## THE SCRANFON TRIBUNE-SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 18, 1896.

# WORLD OF LETTERS.

### RECENT FICTION.

In "The Damnation of Theron Ware" (Chicago: Stone & Kimball) Harold Frederic has given us one of the strong-est novels of the year, with its colors, however, mostly drab and its lights not aearly so prominent as its shadows. It is a good specimen of that modern realism which delights to seek out the weak spots in human nature and elabo-rate woon them until one would think rate upon them until one would think there were nothing but weakness, nothing but failure, nothing but deteriora-tion in life. To be sure, the authors of these depressingly accurate transcripts eply to criticism that they simply hold the mirror up to nature, and are re-sponsible only for the fidelity with which they catch and hold the reflec-tion in the glass. Yet it is a suggestive, if not an incriminating, coinci-dence that the glass is rarely poised before human nature at its best. Almost without exception the mirroring re-flects it at its worst. Perhaps the bad is more picturesque and more fascinatn the good; at all events, in listic novels, it is more common.

We cannot, with the time at our command, present an adequate synopsis of Mr. Frederic's book. Its story is, however, thus hinted at rather than dis-closed by Mary Abbott in the Chicago Times-Herald:

Going with his wife to a small village called Octavius—a small timerant Method-ist minister, with a good oratorical sift, apparent or say temporary sincerity, and deep love for his meventful but sweet, self-donying wife. Theron Ware fails un-der the influence of a Roman Catholic priest and a Roman Catholic woman, rich and imbued with a ince for music, the Greek spirit and artistic taste. New, ex-citing, passion-compelling. Theron begins with seeing the office of extreme unction administered to a dying workman, and be-comes fascinated by Roman rites, and the romantic episodes with which the life of a Roman priest is surrounded. Romantic, that is compared to Theron's Methodist sparsities of living and dearth of ritual. Little by little he withdraws from his own religion, gaping, as he goes, at the Going with his wife to a small village

own religion, gaping, as he goes, at the delightful vistas opened to him by friendship with a scientific writer, a learned priest, and a beautiful woman of advanced tendencies.

woman herself is badly scumbled The woman herself is badly soumbled in the drawing. She behaves badly, and has no claim to be as indignant as she afterward becomes with Theron. Let her disgust be what it may at his conduct, she leads him on, and long after she has voted him a bore and a nuisance. She even offers to kiss him one dusk, when he was—and she knew it—given up to strong excitement under hitherto unknown press-ure.

The great scene is that in which Theron strays to the door of Cella's house, and is led by her to her boudoir, or den, where the has surrounded herself with all sorts of accessories most intoxicating to a man of Theron's temperament and innocence of accessory. Brought up on a farm, companion of slaving, hard-fisted Meth-odists. Theron is taken by an evaluate or accessory, Brought up on a ward-companion of staving, hard-fisted Meth-odists, Theron is taken by an exquisite woman, with whom he is already fascinat-ed, into a room filled with bewildering luxury of hanging and ornament, and then maddened by voluptuous music, heard for the first time in his life. The novelist may put words of disgust and condemnation into Celia's mouth, at the end, and upbraid him by that organ, for his many backslidings and faults of dis-loyaity to his humble home, wife and church. He can never excuse Celia for her wanton deliberation in leading the poor soul on to what might have been his madness, as well as his ruin, that night. And artistic value is lost when Theron is made to appear the fool, in that episode. Naked statues, seen for the first time under those auspices, gleam at the

episode. Naked statues, seen for the first time under those auspices, gleam at the confounded gazer; pictures delight his senses; incense fills his nostrils. He is made comfortable-he is just out from a fit of illness-on a divan, and his cars are filled with the ravishing sounds of Chopin; the "Fourth Prelude." the "Sixth Nocturne." the "Seventh Waltz." A beautiful madonna gazed at him from the wall. "He looked from the madonna to Celia. Beyond the carelessly drooping braids and colis of hair, which blazed be-tween the candles, he could see the outline of her brow and cheek, the noble contour of her lifted chin, and full-modeled throat, all pink as the most delicate rose leaf is all pink as the most delicate rose leaf is pink, against the cool lights of the altar." But that was not all, nor half. Celia left

