NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"Our Branch and its Tributaries."

As a title for a book, the above would not be very suggestive to most people in this part of the world. But it is expressive and significant in the volume before us. The full title is, *Our Branch and its Tributaries*, or *Pictures*, being a History of the Work of the Northwestern Sanitary Commission and its Auxiliaries During the War of the Rebellion; Mrs. Sarah Edwards Henshawe, including a full Report of Receipts and Disbursements, by E. W. Blatchford, Treasurer, and an introductory chapter by Hon. Jas. Skinner. It is published in Chicago by Alfred L. Sewell, who has produced a volume of which any Eastern house might be proud. The paper was made in the Northwest; the press used was made in Chicago, and there, too, the printing and binding were done. It is much the most elegant book that has yet come under our notice from the West.

Mrs. Henshaw, of Ottawa, Illinois, who had taken an active part in the Sanitary work, was requested by the President of the Northwestern Sanitary Commission, E. B. McCagg, Esq., to write its history, and all the voluminous records and correspondence were placed at her disposal. With great labor, and with tact, taste and intelligence that are quite remarkable, she has selected her materials, arranged and classified them, and then wrought them into a narrative that is really fascinating. No part of the history of the war of the rebellion has yet been written as well as this account of the work of the noble men and women connected with the Northwestern Branch of the Sanitary Commission and its tributaries. As a mere record of important facts and events, it is all that was needed. But it is also a vivid and absorbing story, with characters, anecdotes and incidents that give it the color of a romance. Mrs. Henshaw has never before published a book; but this one establishes her a high rank among the literary women of America. Her style is not rhetorical or in any way pretentious. But it is correct, simple, graceful, and often eloquent. There are many passages that cannot be read without moistened eyes; there are many, too, that will excite mirth. Some of the men and women whom we were most active in the hard work of the Commission, are made familiar to us in Mrs. Henshaw's pages. Mrs. Livermore, Mrs. Hoge, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Bickerdyke and others are capitally portrayed. It is hard to detach any portion of this admirable book for reprinting; but the following will illustrate the general style, and introduce some of the characters alluded to:

The battle of Pittsburg Landing found Mrs. Porter at Cairo where she was distributing stores. Hearing that a boatload of wounded was on their way for Mound City Hospital, she hastened there to assist in its reception. The boat arrived in the evening. Mr. and Mrs. Porter went on board, and passed through scene after scene of sorrow. They spent the night in administering refreshments to the fainting, stimulants to the sinking, comfort to the dying, words of a farewell to father, mother, sister, wife, and children, given at their tender keeping.

One young man, in his last moments, painfully drew forth from his bosom a photograph of his mother; and, with broken, dying accents, said to Mrs. Porter, "Tell her—I love her! Tell her—I loved her to the last!" Then his head dropped back on his pillow, and he was dead.

The steamers were placed in Mound City Hospital. Even the pork house referred to by Master Angela was filled. Many died, and, undated, for the rivers were high, and the passage to and fro about the hospital was made in boats. Between the opening in the imperfect flooring of the pork house there could be seen swelling water. Having done what she could in Mound City, Mrs. Porter was ordered to Cairo, where a telegram from the Commission informed her that six ladies were on their way for nurses for Paducah. These she conducted to Paducah, and placed in the hospitals, which were also filled with the wounded from the battle of Pittsburg Landing.

Then she hastened to the front. Here, she was, on her own authority, empowered by Dr. McDougall, to procure for the wounded a supply of female nurses. She went back to Chicago, obtained the number desired, conducted them south, and distributed them among the hospitals at Savannah, where they labored under the supervision of Mrs. Bickerdyke.

From this time, Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Bickerdyke occupied the position of "agents in the field" for the Chicago branch. Their work lay in the hospitals, and was of the most exhausting character. Their incessant attendance, attend-ing the sick, sacrificed their soulful sleep, lived in sight of wounds and suffering and blood, inhaled often a tainted, sickening air, often were wet, and cold, and weary, slept on board beds, dressed in rude clothing, ate coarse food, and endured great labor and privation.

