NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SERMONS BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.—Is there a word to be said about Beecher at this day which is not a plain piece of supererogation? We all have seen, listened to, estimated, the most public of American speakers, and there are in our vast community whole nations of individuals who sigh that they are prevented by unkind geography from placing themselves under his ministry every regular Sabbath. These forty-six homilies, dictated to vast audiences in Brooklyn, and faithfully stenographed by Mr. Ellinwood, will, in so many a Christian family, a plain necessity—the obvious new barrel of spiritual flour. To the few who have refused to know much about Mr. Beecher, the many touches of exquisite persuasion which linger to trap the heart in almost any page that may be opened, will be an unchanging letter from any woo-could offer. We merely think best to explain that the political sermons of Mr. Beecher are omitted from this collection. What remains is the preacher's legitimate appeal to the inner heart of man, placed with affectionate ingenuity in every kind of alluring form.

As to the literary character presented by these impromptus after they are hardened into print, there is nothing of credenem visible which is not well redeemed by the precious evidence of life and suddenness in the illustrations and adornments. Mr. Beecher's peculiar personal paragraph at the beginning, explains that it has been his habit to rely wholly on the inspiration of delivering his preparing notes of the main subjects to be treated. Hence the warmth, the direct appeal made by this living eloquence to the heart of the hearer or reader. "If you have always been glad," continues Mr. Beecher, in a touching piece of evidence, "that I chose the ministry of the Gospel of Christ as the employment of my life. My work has been a joy to me all the way. I cannot conceive of another profession in which the noble enjoyments are so many and the sorrows so few. For, if I am too old to labor, these sermons shall still be read, it will complete my satisfaction and extend my joy and usefulness to the very end of my life." This satisfaction will be felt almost as sacredly by the immense company of his friends.

As particular sermons which have impressed us and which we think sure to do good wherever their influence may fall, we may mention that on the Dreams of Life, which ends in the ringing motto: "Christianity is Christ—personal influence, not intellectual instruction, is its peculiarity." the Gentleness of God, the Lilies of the Field, a study of the Spring for the careworn; Martha and Mary, or, Christian Workers and Thinkers; Moth-eaten Garments; God's Husbandry; Old Age; the Rich Fool, and a short but ardent essay on the continued vitality of Christianity in modern times, entitled "The State of Christianity to-day." Among these fervent sermons, as edifying for their ability by Mr. Lyman Abbott, the casuist may find rhetoric to dispute, the purist decisions to deny; the dilettante critic to be cynical; but we are convinced—and we gladly give it in as our little contribution to the mountain of comments which Mr. Beecher's sermons have evoked—that every that class of heaven-born geniuses who are able to argue without premeditation, hardly any contemporary orator can be found in any country with a style so nearly pure, with a mind so stable amid the play of its own vivacity, and with a heart so fresh, unworn and good.

The collection is printed, by Harper and Brothers in and one octavo, with new clear type on good white paper, and solidly bound in excellent taste. It will be found on the counters of Mr. Pitcher.

The edition of Halleck's too, too few poetic writings, as published by Appleton, forms a luxurious little volume of 386 tinted and cream-laid pages. His friend and literary executor, Gen. James Grant Wilson, has included "a score of poems from various sources, and which are marked by the characteristic grace and melody of his most admired compositions; also, several translations from the French, German and Italian, that now appear in print for the first time." "The Croakers," written by Halleck in conjunction with Joseph Rodman Drake, are included in the volume, with an interesting prefatory history of those pleasant satires; from which it seems, after years, the poet, than whom America has had few to be more proud of, will be brought to the notice of a new and expressed wonder of appreciation by this elegant and timely publication. Many will perhaps discover for the first time that Fitz-Greene Halleck, the man of the world, the punctual business agent of the Astors, was not simply a man who composed one masterly piece of declamation and then died into fame. Halleck, on the contrary, has many styles, and wrote at many epochs, during an occasional literary career of threescore and three years. If he retained often when he might have uttered himself, it was to perfect and polish.

The same editor who annotates the poems so valuably and modestly, promises "The Life and Letters of Fitz-Greene Halleck," with a fine steel portrait from Inman's picture, and views of the poet's residence at Guilford, Conn. We receive our copy through Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

The Globe edition of the poets prepared by Appleton is handsome and handy, and meets the aspirates and the aspirations of the scholar. The poems of John Dryden, with one of his inimitable prose prefaces, are those presented in the most commodious and tasteful form imaginable; the books are strong, handsomely covered, of companionable size; are not too great to be a burden to carry in the pocket at need, and correctly printed on toned paper.—Sold by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

The same New York house are beginning to collect their favorite tartan-cover pamphlets. Waverley into very neat and solid volumes, composed of four of the novels each: the first volume, for which a very tasteful cloth cover has been stamped, includes Waverley, Guy Mannering, Antiquary, and Rob Roy. Same steel-plate pictures have been included, and the compact little tome is really a great deal for the money.—Sold by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger.

—There are symptoms of a reaction in Spain. Five hundred and sixteen ladies of Madrid have presented an address to the President of the Council, requesting the preservation of the churches which have been ordered to be pulled down, and also the maintenance of other religious establishments.

Chameleons.

