

THE MAY MAGAZINES.

"THE GALAXY."

The May number of the Galaxy has the following list of articles:—"Put Yourself in His Place," by Charles Reade—Chapters XL and XLI, with an illustration;—"Stage Coach Travelling Forty-eight Years Ago"—A Chapter from Mr. Thurlow Weed's Autobiography, by Thurlow Weed;—"Ab Astris," by Edmund C. Stedman;—"An Editor's Tales," No. V. "The Spotted Dog," Part II. "The Result," by Anthony Trollope;—"Nature and Dress," by John C. Draper;—"Chanet," by J. W. De Forest;—"Gondoliers," by H. H.;—"Ten Years in Rome"—The Inquisition;—"May Song," by Robert Weeks;—"George Sand," by Justin McCarthy;—"Arbutus," by Anne Crane Semmler;—"A Marshal of France," by G. B. M.;—"A Warble for Lilac Time," by Walt Whitman;—"The Lady Gruch's Husband," by Richard Grant White;—"The Galaxy Miscellany," "Drift-Wood," by Philip Quilbitt;—"Literature and Art";—"Memoranda," by Mark Twain;—"Nebula," by the editor.

From an appreciative paper on "George Sand," by Justin McCarthy, we quote the following:—

But in truth we shall never judge George Sand and her writings at all if we insist on criticizing them from any point of view set up by the proprieties or even the moralities of Old England or New England. When the passionate young woman, in whose veins ran the wild blood of Marshal Saxe, found herself surrendered by legality and prescription to a marriage bond against which her soul revolted, society seemed for her to have revolted itself into its original elements. Its conventionalities and traditions contained nothing which she held herself bound to respect. The world was not her friend, nor the world's law. By one great decisive step she severed herself forever from the bonds of what we call society. She had shaken the dust of convention from her feet; the world was all before her where to choose. No creature on earth is so absolutely free as the French-woman who has broken with society. There, then, stood this daring young woman on the threshold of a new, fresh, and illimitable world; a young woman gifted with genius such as our later years have rarely seen, and blessed or cursed with a nature so strangely uniting the most characteristic qualities of man and woman as to be in itself quite unparalleled and unique. Just think of it! Society and the world had no longer any laws which she recognized. Nothing was sacred; nothing was settled. She had to evolve from her own heart and brain her own law of life. What wonder if she made some sad mistakes? Nay, is it not rather a theme for wonder and admiration that she did not know some right at last? I know of no one who seems to me to have been open at once to the temptations of woman's nature and man's nature except this George Sand. Her soul, her brain, her style may be described, from one point of view, as exuberantly and splendidly feminine; yet no other woman has ever shown the same power of understanding and entering into the nature of a man. If Balzac is the only man who has ever thoroughly mastered the mysteries of a woman's heart, George Sand is the only woman, so far as I know, who has ever shown that she could feel as a man can feel. I have read stray passages in her novels which I would confidently submit to the criticism of any intelligent man unacquainted with the text. I am convinced that they would declare that only a man could have thus analyzed the emotions of a woman, and that only a man could have especially a passage in the novel "Fleecino" which, were the author unknown, would, I am satisfied, secure the decision of a jury of literary experts that the author must be a man. Now this gift of entire appreciation of the feelings of a different sex or race is, I take it, one of the rarest and highest dramatic qualities. Especially is it difficult for a woman, as our social life goes, to enter into the feelings of a man. While men and women alike admit the accuracy of certain pictures of women drawn by such artists as Cervantes, Moliere, Balzac, and Thackeray, there are few women—indeed, perhaps there are no women but one—by whom a man has been so painted as to challenge and compel the recognition and acknowledgment of men. In the Galaxy some months ago I wrote of a great English-woman, the authoress of "Romola," and I expressed my conviction that on the whole she is entitled to higher rank as a novelist than even the authoress of "Constance." Many, very many men and women, for whose judgment I have the highest respect, differed from me in this opinion. I still hold it, nevertheless; but I freely admit that George Eliot has nothing like the dramatic insight which enables George Sand to enter into the feelings and the experiences of a man. I go so far as to say that, having some knowledge of the literature of fiction in most countries, I am not aware of any woman but this one who could draw a real, living, struggling, passion-tortured man. All other novelists of George Sand's sex—even including Charlotte Bronte—draw only what I may call "woman's men." If ever the two natures could be united in one form, if ever a single human being could have the soul of man and the soul of woman at once, George Sand might be described as that physical and psychological phenomenon. Now the point to which I wish to direct attention is the peculiarity of the temptation to which a nature such as this was necessarily exposed at every turn when, free of all restraint and a rebel against all conventionalities, it confronted the world and the world's law, and stood up, itself alone, against the domination of custom and the majesty of tradition. I claim, then, that when we have taken all these considerations into account, we are bound to admit that Aurora Dudevant deserves the generous recognition of the world for the use which she made of her splendid gifts. Her influence on French literature has been on the whole a purifying and strengthening power. The cynicism, the recklessness, the wanton, licentious disregard of any manner of principle, the debasing parade of disbelief in any higher purpose or nobler restraint, which are the shame and curse of modern French fiction, find no sanction in the pages of George Sand. I remember no passage in her works which gives the slightest encouragement to the "nothing new, and nothing true, and it don't signify" code of ethics which has been so much in fashion of late years. I find nothing in George Sand which does not do homage to the existence of a principle and a law in everything. This daring woman, who broke with society so early and so conspicuously, has always insisted, through every illustration, character, and catastrophe in her books, that the one only reality, the one only thing that can endure, is the rule of right and of virtue.