him, stunned, dreaming, and returned in exquisite Greek dress-and played

that Abraham Lincoln was a direct descendant of the Lincolns of Hing-ham. Mass., inheriting from that re-spectable ancestry a spirit of adven-ture, patriotism and shrewd Yankee thrift. These Massachusetts Lincolns were people of consequence, most of them. "One," says Miss Tarbell. "was a member of the Boston tea party and served as a captain of artillery in the war of the Revolution. Others were privates in that war. Three served on the brig 'Hazard' during the Revolu-tion." Levi Lincoln, a great-great-grandson of three brothers to settle in tion far away into the realms of philo mysticism, where he spoke other things of the "Christ-and gave utterance to this myth. thought: "The earth was just as round in the days when people supposed it to be flat, as it is now. So the truth you give a charter to ten hundred thou-sand separate numskulls to examine it by the light of their private judgment and report that it is as many different varieties of something else." The congrandson of the Samuel Lincoln who was one of three brothers to settle in Hingham between 1635 and 1645, having come from the west of England, "was one of the minute men at Cambridge immediately after the battle of Lexing-ton, a delegate to the convention in Cambridge for framing a state consti-tution and in 1781 was elected to the continental concrease but declined to trast is sharply drawn throughout the book between Father Forbes' sleek materialism adapting itself gracefully to worldly ends under the essentially pa-triarchal system of Catholicism and continental congress but declined to serve. He was a member of the house Theron Ware's hectic sensuous enthusi of representatives and of the house of Massachusetts and was appointed attorney general of the United States by Jefferson; for a few month States asms which carry him to moral wreck in part at least because of the facility which Methodism offers for putting into pulpits men who are as babes in worldly guile and in intellectual balattorney general of the United States by Jefferson; for a few months pre-ceeding the arrival of Madison he was secretary of state, and in 1807 he was elected lieutenant-governor of Massa-chusetts. In 1811 he was appointed as-sociate justice of the United States supreme court by President Madison, an office which he declined. From the close of the Revolutionary war he was considered the head of the Massachu-setts bar." Levi Lincoln and Abraham Lincoln were directly related. Another point established by Miss Tarbell is that the immediate ancestors

last. "The Damnation of Theron Ware" has its weak points. It will receive se-vere criticism. It enters hazardous ground and cannot escape the risks of that audacity. But it is, we repeat, one of the most consummate studies of human nature in some of its weaker aspects that has been printed in many day. One, after reading it, can unhest-tatingly place Mr. Frederic among the foremost of American novelists, we Tarbell is that the immediate ancestors should say not second even to Howells, because he is more virile and more

brave.

as this.

Tarbell is that the immediate ancestors of Abraham Lincoln, especially his fa-ther, Thomas Lincoln, were not shift-less people nor "poor white trash." The present biographer believes that for Ever since we read George Gissing's "Sleeping Fires" (New York: D. Applepurposes of contrast the poverty of the Lincolns had been too frequently over-drawn. "There is no attempt made ton & Co.) we have been wondering why he wrote it. Gissing is a man of here to deny the poverty of the Lincoln household," says Miss Tarbell in her introduction, "but it is insisted that this poverty was a temporary condi-tion incident to pioneer life and the unfortunate death of Thomas Lincoln's talent rising almost to genius. His command of the language is ready and firm; he has the knack of sketching distinct portraits with a few bold strokes and there is an artist's nicety of per-ception in his coloring and his posing father when Thomas was but a boy. Thomas Lincoln's restless efforts to better his condition by leaving Ken-tucky for Indiana in 1816, and after-wards, when he had discovered that his farm in Spencer county was barren, by and yet with all these merits pleading in his favor, we cannot for the life of us come to a decision why he wrote "Sleeping Fires." What was the mo-Steeping Fires." What was the mo-tive of it? What is the good of it? Wherein lies the satisfaction of it? The story, apart from its occasional charming descriptions of Greeian scentrying his fortunes in Illinois, are sufclent proof that he had none of the indolent acceptance of fate which charery-descriptions which rise into form as cloud, sky or mountain with hardly the semblance of an effort-is almost totally devoid of interest. There is a acterizes the 'poor whites.'" Indeed, the handsome volume is full of new points. Its text reads like a ronance and its portraits and other illus bachelor who in his day had been a blade; a wealthy widow who had once

trations-there are 160 in all-would make a connected story even if there were no words. The enthusiastic re-ception which this Life has commandrejected him because her very proper parents painted his moral record a shade or two blacker than it really was ed is a happy proof of the vitality of the American public's continued interwhereupon she gave herself to a rheu-matic baronet who fortunately soot est in the greatest human being who has walked this earth since the foundahad the good taste to die and lastly, a fossilized old antiquarian with a young man in tutorial tow who turns out tion of our government.