Much of the time they labored together. They were so intimately associated by contrast, that in sanitary work each seemed the complement of the other. Mrs. Porter was gentle, Mrs. Bickerdyke was brusque. The mildness of the one was as effective in the performance of duty as the resolute efficiency of the one, to the turbulent energy of the other. The culture and social position of Mrs. Porter gave her power with the officers; Mrs. Bickerdyke followed her own best judgment in dealing with herself or the sick and file. In person Mrs. Porter was *petite*; Mrs. Bickerdyke, the reverse, and under very voluminous clothing, which, in Mrs. Porter, was an accent of pity and of sympathy; in Mrs. Bickerdyke, of protest and of cheer.

It was on the breaking up of the hospitals at Savannah that Mrs. Bickerdyke began to develop one of her specialties. The order had gone forth, and everything was being made ready. On approaching, one day, the main hospital, she espied a huge pile of soiled clothing—sanitary shirts and drawers, blankets and sheets—evidently prepared for some form of destruction. "What is to be done with these?" she inquired, in a tone of remonstrance. "They are to be burned," was the reply. "Burned!" she exclaimed, "and the women and mothers of the boys out there and the wives and mothers of the men here worked so hard to send!" "Nothing else can be done with them," was the answer. "Don't see they are soiled and bloody, there are too many of them to be washed, and they cannot be moved in this state." "I'll show you, sir, that they can be washed. Where is the wash-house? Send you hear from me!"

She went to the proper officer, and asked that a detail of seven men might be sent her for Monday. The day sacred to the American wash-day arrived, and with it men, teams, barrels and kettles. The hospital yard was turned into a boiling, Washing, wringing, boiling, and drying went apace on. The next morning, Monday, ironing, day, blessed day, and so of Thursday, and Friday, and Saturday. Mrs. Bickerdyke was everywhere every process, all the while attending to her sick; never forgetting a delicacy, or a comfort, good or ill, on egg, and that one a brandy product. New relays of men were sent each day, for the work was tiresome, and the employment was disagreeable. "That's not the way to wash," she would exclaim, seizing the garment and giving a specimen twist, while her pupil looked on, in hopeless admiration. The work worked well, and everybody, Mrs. Bickerdyke did was right, in their eyes. The clothes were washed, dried, folded, (there was no ironing), boxed, and sent to the next point of destination.

The first and second Sanitary Fairs held in Chicago are described by Mrs. Henshaw in the most admirable manner. The assassination of Mr. Lincoln occurred during the preparations for the second, and his portrait, draped in black, was seen everywhere in the Fair. Mrs. Henshaw relates the following touching incident, which we have not seen reported elsewhere:

"The youngest, and much-loved one of President Lincoln, 'Little Tad,' was present at this Fair. He wandered from booth to booth, and finally was found by a lady, sitting apart in bitter weeping, to her inquiries he replied, 'I wanted to go anywhere without seeing a picture of my father.' 'You did love your father very much?' said the lady, her own eyes humid with sympathy. 'Yes, yes,' exclaimed the child; 'nobody ever had such a good father! He was always kind, and there was one thing that he never did—never!' said the child, with loving emphasis. 'And what was that?' inquired his interested mother. 'Every day, no matter how busy he was, he never forgot to say a prayer with me.' He had kept for only from one to five words, he would put his hand on my head and say those.'"

Mrs. Henshaw's narrative of Mrs. Henshaw is thus diversified with anecdotes, sometimes and like this one, and again mirth-provoking. There is not a dry, uninteresting page in the whole volume. The heart of the author was in her work, as it was when she labored with the commission. The introductory chapter, by Hon. Mark Skinner, first President of the Commission, is valuable and interesting; and the Treasurer's report will doubtless have notice done to it. But Mrs. Henshaw's narrative will delight every one for its manner as well as its matter. The book is to be sold by canvassers in the Northwest, but we presume copies could be procured for parties in the East by addressing the publisher, Mr. Sewell.

The North American Review.

