylls²

It is almost impossible to avoid coupling Miss Barlow's book with that which gained for Mr. Barrie in "Auld Licht Idylls" early distinction; indeed, it has already become trite to call the author of "Irish Idylls" the Barrie of Ireland. Lisconnel, with its few cabins "huddling together for company," lying at the foot of a steepish slope from which "the broad level spreads away and away to the horizon, before and behind and on either hand of you, very somberly hued," is to Miss Barlow what Thrums prefigured in "Auld Licht Idylls" to Mr. Barrie's readers. The characterizations of Irish peasant life are as racy of the soil, as quaintly humorous and profoundly pathetic, as are Mr. Barrie's delineations of Scottish life and character. Yet the work of these two writers is differentiated by the broad lines of variation which have separated these two species of the human race through years of natural selection and conditions of existence; moreover, Miss Barlow has a style of her own. The likeness lies nearer the source and has a deeper significance. Walter Pater, in a mood of grave pleasantry, has imagined Charles Lamb coming to the humorists of the nineteenth century and finding the springs of pity in them deepened by the deeper subjectivity, the intenser and closer living with itself, which is the char-

acteristic temper of this later generation. After all, it is the affinity of temper rather than the material wrought upon or the artistic manner of its production that tempts comparison between these writers. This is still further evinced in their common choice of subject; like Burns, Mr. Barrie and Miss Barlow have elected to deal with that lowly phase of life which has honest poverty and moral struggle with the mingled elements of penury and pride—so productive of humor and pathos—for its composite ingredients.

Blending with this quality of insight is that exquisite pity, that soul of sympathy, flowing from which both tears and laughter are alike genuine and contagious. Loving reverence and fidelity to truth, colored by the "vision within," have drawn a likeness which no mere literary art in itself could have produced. The subjects of these Irish stories are, at first glance, meager and commonplace. For a background there is Lisconnel, with its mortarless stone cabins, "three in a row on one side of the road, a couple fast by on the other—not exactly facing them because of a swampy patch—two more a few paces further on, with 'Ody Rafferty's' and 'the widow M'Gurk's,' which stand 'a trifle back o' the road' up the hill-slopes, climbing down to join the group. That is all Lisconnel, unless we count in the O'Driscolls' old dwelling, whose roof has long since top-dressed a neighboring field, and whose walls are in some places peered over by nettles." A proud, self-conscious old woman who upsets established opinion regarding her character, by lavishing her whole legacy of fifteen shillings, sent from "the States," on her neighbors; a good-hearted ne'er-do-weel of a bosthoon who is found to be "one too many" in a numerous household, and becomes the victim of a project of emigration which his family arrange for him without consulting his wishes; the semi-comic-and-tragic contingencies arising unexpectedly in the course of a wet day; the recital of a mother's strong love and maternal affection turned to madness as husband, children, and homestead are successively taken from her by a cruel destiny; the mishaps and tribulations of the course of true love which fill in the space betwixt two Lady-days—these are some of the bare facts on which Miss Barlow has reared a noble structure; but what indescribable and melting pathos, what humor, what refinement of feeling, what originality, what insight, go to make it art!

For these "Idylls" are no mere descriptive sketches thrown offhand with an artistic skill to embellish their prosaicness. Miss Barlow feels and conveys the sensitive impression of that indefinable thrill of things which Robert Louis Stevenson has called the tuning-fork of art. There goes with this the conviction that she writes as one predestined,—"whom the gods have called." What we know of Miss Barlow bears out this impression of her work. She has the humility of the artist. In her propitiatory preface she presents "this little book as an attempt to record some of the things she has seen in the wild bog-land." But in the process, being a poet, she has become more than a transcriber, and we have in "Irish Idylls" a work of art. By the direct representation—without pointing any social or political moral—of a vision of human life, and of the harsh enveloping forces of nature and man's inhumanity to man, operating in the lot of some poor west Irish peasants, whose hamlets may be found set "parenthetically between the wide green pastures and the wide black bogs," Miss Barlow has produced a book which touches the heart—a book which, in its essence, will perform the chief function of art—"to free, arouse, dilate."

