## LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS

From Claxton, Romsen & Haffelfinger we have received "Notes, critical, explanatory, and practical, on the Book of Psalms," by Rev. Albert Barnes. Volumes second and third. Published by Harper & Brothers. This is the closing work of a long life spent in the service of the Christian religion, and it will take its place in the family library and among the students of Scripture as a standard authority. Mr. Barnes has devoted nearly forty years of his life to the preparation of this commentary, and the care which has been taken to make it as complete and perfect as possible will enhance Its value and influence as a means of lucreasing the knowledge of Christian readers with regard to the ancient hymns of the Jewish Church. To each psalm is prefixed a critical and explanatory account of it, with such information about the authorship as a deep, scholarly research has been able to obtain, and the notes give a carefully digested exposition of doubtful and obscure passages. The work is one that will commend itself to the Biblical student, and we hope that the venerable author may live to see some of the fruits of his labor in the appreciation shown for it by Christians of all denomi-

The same house sends us "Springdale Abbey, edited by Joseph Parker, D. D. A story of some interest is given in the shape of a diary and series of letters, but the value of the work is rather in the sketches of character and in the philosophical and religious reflections in which it abounds. There are many delightful chapters which will find appreciative readers, and the fresh, wholesome tone of the book entitles it to the consideration of those who desire to read something that is at once entertaining and full of matter for solid thought.

From Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger we have also received "Leander; or, The Secrets of the Priesthood," by Earnest Truman, which professes to give the experiences of a young man among the Jesuits and secular clergy of the Catholic Church, and his disappointment in not finding the priesthood all that he had imagined it to be. The work is ostensibly a true history, but whether it is so or not, we of course are unable to state.

- From George Gebbie, No. 730 Sansom street, we have received "The Family Doctor." Published by Routledge & Sons, London and New York. This is a work of seven hundred and fifty closely printed pages, in which a large amount of valuable practical information on medical subjects is presented in a convenient and popular shape. The author has endeavored to produce a book that will be suitafor reference in all the numerous cases where it is unnecessary or impracticable to obtain the assistance of a surgeon or physician. Of course no manual of this kind should ever supersede the services of a regularly educated medical man, but there are many cases in which it will prove useful, and the various subjects are treated in such a plain and understandable manner that no one need have any difficulty in comprehending the author's meaning. The work is arranged in the form of a dictionary, or rather encyclopædia, and it is illustrated profusely with explanatory wood-cuts.

-From J. B. Lippincott & Co. we have received the first bound volume of Auerbach's "Villa on the Rhine." Published by Leypoldt & Holt. This edition of one of the most fascinating romances of the day is worthy of the regard, of the reading public not only on account of the neat and elegant style in which it is Issued, but because the author has an interest in the profits. A finely engraved portrait of Auerbach is given as a frontispiece, and the story is prefaced by a sketch of his life, written by Bayard Taylor.

The same house sends us "Over Yonder," the pleasant German story by E. Marlitt, translated by Mrs. A. L. Wister, which appeared in the February number of Lippincott's Magazine. Mr. Bensell's design of the old eavesdroppers is given as a frontispiece, and the story is one that those who perused it in the magazine will be pleased to possess in its present shape.

-From Turner Brothers & Co. we have received Our Boys and Girls, edited by Oliver Optic, for Saturday, May 1, and No. 2 of The Vocalist, published by Fisher & Denison, which gives the comic song of "Tommy Dodd," with piano-forte accompaniment, and several other lyries of like character.

## SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS-COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

PTALY-THE DEATH PENALTY.