shortly before he, also, expires, to be the bachelor's own son. Bachelor and widow are brought together, the sleep-An interesting pamphlet rather ob-scurely entitled "The School of Poli-tics" reaches us from Charles H. Kerr ing fires glow again and the curtain falls with every assurance that the past & Co., 56 Fifth avenue, Chicago. It is written by E. Hofer, "member of the Eighteenth General Assembly, Salem, Oregon," and is a determined plea for the better legal safeguarding of the American primary system. The propo-sition laid down by Mr. Hofer at the will be buried in the expected joys of the future. That is all. Not very satisfactory or very important, you say! Well, that's just what we have been thinking ever since we laid the book down, and that's why we cannot make start is that "in the perfected nominat-ing primary every member of every party should have a direct vote in the out why a genius like Gissing drools his time out on such commonplace stuff choice of every candidate whose name appears on the ticket of his party." Upon this text he says:

Two novels in paper covers await us in the Lippincott Sciect series. One is called "Mrs. Romney," by Rosa Nou-chette Carey, and, to save time, we will Bossism is today the dominant force in

Two novels In paper covers avait up in the Lippincott Select series. One is called "Mrs. Romney." by Rosa we wind look at it through our New York name sake's spectacles: Trars, sal, pensive looks, headaches cub tack of nervous fever, followed in turn by a "reconciling kiss", and a scenario of the sensible. It is the result of two controlling forces in American diverse the more of the sensitive sensible. The sensitive called Kitty. Rommey is a tearful "littive with a smeed verify multi-formation of state called Kitty. Rommey is a tearful "littive with a smeed verify multi-formation of state sing in that for multives of her own sho for direct fills some reason why Cather and second force that for sensitive sensitive sensitive in a that for multives of her own sho for them the sensitive sensitive sensitive sensitive sensitive sensitive sensitive sensitive second force that for sensitive sensitive sensitive for the collectorships, police commission-trans, marking sensitive s

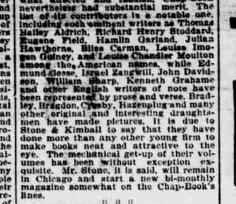
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politics--the primary--why shall he not take sufficient toll? When we have re-formed the primaries so that no man shall govern us without the consent of the governed, when we have separated local, state and federal elections so that one boss cannot, by manipulating one set of primaries and nominating convention. control our affairs from the school district to the president's appoint-ments, then can we be said to have a self-government by the people, and not until then shall we be able to have henest of-ficials. When the sheriff who draws the jury and the judges on the bench no lon-ger owe their places to the machine, we may be able to convict the man who has worked the machine to corruptly enrich himself and others. Even though local and general elections be held separate a: to time, so long as the present primary system prevails, they are held under one emachine and the people get but little ben-etit from voting at different times for state, city and school officials. We must elfher abolish the present delegate con-vention and primary, or we must safe-guard it by juws as stringent as the ballot laws, provide for holding the primaries at public expense and have a direct vote of all parties for their choice of candidates at the same time and place.

at the same time and place. "A History of the American Tariff"

(Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co.) is an opportune production by Eugene C. an opportune production by Edgene C. Lewis. It treats of the period from 1789 to 1860 and gives a handy sum-mary of historical facts, but does not argue either for or against protection. A portrait of ex-Governor McKinley adorns the title page.