Some explanation of Miss Barlow's resource and insight, and of her sympathetic acquaintance with the life of the peasantry she depicts, is to be gathered from the fact that the blood of many Irish generations runs in her veins, and that the traditions of the western Connemarese country took root in her mind when she lived as a child at her grandfather's rectory in County Louth. Years succeeding her childhood were devoted to an intensely eager student-life, but these early impressions retained their grasp on her imagination, and, with a deep love and patriotism for her country speeding her on her intellectual quest, she has revived and freshened these impressions within recent

¹ *The Century Gallery*. Selected Proofs from the "Century Magazine" and "St. Nicholas." (The Century Company, New York. \$10.)

² *Irish Idylls*. By Jane Barlow. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

years, during a pilgrimage to those districts in the far west which form the scenery of "Bogland Studies" and "Irish Idylls." The former was written in verse and attracted considerable attention, but a wider audience and a more popular appreciation has fastened upon "Irish Idylls." Since its publication last autumn the English edition has gone through three editions. The title is rather misleading, for it suggests a representation of the entire nationality, whereas the "Idylls" cover only a segment of the various life of the Irish people. In a recent letter Miss Barlow comments on this equivocal nomenclature as follows: "Although great poverty is only too often to be found all through this country—there are cabins in this village (in the east) as miserable as they well can be—it is perhaps only in the west of Ireland that a state of things such as is described as existing in Lisconnell could justifiably be represented as general."

The faults of Miss Barlow's work are obvious, and admit of repression and amendment as she gains self-command and experience. As a final word, however, we would emphasize the need of a deeper insight into the religious sentiment of a people who have always been susceptible to religious emotion, and whose shriveled and hard-set lives are softened to a much greater extent by the well-spring of deep human instincts of faith and love, which we know exist surely if unobtrusively in the breast of the Irish peasant, than by the good nature and ready wit which are also his heritage. "In the harsh face of life," says Stevenson, "faith can read a bracing gospel."



A Perplexed Philosopher. By Henry George. (Charles L. Webster & Co., New York.) This volume, like everything else from Mr. George's pen, is brilliant in a high degree. Yet it is likely to detract from Mr. George's reputation. It was not worth his while to devote so much mental energy to exposing the inconsistencies of Herbert Spencer, and it was decidedly beneath him to charge that Mr. Spencer abandoned the radical doctrine of his earlier years because of a desire to remain *persona grata* to the English aristocracy. As a matter of fact, Mr. Spencer, because of his health and because of his tastes, mingles but little in society of any sort, and the motive for apostasy is utterly wanting. Beyond this, Mr. Spencer never did, in a logical and thoroughgoing way, accept the doctrine that all men have an equal right to the land. Mr. George shows very clearly that Mr. Spencer's thinking upon this subject was confused from the start, and it is not likely that he would ever have taught as he did the wrongfulness of individual ownership of the land, had he appreciated that its logical consequences were so fatal to vested interests. A man's views upon social questions depend upon his spirit, and not upon any logical deductions from his philosophical creed. Herbert Spencer has not the spirit of a social reformer, or he would have thrown away his entire social philosophy, when he found that on nearly every important question it forced him to fight with the opponents of social reform. Mr. George ought not to have expected Mr. Spencer to uphold the single tax, and he has no more right to accuse him of moral turpitude because he is not logical than he would have to accuse all clergymen of such turpitude who preach the abstract doctrine of brotherhood, and yet upon concrete political measures are on the side of aristocracy and monopoly.

We are accustomed to associate the name of George Moore with novels of the Zola and Maupassant character, by way of illustrating realism in its utmost purity (?). But *The Strike at Arlingford: A Play in Three Acts*, has nothing improper in its whole course. It is a study of the Socialistic movement, and contains some striking epigrammatic observations on the subject. The plot of the play is extremely clever and rather original; some will consider it to be over-cynical. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.)

The Faience Violin, translated from the French of Champfleury, by William Henry Bishop, is a graceful rendering of a delightful little virtuoso sketch. The frenzy of the collector, its origin, growth, and culmination, are traced by the hand of one who was himself the most canny and successful of collectors. It is just the story for lovers of *brac-à-brac*—a book to put in the cabinet beside your bit of *Geux faience*, your specimen of fine Cantigalli, or, by good hap, a genuine jewel of Luca della Robbia.