From the N. Y. Tribune. A despatch from Florence states that the Court of Appeal, which has for some time been considering the penal code of the Kingdom of Italy, has concluded its labors, having unani-mously agreed that the penalty of death should be abolished. We may, therefore, with confidence anticipate an early expulsion of that penalty from the land of Beccaria and Cayour, Italy is a kingdom of some twenty-five millions of souls. If not yet entitled to rank among the great powers of Europe, she cer-tainly stands first among kingdoms of the second class-above Spain, Sweden, or Turkey. She has risen rapidly from the third or fourth-rate position held by the kingdom of Sardinla from 1815 to 1859, and her alliance is assiduously courted by France on the one hand, and Prussia on the other, in view of that struggle for the mastery which cannot be much longer postponed. Intelligent politicians expect the Pope's remnant of political sovereignty to lapse on the death of Pius IX, so that Italy will be one from the Alps to the southernmost cape of Sicily; while southward slopes of the Alps, though now Swiss or Austrian, are Italian in geography, in language, in race, and gravitate toward the new kingdom with a momentum that cannot forever

be resisted. It cannot be said that Italy abolishes the galfrom any weak, sentimental horror of bloodshed. Unhappily, crimes of violence and passion are common among all classes of her Blood for blood" is the common law the stiletto is a national institution; assassination is a trade among her outlaws; and life is less safe in her cities than in those of almost any

other country of Europe.

Italy puts away the gallows, because experience has fully proved that it incites more ders than it prevents—that its lesson of ven-geance is unwholesome—that the ignorant and passionate can never be made to realize that it is wrong in them to redress their personal inju-ries in the same spirit and by substantially the same means that the State employs in redressing wrongs done to the community. She believes that if a State is ever to teach her people effect-ively to forswear vengeance and bloodshed, she

must begin by setting them the example. That the reform thus instituted will prove a blessing to Haly first, and in time to the whole civilized world, we most profoundly hope and

THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN. From the Louisville (Ky.) Couries

The administration and its whole party are deeply intent upon getting into trouble with Spain. They selze with avidity upon every ineident, actual or reported, that seems to promise a chance of involvement in hostilities. we have not the slightest sympathy with them. We carnestly wish well, as we have more than once said, to the cause of the Cuban revolution, hoping and trusting that those engaged in it have honest and pure purposes in view, but we want no war between the United States and Spain, if war can be avoided with honor. see that much, if anything, could be gained by our country by a war, though a great deal might be lost. We could, of course, seize Cuba, provided Great Britain, France & Co. should consent, which seems doubtful; but Cuba, reliaved from Spanish tyranny, might prefer independence to annexation, and, if forcibly annexed, might prove a sickly body joined to another sickly body, the junction hastening the decomposition of both. Besides getting Cuba, we don't know what our Government could wring from Spain, for she has no money and nothing else that we want. Moreover, weak as sh seems, and in most respects certainly is, she could unquestionably, in the event of hostilities, nflict great injuries upon us. She has little or no commerce of her own, but what ruin she could, with the sympathies of all the world alive in her behalf, work upon us! If the Alabama and two or three other Confederate cruisers, during the late war, nearly swept our commerce from the ocean, how much of it can we suppose would be left by two or three hundred Spanish privateers scouring the ocean day and night? Would not the damage legitimately inflicted upon us outweigh ten times over the value of uba to us, even supposing Cuba to be valuable? Let us scrupulously exact justice from Spain, out let us scrupulously render her justice. This is our true policy and our only true one.

THE POLITICAL PROSPECT.

From the Richmond Disputch. There is not one sign just now in the political horizon unfavorable to a triumph at the approrching election for that side struggling to relieve the people of Virginia from a thraldom more odious than Egyptian bondage. The people are growing daily more and more harmoni-ous and united in their opinions and purposes, and we have every reason to believe that they understand the crisis, and will be ready to meet it at the day of election. They are beginning to see that the question is:—The Constitution as a whole, or the Constitution expurgated of its now objectionable clauses. One or the other must prevail, and between them the choice is so plain that none can be mistaken.

The Constitution as it is has received the emphatic condemnation of General Grant. earnest and explicit has been his execuation of the more obnoxious of its provisions that Governor Wells and his followers have not dared openly to advocate them. In their conclaves they give out their plans, and essay to drill the poor negroes in the policy of prescription and persecution of the white people; but in their public declaratins and written opinions they avoid committing themselves to their true position, which is one of open hostility to the views and wishes of General Grant. With incomparable effrontery they even pretend to be exponents of the President's views, and to be entirely in narmony with him!