"How to Live Well on Twenty-five Cents a Day" (New York: J. S. Oglivie Pub. Co., 57 Rose st.) contains a series of good daily menus, with cost figur down to 25 cents a day for each plate; also, many valuable hints and helps for housekeepers, all by Mrs. Gesine Lemcke, of the Cooking college, Brooklyn.



life of Philadelphia in the eighteenth cen-tury. Six Jewish works will be published dur-ing this spring by the Macmillans. They are: "Jewish Social Life in the Middle Ages," by Israel Abrahams; "Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," by Dr. 8. Scheeter; "The Jewish Prayer Book," by the Rev. 8. Singer; "The Return of the Jews to Eng-land," by Lucien Wolf; "The Jewish Race," by Joseph Jacols, and "Jewish Ethics," by the Rev. Matrice Joseph. The "Memoirs and Correspondence of Oliver Wendell Holmes," edited by John T. Morse has enjoyed the heartiest aid and co-operation of Dr. Holmes' family, so the biography comes to the public with the stamp of the fullest authority and su-thenticity. The letters are largely to James Russell Lowell, John Lathrop-Moi-ley, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe and Miss Mary Phelps.

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more. She sang lullables and balsome more, She sang julianies and hal-lades that sent his senses swirling. She brought him benedictine to drink when he was faint-the first approach to when he had ever made. And perfidy to his wife boiling beef, and his church full

he had ever made, and his church full drawling, nasal psalm singers! Again, some days later, Cella let him make love to her; he did not know it, but she did. He becomes desperate, follows Cella to New York, wither she has gone with the priest, Father Forbes, on an ex-pedition resembling very much an elop-ment. And here comes one of the most touching episodes of the book. Theron, hesides himself, with love excitement, the memory of her voluntary kiss tinging and inflaming his passion, pursues her, and tells his love; utterly ignoring the fact that her other lover (as he can but sup-pose) is with her. oose) is with her.

It is here that the Circe casts him off, coldly, brutally, calling him, at the limit of the passion which she had deliberately invited and excited, a nuis-ance and a bore. The character of this woman, we are moved to say, is not satisfactorily drawn. It is brilliant, picturesque, one might almost say damnable in its fascinations, but not damnable in its fascinations, but not convincing. If such women exist out-side of novels, we do not know it. Much more true to life is Mr. Frederic's pic-ture of Theron's wife—an honest farm-er's daughter, common-place but cheerful and unsuspicious-one of those models of uneventful domesticity who are content to ge through life, perform ing in the background the function of servant and helper, without any wish to shine. Methodism is full of such good, clean-minded, unobtrusive preachers' wives, and it is, by the way, to the credit of the cloth that the min-istry of Methodism boasts few Theron

Wares Mr. Frederic is like to get a double-sized hornet's nest about his ears by his impartial administration of realism to both Protestants and Catholics. The Catholic Father Forbes whom he sets as a foil to the weak, vaciliating, sus-ceptible and utterly unseasoned young Methodist parson, is a picture that few Catholics will relish. Fair, fat and sy-baritics a lover of good wine and an Catholics will relish. Fair, fat and sy-baritic, a lover of good wine and an epicure, he presents to every one of Theron's principles an embodied an-tithesis. The picture of the first meeting of these two men upon what might be called controversial grounds-al-though, to tell the truth, Theron was too dazzled to do much controverting-is a significant one. Theron had called on the priest, somewhat impusively, to borrow some books that woud elucidate the character of Abraham, concerning whom he wished to write. The priest fell to talking with him, dreamly, retrospectively, over his after-dinner cigar, and soon had led the conversa-

# Lincoin and puts into such interesting relief the comedy and the pathos of his boyhood days as does the first instal-ment of this Life, now handsomely pub-lished in library form, which includes the period from 1809 to 1835.

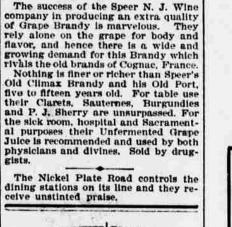
away from the primaries, or allows his name to be put upon the slate of delegates as a guaranty of good faith and respecta-bility to enable thugs and boodlers to han-dle the county convention, can see just how he contributes to the upbuilding of public morality and good government in the name of his party. Self-government by the people is on trial. The people want the best. The masses have no interest in anything but good government. When they vote at the polls they do not knowingly vote for cor-ruption and extravagance. They do not knowingly and intentionally put bad men in office. The theory of a people's gov-ernment does not embrace the idea of the enrichment of the few and the impover-ishment of the many. Yet that, is what our government is tending to become more and more. During the past few years of depression and hard times, the salaries of the official classes have not been diminished. Congress after congress has appropriated over a billion of dollars, and even the expenses of the Supremo the period from 1809 to 1838. Although one might have imagined, before Miss Tarbell set to work upon this task, that the collection of Lincoln-ania had been exhausted, the sequel effectually disproves such a theory. Not only has she gleaned a considerable mass of interesting new material upon the subject, in the form of anecdotes, recollections, old manuscripts and the like, together with very many absolutely new portraits both of Lincoln himself and of the persons and scenes among whom his epic life was passed, but she has also given a final determination to several points of really great import-ance. She has established, for instance,