By nothing is the monotony of life so charmingly relieved as by the ever-changing graces and shifting mental tints of the social chameleon. The generality of people plod heavily, sotidly, hardly through the world, with an epidermis of opinion and taste and interest that remains very much at the end what it was at the beginning, assuming no diverse hues, tinged by no fantastic variegation of colors, ever showing the same steady surface of red and blue, or, as is mostly the case, of pale drab. With such men, if you know that you are going to meet one of them, then you know with perfect certainty the kind of temperament that will confront you, and are prepared accordingly, whether mournfully or jollily as circumstances may be. Accidental varieties of mood are of course to be counted upon; the weather, the state of one's business, of one's health, the conduct of somebody near one, and a hundred other causes, may make all the difference between a man being cheerful or dull, complaisant or churlish. This is to be here contingency of ordinary life. The nature of the chameleon is quite different. In a word, it is a nature, and not the accidental product of a circumstance. The man who had not the fortune to be born a chameleon can never make himself one. Anybody who attempts it as one way of playing a part will fail as stupidly as an ass who essayed to imitate the gambols of the lapdog with its master. The artificial chameleon disguises as much as the natural nature interests, amuses, delights and warns us. There is no more likeness between the two than there is between a stuffed dog and the vivacity, brightness, agility and caprice of the same being when alive. Perhaps the descriptive portion of the great and master science of man considered as a social animal, few objects can be more worthy of a place, or are better worth examining and wondering at, than the chameleon. There are not very many of them. The type is not common. Not every collector in the wide field of human nature is so happy as to possess a specimen among his acquaintance, or even know anybody who does. Perhaps in some respects this is fortunate. It is not quite easy to see what fearful destiny would befall the world if it were full of chameleons. One recoils from the idea, as from a perpetual diet of sugarplums.

The distinctive characteristic of the human chameleon is his intense and incessant responsiveness to every new atmosphere of influence in which circumstance places him. He is open to every intellectual and moral impression; no matter from what quarter it brings to bear upon him. In he with the chameleon, it is only to adopt, for the time, the conviction that political activity is only fit for inferior minds who cannot rise to the far higher sphere of color, form, composition and beauty. For a whole week he will have no talk of literature, science, or poetry, unless you shall be artistic, or nothing. The chances are that he boys a box of paints and an easel, and a piece of canvas, and begin to paint. But, alas! before the first lesson is well over, the chameleon has by accident or by some chance, filled a spare moment by taking up a history of civilization in a dozen volumes, or some equally impressive work. The size of the scheme, the writer's gigantic design and colossal fulfillment, the glimpse which it gives of the long vista of time and the great procession of the ages, stir his imagination to boiling point. Form, color, composition, beauty, shall be cons to the low depth of frivolous dilettantism, are insignificant. He is a well-nourished philosopher on the spot. The painting is huddled into a corner, the master has a peremptory cough, and the easel is quietly folded, not with canvas, but with heavy tomes, atlases, charters, and we know not what else besides, that are going to the making of the brief chronicle of humanity, the annals of mankind—the mankind—the world of the chameleon's friends is on the tiptoe of expectation. Good wishes fall thick around the undertaking; encouragement flows in on every side; no stimulus is wanting. Lo, as we gaze and wonder and clap our hands, the scene is changed, the chameleon is historic muse is suddenly deposed, and her very image, like that of the fallen Sejanus, is dragged as with a hook from the pier of a Roman centurnely. The politician has come on the scene, and the chameleon is a politician, and the philosopher with a fork. Who will grunt and sweat and radiate bear, just to run the chase away from the dull pages of the past, when the blank and unimpressed page of the present and the future swell his sense? Who will laboriously write history when it is within his hands to make history? Let the dead bury their dead, and the past be past. The chameleon will be no Dryasdust, while the world of misery and oppression lies at his door, crying aloud for the arm of the helper and the voice of the strong deliverer. And so the game goes merrily on. Anything is undertaken, Nothing is accomplished. Each chameleon has its little day, and then perishes like the fly of a summer afternoon. Yet the chameleon has been happy. Life has sat easy on him. His spirit is full of gaiety and buoyancy. Each following taste has kept his spirits gayly amused while it went before; each swift-passing interest left all swept and gracefully garnished for the interest that came after. There is plenty, therefore, a bright side to the chameleon's life. Incessant stimulation is indispensable to the peace and comfort of his days; to be without new excitement is to languish and fade; to be born a chameleon can never make him itself one. Anybody who attempts it as one way of playing a part will fail as stupidly as an ass who essayed to imitate the gambols of the lapdog with its master. The artificial chameleon disguises as much as the natural nature interests, amuses, delights and warns us. There is no more likeness between the two than there is between a stuffed dog and the vivacity, brightness, agility and caprice of the same being when alive. Perhaps the descriptive portion of the great and master science of man considered as a social animal, few objects can be more worthy of a place, or are better worth examining and wondering at, than the chameleon. There are not very many of them. The type is not common. Not every collector in the wide field of human nature is so happy as to possess a specimen among his acquaintance, or even know anybody who does. Perhaps in some respects this is fortunate. It is not quite easy to see what fearful destiny would befall the world if it were full of chameleons. One recoils from the idea, as from a perpetual diet of sugarplums.

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