This is but a game of unscrupulous cunning and dissimulation. The only chance for its success is the playing it out completely with the imposture and knavishness that thus far have characterized it.

But there is a serious obstacle in their way. The consent and co-operation of higher outho-rities are indispensable to their purposes; and here they will be disappointed. Neither in Washington nor in this city will they find themselves sustained in any of their schemes for stifling the voice of the people of Virginia. We would not insult those who have the control in the matter of arranging the manner of the election, by supposing it possible that they would entertain suggestion intended thus to prevent a fair expression of the popular will.

Indeed, we may go further, and declare that we know the desire of the President is to sub-mit the question on the Constitution in the fairest manner, and that he has just declared again his wish, so often expressed, that the people of Virginia may vote down the obnoxious clauses of the Constitution, We mean what we say here to be understood in the most positive

Then the signs are, we repeat, most cheering. and we are confident of a grand victory for Virginia, and an ignominious defeat of the party of proscription, hate, and blood, led on by Governor Wells.

THE ARMY OF OFFICE-SEEKERS.

From the St. Louis Republican. A Washington correspondent states that, "for thirty newly-created positions in one department, there are over three thousand applications," one hundred aspirants for each place to be filled, ninety-nine of which, at least, must be disappointed. This, looked at from one point of view, would be cheering as evidence of the large number of our fellow-citizens who are willing to sacrifice their personal peace and comfort for the sake of serving their country; but from others it is not quite so satisfactory. When we onsider the very high ratio of those who press hemselves into the public service, who have neither the ability to discharge properly, nor the integrity to discharge faithfully, the trusts they undertake, it is sorrowful to think how much better the public would be served if the Government was free to choose from the best, having no pressure to dietate its selections, and no per-

sonal interest to limit the number of those from among whom the choice might be made. There is still another point of view from which the circumstances are the reverse of encouraging. The unprecedentedly large number of office-seekers indicates a proportionately large number of persons who are out of employment, and who want the means, or the opportunity, or the energy, to choose the way and initiate the means to make a livelihood by some honest pursuit. A mighty array of men have been destroyed, economically, by the war. It is one of the manifold curses of war that it works the economical destruction of men. Thousands of persons who at the breaking out of the war, were engaged in some form of productive occupation, abandoned it for the destructive work of war, or to engage in some traffic which the existence of war ren dered for the time being profitable. While the war made many rich, it also made many poor, and whether the individual who abandoned his business on its account adopted fighting or traffic as the substitute, the effect upon his character was nearly the same; for the excitements of the one and the vicissitudes of the other alike served, in many cases, to render the pursuit of peaceful industry unpalatable. The that the country is full of demoralized people; people demoralized by prosperity and demo-ralized by adversity; disinclined to industrial pursuits with a disinclination that is practically incapacity. Unable to set themselves at work, people are necessarily hangers-on to the providence. They represent the loss which the country has incurred in consequence of the debauch in which it indulged. They are wrecks which the receding tide of war has left upon the shores of society-worthless, impregnated with decay, and livid with moral disease.

ENGLAND AND CEBA. From the N. Y. Herald.

Recent cable telegrams indicate a change Recent cable telegrams indicate a change of action on the part of England which may produce very strange complications in the Cuban question. Belligerent rights are to be conceded to the insurgents, and such assistance rendered to them as was given to our own Rebellion. In the meantime it is not improbable that complications may arise which will produce open war between England and Spain. From Nassau, via Havana, the telegraph states that 'milltary preparations are being made in view of possible complications with Spain." possible complications with Spain.