# LITERARY GOSSIP.

LITERARY GOSSIP. A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom is the full the of the Important work by the Hon. Andrew D. White, which is to be published immediately by D. Appleton & Co. In this book the author "simply tries to let the light of historical truth into that decay-ing mass of outworn thought which at-taches the modern world to mediaeval conceptions of Christianity, and which still lingers among us—a most serious bar-rier to religion and morals, and a menace to the whole normal evolution of society. My belief is that in the field left to them—their proper field—the clergy will more and more, as they cease to strug-gle against scientific methods and con-clusions, do work even nobler and more beautiful than anything they have here-tofore done. And this is saying much. My conviction is that science, though it has evidently conquered dogmatic theology based on biblical texts and ancient modes of thought will go hand in hand with Re-ligion; and that although theological con-tright continue to diminish religion, as seen in the recognition of 'a power in the universe, not ourselves, which makes for right conger, not only in the American institutions of learning but in the world at large. Mrs. Everard Cotes (Gara Jeannette

at large." Mrs. Everard Cotes (Sara Jeannette Duncan) has sent from her Cclautta home a novel of social and official life in India called "His Honour, and a Lady," which represents this popular author's most fin-ished and successful w.ork. The serial publication in England was secured by W. W. Astor for the Pail Mall Magazine, and the interest which the story has aroused in the course of its serial publication in-dicates its decided success when it ap-pears in book form. The story differs from most Anglo-Indian novels in that the native life is not made conspicuous. It does not depend upon the strangeness of its characters and curiosities of man-ners and customs for its interest, though these are touched upon, but rather upon an adroit analysis of motives and a very curious interaction of characters relieved by the author's unfailing humor. This novel will be published with Illustrations by D. Appleton & Co.

by D. Appleton & Co. II III III A disruption has occurred in the Chi-cago publishing firm of Stone & Kimbali Mr. Stone retires and Mr. Kimbali de-clares that he will move the firm's effects to New York, which he deems a better book mart than Chicago. The Chap-Book, too, will be transplanted. It is an inter-esting periodical, of real although uneven merit, and its dainty conceits have won their way into the esteem of thousands of book-lovers. Although purposely some-





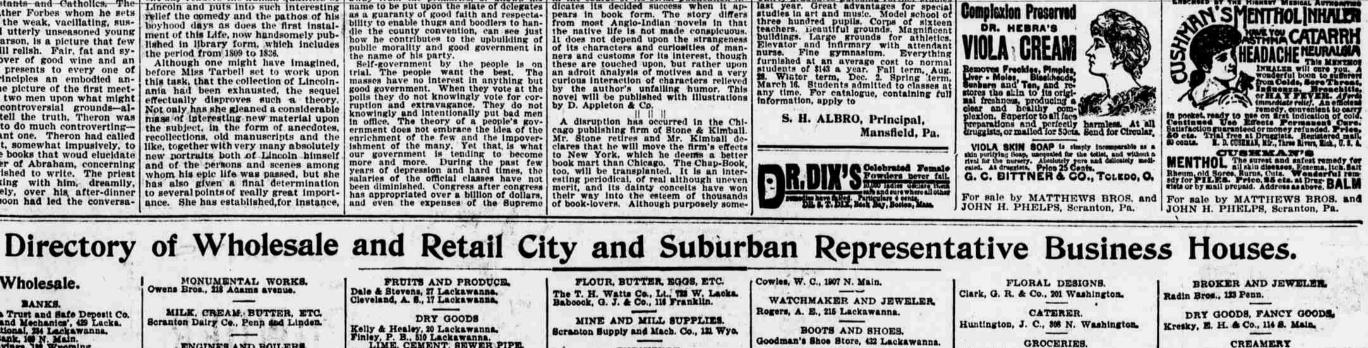
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