The midsummer number opens with a pleasant essay on the life and writings of Sterne, in which the whitewashing movement introduced by Fitzgerald's "*Life*" is somewhat but pretty accurately followed up. We do not think it practicable to erect Laurence Sterne into anything like a hero. What he brought into English literature was the tone of French *causerie*—the brilliant, unhinged, flighty way of getting around any statement, in which the French seem to be at home, and an acknowledged artist; together with a huge importation of the humor (humor much too *Gaulotte*), which he found in Rabelais, and with which, when he plunged in his work as well of English letters, the whole fountain was perfumed. Until Sterne, the national writing was pure or else heartily gross, with an innocent license in its very exhibitions, and Sterne taught it the leer and the double-meaning. The charitable efforts of Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, and here of Mr. Hill, are efforts to disprove these old opinions, but to get over them.

Some facts on meteoric showers are collected and reasoned from by Mr. Newcomb. The facts begin with the year 999, when a dance of stars occurred over Arabia which reminded the survivors of the movements of locusts. The most satisfactorily-observed streams of meteoroids are found to be particles left behind after our intersection with a comet; but the matter of which these messengers is composed is of such tenuity that any effort on their part to shake pestilence or war from their hair would simply result in their shaking themselves to pieces. The particles of which these masses are made up appear to have just extension enough to reflect the light and assert their existence. Professor Newton estimates the number of shooting stars which enter the earth's atmosphere daily at seven millions. Their average mass appears to be a fraction of a grain,—say one third.

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Napoleon that at Mentana the new rifles had performed miracles; and it is no wonder that the reformers eagerly caught up the idea by suggesting that the new saint should be added to the calendar, and that a new invocation should be inserted in the Roman litany—*Sancte Chassepot ora pro nobis!*

The happy flexibility of the Romish principle, as a power of propagandism, is exhibited wherever its missionaries penetrate, whether in Asia or America. Mr. Lea observes this, but soon arrives at the kernel of the difficulty, the radical laxity of its central doctrine, which prevents anything but an external or numerical progress through the world of souls.

"In this country we see the Catholic clergy adapting themselves without complaint to republican institutions, subjected to the laws of the land, enjoying no special immunities or privileges, loudly devoted to the duties of the pastorate, propagating their faith by persuasiveness, earnestly engaged in the religious instruction and moral training of their flocks, and active in the charitable work of feeding the hungry and curing the sick. More than any other denomination throughout the populous North, their labors lie among the poor and humble, and their ceaseless ministrations accomplish results which could be reached by no other instrumentality. It is difficult to imagine those ardent and self-denying men as members of the same brotherhood, believers in the same faith, part of the same organization, as that which from the Vatican has armed the Jesuit legion, and which proclaims eternal war against equality, freedom of conscience, liberal education, self-government, and, in short, all the forces which constitute progress and modern civilization.

"While the ministers of the Church, under the pressure of circumstances, can adapt themselves to the necessities of their position in a free country like this, it is the misfortune of the Papacy that it is the exponent of an infallible church, and that, acting under the immediate inspiration of St. Peter, the Popes have always been and must always be infallible. Infallibility is a heavy burden for poor humanity. It can confess no errors, it can rectify no blunders, it can atone for no action for wrongs. To be consistent with itself, it must remain in one age what it was in another, and from the Middle Ages to-day The world moves on, while it is forced to lag behind, and it thus becomes an anachronism which has lost its usefulness, and can only exert its powers for evil rather than for good. The Mustal Ferretti, kind and benevolent as a man, finds himself as Pius IX, charged with the tremendous task of perpetuating in the nineteenth century the theocratic autocracy which Hildebrand aimed to establish, and which Innocent III. wielded with awful effect."

From the throng of valuable facts amassed by Mr. Brigham in his account of the lumber region of Michigan, we select the following heavy figures, to give a conception of the fatal way in which our West is losing her crowns of pine, restricting our summary to certain mills in the Saginaw Valley alone:

"The whole number of mills in the Saginaw Valley, or tributary to it, exclusive of those at Flint, was, in 1867, eighty-two, with an invested capital of $8,425,500. In these mills there are seventy-five circular saws, sixty-nine vertical or "muley" saws, and thirty-nine gang saws,—one hundred and eighty-three in all. The lumber manufactured in these mills, boards and shingles, amounted to 425,960,100 feet, which is but little more than half their capacity. The aggregate of logs in the booms was 17,304,600. The number of men employed in these mills was 2,402. In addition to this lumber, nearly sixty-five million feet were made during the year. Of this vast product of the year, less than one-eighth remained unsold at the close of the year in the winter. About four hundred million feet of manufactured lumber were actually transported from this Valley during the summer and autumn of the year 1867. Figures like these oppress the imagination."