There is no doubt but this policy is in strict accordance with that which the British Government has always followed in the internal troubles which from time to time have agitated different nations of the world. England and her trade has always gained ground at the expense of other countries. Large or small commercial

competitors cause no variation in policy. "Break them into fragments, they can be kandled easier," appears to be the rule of foreign action. In pursuit of this, discord has been purposely fomented among foreign powers. Civil wars have resulted, and the contending parties, weak-ened and reduced, have leaved for superiors. ened and reduced, have lessed for support upon the very nation which stirred the flame of war In the history of our own continent we find abundant evidence of this policy. There is scarcely a Spanish-American State but bears witness to it. There is no bolder marke i example than ourselves. While England professed to ake the lead in the elevation of the hum in race, and especially denounced before the world every nation that was stained with slavery, she, true to er principles, urged and assisted the sixing power to break up institutions which were nearest in keeping with her own. This she car-

red to a point little short of real warfare, and

hus struck at us in a manner which was more

owardly than honorable. The object of recognizing Cuban belligerent ights is pregnant with meaning. Doing so, England would at once culist great sympathy for herself on the part of the insurgents, and, heir independence achieved, they would natu ally turn for advice to the country which aided hem in the hour of their greatest need. We can well understand what that advice would be. Certainly it would not be annexation to the United States. Cuba is too magnificent a commercial prize for England to let slip through her hands, if it can possibly be held ommercially when it cuts loose from Spain The valuable and increasing trade which already roduces thirty-three million dollars of revenu or the Spanish crown is no mean prize for diplomatic or even warlike effort. The magnificent geographical position of Cuba, unsurpassed by another equal extent of territory on this contianother equal extent of certainy on this conti-nent, is also a tempting bait for those who are interested in pressing forward a commercial supremacy won in the manner we have indi-cated. In our hands Cuba would double our payol strength, neutralize the value of Nassau

understand this as well as we do, and it is, per-haps, statesmanship on their part to prevent our obtaining possession of the "Ever Faith-The sluggish movements of our Government save given England an opportunity to make this threatened diplomatic stroke of recognition of belligerent rights, and if she be quick in her movements she will completely outgeneral the authorities at Washington. Our Washington dignitaries sacrifice all national considerations to political ones, and narrower ideas, based upon still narrower foreign policy, threaten to keep us in a secondary and shameful condition for

and serve us as an outlying fortification for the

protection not only of ourselves, but of all the

epublics on this continent. The English people

many years. But in the lead which England proposes to ake with reference to Cuba there is point involved, and that is our pending Alabama and other claims. The recognition of the Cubans would be a direct confirmation of the principles which were enunciated in the recognition of the "Southern Confederacy." This would be another argument which England would then have against making due reparation to the United

In the meantime the Spanish government appears determined that no cause shall be given to us for interfering in the Cuban trouble. Apolo-gies are made as fast as can be wished for every petty difficulty that occurs. The passengers taken from the Lizzie Majors are surrendered and the proper amends made. There is but one way for the United States to proceed in the present condition of Cuban affairs, and that is the adoption of the bold policy and principles we heretofore laid down. Cuba should be seized on the ground that it is a constant threat against us and the whole continent so long as the island remains in the hands of any foreign power. If England be allowed to outgeneral us nere, it will be infinitely to our shame and disad Even Mexico is on the eve of recogvantage. nizing the revolutionary government. It is ab-surd that we should follow in the track of England, and much more debasing that a timid policy should place us in the rear of Mexico.

DEGRADATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE.

From the N. Y. World. We do not wish to be unjust, even to General Grant: and now that many of the leading i nals of his own party are criticizing his appointments and deploring his incompetency, we deem it fair that what can be reasonably said in exenuation of his blunders should be candidly set forth. General Grant is not alone answers ble for the disgraceful state of things which has been exhibited at Washington since his inauguration. The party that elected him must bear an equal portion of the blame. We do not mean that they must share the discredit because they elected a President of so little experience and capacity (although they are in this sense without doubt responsible), but because they have so stripped the office of its just prerogatives that no President could have made his administration