Mark Twain, in his "Memoranda," knocks

the hat over the eyes of a sometime Philadelphia pulpit celebrity in this manner:— In a recent issue of the Independent, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, of Brooklyn, has the following utterance on the subject of "Smells":—"I have a new Christian friend who, if he sat in the front pew in church, and a workman should enter the door at the other end, would smell him instantly. My friend is not to blame for the sensitiveness of his nose, any more than you would gain a pointer for being keener on the scent than a snuff-dog. The fact is, if you had all the churches free, by reason of the mixing up of the common people with the pious, you would keep one-half of Christendom sick at their stomachs. If you are going to kill the church thus with bad smells, I will have nothing to do with this work of evangelization.

We have reason to believe that there will be laboring men in heaven; and also a number of negroes, and Esquimaux, and Terra del Fuegoans, and Arabs, and a few Indians, and possibly even some Spaniards and Portuguese. All things are possible with God. We shall have all these sorts of people in heaven; but, alas! in getting them we shall lose the society of J. Halmage. Which is to say, we shall lose the company of one who could give more real "tone" to celestial society than any other contribution Brooklyn could furnish. And what would eternal happiness be without the Doctor? Blissful, unquestionably—we know that well enough—but would it be *distingué*, would it be *recherché* without him? St. Matthew without stockings or sandals; St. Jerome berefted, and with a coarse brown blanket robe dragging the ground; St. Sebastian with scarcely any raiment at all—these we should see, and should enjoy seeing them; but would we not miss a spike-tailed coat and kilt, and turn away regretfully, and say to parties from the Orient:—"These are well enough, but you ought to see Talmage of Brooklyn." I fear me that in the better world we shall not even have Dr. Talmage's "good Christian friend." For if he were sitting under the glory of the Throne, and the keeper of the keys admitted a Benjamin Franklin or other laboring man, that "friend," with his fine natural powers infinitely augmented by emancipation from hampering flesh, would detect him with a single sniff, and immediately take his hat and ask to be excused.

To all outward seeming, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage is of the same material as that used in the construction of his early predecessors in the ministry; and yet one feels that there must be a difference somewhere between him and the Saviour's first disciples. It may be because here, in the nineteenth century, Dr. T. has had advantages which Paul and Peter and the others could not and did not have. There was a lack of polish about them, and a looseness of etiquette, and a want of exclusiveness, which one cannot help noticing. They healed the very beggars, and held intercourse with people of a villainous order every day. If the subject of these remarks had been chosen among the original twelve Apostles, he would not have associated with the rest, because he could not have done so. The fishy smell of some of his comrades who came from around the Sea of Galilee. He would have resigned his commission with some such remark as he makes in the extract quoted above:—"Master, if Thou art going to kill the Church thus with bad smells, I will have nothing to do with this work of evangelization." He is a disciple, and makes that remark to the Master; the only difference is that he makes it in the nineteenth instead of the first century.

Is there a choir in Mr. T.'s church? And does it ever occur that they have no better manners than to sing that hymn which is so suggestive of laborers and mechanics:—"Son of the carpenter, receive this humble work of mine!"

Now, can it be possible that in a handful of centuries the Christian character has fallen away from an imposing heroism that scorned even the stake, the cross, and the axe, to a poor little effeminacy that withers and wilts under an unsavory smell? We are not prepared to believe so, the reverend Doctor and his friend to the contrary notwithstanding. From J. B. Lippincott & Co. we have received the April number of *The Sunday Magazine*, *Good Words*, and *Good Words for the Young*. These publications are as usual copiously illustrated by some of the best English artists of the day, and they are filled with interesting and entertaining reading matter. The peculiar merits of all the three magazines named above are so well understood that it is unnecessary for us to make any extended mention of them, and we can only recommend them most cordially to the attention of the public.

—Turner & Co. send us the following new magazines:—

*The Ladies' Friend* for April is finely illustrated. Its fashion plates give the latest styles, and its literary contents present an agreeable variety of articles. The April number of *Godley's Lady's Book* is up to the usual standard of excellence, both as regards its illustrations and its stories, sketches, poetry, and fashion articles. *Arthur's Home Magazine* and *The Children's Hour* for April are filled with pleasing illustrations and attractive literary matter, suited to the tastes of readers of all ages. —From the Central News Company we have received the latest numbers of *Temple Bar*, *The Cornhill Magazine*, and *London Society*.

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Attest—H. MALTERBERGER, Register. 11 27

JOHN FARNUM & CO., COMMISSION MERCHANTS and Manufacturers of Chesapeake Fishing and other Goods, No. 23 CHESTNUT Street, Philadelphia. 11 2m