And here is the Michigan lumberman at home:

"The first party of woodmen usually go to cut in November, as soon as the ground begins to freeze; they select a place for their camp as near to nearly the centre of the 'lot' which they are to work upon, taking care to get a dry soil, in the neighborhood of a spring or brook; they build a log-house, and cut a road to the nearest stream, on which the logs must be floated down. The log-houses are large enough to accommodate from twenty to fifty persons. In the centre of the building a fireplace is built, directly under the apex of the roof, and the only chimney is a round above the fireplace. The work of wood-cutting begins as soon as the road is finished and the ground becomes hard enough to haul the logs, usually early in December,—and it is continued until the streams break up in the spring. The daily wood-chopping begins with the early morning, and is kept up so long as there is light. In the evenings the woodmen sit around their fire, play cards, smoke short pipes, tell stories and sometimes cut a rude dances. There is very little drinking among them during the season of work in the woods. Spirituous liquors are not allowed upon the premises, and the men have usually no money to buy liquor. They are paid by the day, and supplied with suitable food by their employers. Pork and beans, dried fish, bread, and tea are the most approved articles of diet. Coffee is not generally provided, and the delicacies consist chiefly in the wild game which the woodmen themselves may chance to catch. There is plenty of this to be had, if there were time to take it; for the woodlands full of squirrels, rabbits, coons, deer, and black bears, whose flesh is not unpalatable; the streams, too, are full of fish. But the men are too busy in their craft to do much fishing or hunting, and are content with the simple, but nourishing, regular fare. In addition to their regular labors, they get, on an average, about a dollar a day for their labor. The whole gain of a lumberman, in his winter's work, is about a hundred dollars, which a new suit of clothes and a few weeks of sport in the spring generally exhaust. The life of a lumberman is like that of sailors, and very few lay up the fruits of their toil. Their earnings are quite as good as the average of those who lead a roving life. They generally work with spirit and preaching, and make little account of Sundays. A few have books, but the taste for reading is not cultivated. Some play the fiddle and sharpening axes, with such amusements as we have mentioned, fill the spare time. Their occupation is healthy and cheerful. The stock of medicines rarely needs to be replenished, and not much call for a physician to do in their strong-armed company."

The foreign critics who complain of the want of tone in American life have several times gracefully particularized the fact that of our first writers a number display a more exquisite urbanity of style than the children of older civilizations. A selection that should pick out the finished stylists of the time would undoubtedly include several Americans—Irving, Prescott, Hawthorne, Longfellow and Curtis, the last-named, in those books which attach him to the circle of literature proper, displays indeed an overexquisiteness, a sugary finish that would seem to derive from an age of decline, as if he were the sweet, accomplished Virgil of some mellow empire just ripening to its fall. Yet Curtis's addiction to topics has been pursued in the most discordant scenes of American life. What would be made of him by critics of the order of Taine, who are eternally constructing an artistic from the influences of his age? Mr. Howells, in his friendly and kindly panegyric, accepts his man because he exists, and does not attempt to account for him at all. A very charming little memoir results.

John Fiske's considerations on the character of a liberal education are based on the essays of Prof. Farrar, and give a brisk jog to our repose on old systems of teaching. Suppose we have been all wrong in committing to memory first the rule or the paradigm, and arguing from *that* to the example? Suppose our competitive examinations only bring out the brassy, unabashable student, leaving modest worth unnoticed in the shade it loves? Suppose the selection of great authors for grammar exercises and translations is insulting and stultifying? The strictures of Mr. Fiske are worth all attention, but we think he undervates the discipline of memory attained under the old arbitrary rote-study.

John Bascom's paper on Byron as a Citizen of the age of Byron and Scott, "all perfect, finished to the finger-nail," but condemned by prosperity and fortune to be a mere idol of force in private circles. The extracts from his published but forgotten works indicate immense accomplishments; and are very ably selected and criticised by the author.