In the querulous debate which sprang up in the Senate last Wednesday, it was conceded by all the Republican Senators that the business of making appointments has come to a most scandalous pass, and cries aloud for rectification. Most of them spoke in a tone similar to that of Mr. Trumbull, who said "that he regarded the subject of removal from and appointment to office as one of the greatest evils to the country. and calculated to sap the very foundations of our Government. The experience of the last six or eight weeks admonished them all that something should be done to effect a reform. great change had taken place, and Senators and Representatives had become mere solicitors." The portentous change which Senators so strongly deprecated is the natural consequence of the usurpation of executive functions by Congress; but the bad fruits have ripened more rapidly by reason of the personal weakness of the new President. The applicants for offices were not slow to discover that the President is stripped of all real power, and that their chances of success depended upon their courting and conciliating the Senators. Under the new Tenre-of-Office law, the same as under the old, the President can make no removals without the consent of the Senate; and when it was for that that body held fast its grip upon the President, his moral as well as his official influence sunk into a hopeless eclipse. The Senate, being able to prevent his making any appointments or any removals, were seen to possess all the real power, while the President was compelled to take the nominal responsibility. In this state of things, the instinct of the office-seekers led them to importune the Senators for recommendations indorsements, knowing that the President would naturally wish to nominate men whom h could get confirmed, and that the Senators would be likely to vote for the confirmation of persons whom they had themselves recommended system has operated in practice as might have been expected in theory. Applicants, instead of relying on the recommendations of their State officers and other men of influence at home, have besieged Senators for signatures to their papers and the President, instead of submitting his posed nominations to the member of the Cabinet from the same part of the country, who could easily ascertain the qualifications of the applicant by correspondence with trustworthy persons of his acquaintance, has allowed Senators and Congressmen to dictate his nominations. The cases of Ashley and of Jones are instances which illustrate the operation of the system. Ashley, though notoriously and scandalously unfit, was nominated for Governor of a Territory because his papers were signed by nearly all the Republican Congressmen; and Jones, though a particular pet of the President, could not get confirmed. Under this system, all sense of responsibility is frittered away and lost. The Senators who sign the recommendations are not responsible for the nominations, and to avoid giving offense, they sign for almost everybody who asks them. When these thoughtless recom-mendations reach the President, he gives them importance as coming from members of a body which holds a complete check both upon his power of appointment and his power of removal. The consequence is, that Senators who have any sense of character are often obliged to vote

against the confirmation of persons whom they have themselves recommended. Under this ab-

sard system. all effective responsibility is oblite sted. Senators recommend unfit persons be-anse they are not responsible for the nominaous; the President no minates unfit persons be ause they are recommended by the body which responsible for their confirmation; and the esulf is that we have a set of appointees which is generally acknowledged to be a disgrace to the

A weak and sordid President, like General Grant, would doubtless have made many bad no-minations, under any circumstances. But if he had been allowed to act with the proper respon-ibility of his position, he would probably have been more careful, and, at any rate, could have been held to a stricter accountability. nas now a plausible plea in extenuation. an say that his nominal responsibility is disjoined from any real power, and that he has merely deferred to those who have assumed the lower of which he is stripped. The only reason or having a President at all, is that somebody may be responsible for the selection of officers and their efficient discharge of their duties. the executive head of the Government is ever so weak and incapable, it is better that he should act under a full sense of responsibility. He will then seek the aid of responsible advisers whereas, under the present system, he allows himself to be controlled in many cases by the rresponsible, utterly thoughtless, and ever reckless and capricious recommendations of Senators, yielded to the importunities of appli-No system could be imagined more subversive of all genuine or efficient responsi-

When General Grant came into office, undertook to recover the just authority of the President, and for awhile he had the support of House of Representatives in this attempt But he was overreached by Senators who practised upon his inexperience and entrapped him into assenting to changes in the Tenure-of-Office law which he did not understand. When he had thus surrendered his demand for its repeat his position was fatally weakened, and his moral power completely lost. The House could no longer stand by his cause when he had deserted it himself. A modified bill was hatched in the ommittee of conference, explained in one sens to the Senate, in a sense exactly opposite to the House, and passed in hot haste without debate r deliberation. The President was cowed and signed it, and has since been as destitute of moral or political influence as he is of real official power. But it does not become the Republicans who elected him and have thus degraded his office, to complain of the natural result of their own perversity and folly.

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THROUGH RATES and THROUGH RECEIPTS to all points in North and South Carolina, via Seaboard Air Line-Railread, connecting at Portsmouth and to Lynchburg, Va., Tennessee, and the West, via Virginia and Tennessee Air Line and Richmond and Danville Railroad.
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618

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