There is an exquisiteness of feeling and a refinement of form in *Nowadays, and Other Stories*, by George A. Hibbard.

(Harper & Brothers, New York.) The best of them, we think, is that entitled "In the Midst." We enjoy the delicate analyses of character and emotion which Mr. Hibbard presents, as well as the felicity of his turns of expression and the general charm of his style. The publishers have presented these fine sketches in a beautiful volume.

The Story of Parthia is the most recent number in the series of "The Story of the Nations." It is by Professor George Rawlinson, which is a perfectly sufficient guarantee that it is a trustworthy historical account, and, upon examination and comparison, we find nothing to condemn; but this we do say, that the book is far from being, in any true sense, a "story." It is a respectable, abridged history of the Parthians, and it is rather dull. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.)

A new and decidedly handsome library edition in two volumes of Hepworth Dixon's famous work on *Her Majesty's Tower* comes to us from T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York. We miss the not always artistic but certainly illustrative pictures of the earlier editions, but otherwise this is vastly superior. The fascination of the grim romance clinging to the ancient Tower of London is of a lasting kind.



Literary Notes

—Mr. Rudyard Kipling's forthcoming long story is called "The Bridge-Builders."

—A new biographic work on Schopenhauer is expected soon in Dresden. Its author is the late Dr. Bahr, an intimate friend of the great pessimist.

—Mr. Howells is to publish his literary reminiscences in a series of articles entitled "Men and Letters." The papers are to appear in "Harper's."

—Colonel R. S. Lanier, father of the late Sidney Lanier, the poet, died at Macon, Ga., on October 20. He was a lawyer, and eminent in his profession.

—Mr. Holman Hunt is writing a history of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, based on his personal knowledge and his reminiscences of the men who contributed to the movement.

—Louis Kossuth has completed the third volume of his memoirs, but is so nearly blind that he has been unable to read the proof-sheets personally. He is over ninety years of age.

—The Century Company have printed a second edition of Miss Case's "Love of the World," a singularly fresh and suggestive book of religious meditation, of which *The Outlook* spoke at length last season.

—An interesting feature of "Scribner's Magazine" during the coming year will be a novel by George Meredith, which will bear the title of "An Amazing Marriage," and is declared to be a brilliant piece of work.

—A writer in the "Pall Mall Gazette" reports the mound over Rossetti's grave, in the pretty old churchyard of Birchington-on-Sea, as being "trodden away" by visitors, and suggests that an iron railing be placed around the grave and monument.

—Professor Jowett, the late Master of Balliol, Oxford, bequeathed the copyright of all his papers and other writings to the College, with full control to three literary executors, Professor Lewis Campbell, Dr. Evelyn Abbott, and P. Lytton Gell.

—Says the London "Literary World": "£25,000 for the copyright of an ex-Imperial Chancellor's memoirs is not a bad price, and if the report be true that Prince Bismarck has obtained it from a firm of German publishers, we congratulate him on an excellent stroke of business. General Gordon's family got only £6,000 for his famous Diary, and we fancy that that was almost too much."

—Messrs. Little, Brown & Co., of Boston, have issued a new edition of a very attractive volume which last year found many readers. "The World's Best Hymns," compiled and illustrated by Louis K. Harlowe, is so well described by its title that nothing remains to be added to the former notice of the book save the record of the fact that additional hymns have been added to the present edition.

—Messrs. D. Appleton & Co., of this city, announce the Anthropological Series, edited by Professor Frederick Starr, of the University of Chicago—a frequent contributor to *The Outlook*. The books in this series will treat of ethnology, prehistoric archaeology, ethnography, etc., and the purpose is to make the newest of all the sciences—anthropology—better known to intelligent readers who are not specialists. The first book in this series will be "Woman's Place in Primitive Culture," by Professor O. R. Mason, of the Smithsonian Institution; the author will trace in it the division of labor between man and woman, which began with the invention of fire-making.

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