Mr. Adams Sherman Hill contributes to history a good report of the Chicago Convention.—Mr. Lowell devotes sixty-two of the complete pages of his essay to an elaborate, exhaustive, magnificent handling of Dryden, in his works and personal character. It has never been so well done before, and we do not yet how little of new there was to say! This essay will remain, for American boys, the authority that Macaulay's *Milton* was to their elder brothers. The volume of Dryden is one that attempts no à-plomb, no rhetoric, no phrases, but takes his color completely from what he writes; in a delightful method that is as different from the Macaulay method as possible. When will the scholarly Boston publishers give to the American bookshelf a complete edition of Lowell's works? The time is ripe, and the mind of the country needs them.—Mr. Godkin's exposition of our Political Corruption and Commercial Immorality, is one of the many reform essays that have sprung up all about, since the presentation of Mr. Jenckes' bill, among our dallies, weeklies, monthlies and now in our best quarterly. The last Juvenal is unimpeachable, and brings grave considerations to light, but we cannot but think that the severity of the tempest of Mr. Parton had gone over his satire and furbished it up for popular reading. It is one of the *Nation's* most dreadful editorials, transferred from that journal because it was too long and not susceptible of paragraphy.

The Critical Notices examine nineteen separate works, with admirable judgment. The whole number of articles from the pages of the *North American* as the best existing exponent of modern thought from the republican standpoint, with its high and temper tone of a balanced and tranquil civilization, and one cannot advise with a better guide for the formation of liberal and living opinions.

Harper's Pictorial History of the Great Rebellion.

With Nos. 33, 34 and 35, this enterprise is concluded. We receive them from G. W. Pitcher.

In 1862, while the issue of the great war was still dubious, "and the bravest held his breath for long," Mr. Richard Grant White commenced to prepare for Harper & Brothers a summary of the course of events, to be continued up to the termination, of the revolt, whatever its issue. Messrs. Harper constituted to this the best plates from their illustrated Weekly, and issued the work in parts from the Cobweb, which would accommodate the most considerable of these engravings. Mr. White retired from the task at the commencement of Reconstruction, leaving the work in the hands of two able gentlemen, Mr. Alfred H. Guernsey and Mr. Henry M. Alden. Of these editors, the former attended the surrender of Lee at Appomattox and the latter to Sherman's and other Western campaigns. Of the political criticism of the work, the former direction was shared about equally by both these gentlemen. What fit. generals of division were to the army in the rebellion, the same, in a lesser degree, were the incidents of the counties to education, a belief which we have, in the course of this work, derived result from your deliberations. I have but a few words to say. I have come the city to give you a happy welcome to the capital of the Keystone State. I think that we are preparing youth to fill the great and noble offices of life, and that by abscission throughout the country, I feel that we have an important duty before us. We have had to meet much prejudice and much determination to break down the old system, and sometimes the most devoted friends of the system were in great distress to the result. But it is a thing of the longer, and Pennsylvania to-day is not behind a single State in the Union in her school system.

We are not ashamed to be shaved, but sovereigns to wield power and shape the destinies of the great Republic, we think that a little mechanics here will produce much good to Pennsylvania and the Union. Yesterday, the meeting was wisely called, that we may meet the school system, and discuss it, and that the subject of colleges and schools will receive such attention, and the subject matter be better before the Legislature. I have no doubt but that your committee will report a large number of great results. We still have our enemies to the school system of Pennsylvania, and before we can meet, we will overcome them, and trust that the Legislature will do the work of the in-tigencies of a newspaper must be taken into consideration in judging them. With all their faults, they conserve details of topography, of geology, of mines, of the country in which an action took place or the attitude in which a hero died, that have the reliability of notes taken on the spot, and add greatly to the picturesqueness of history. With the cover of each number as it comes out we have the benefit of an allegory, of Mr. Harry Stephens's ingenious fancies. He is a good hand at caricaturing animals, has still better success in caricaturing ideal personages, so that on the whole we recommend the artist to call in if possible, before it is too late, his thirty-five title pages from the subscribers, who will probably yield them up without much agony. We must apologize, for the thirty-fifth time, this fatal America with the near-sighted expression who miraculously, with a muscular and heavily-knuckled

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