

The Lenoir Topic.

VOLUME XII.

LENOIR, N. C., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1887.

NUMBER 49.

WALLACE BROS.

Statesville, N. C. 304 Greenwich St. N. Y.

To the Wholesale Trade.

We congratulate our friends and customers on the fine outlook for crops and consequent good fall business. Anticipating a largely increased demand, we have made very extensive preparations and will soon have our entire

Fall Stock

in line. We feel confident in saying that it will be the largest stock of

General Merchandise

—IN—

North Carolina.

Every department will exhibit a

Complete Assortment

containing almost everything required, and invariably at the

Lowest Market Prices.

Please call and examine before placing your orders.

WALLACE BROS.,

Statesville, N. C.

DAVENPORT COLLEGE.

A High Grade Home School for Girls.

LENOIR, CALDWELL COUNTY, N. C.

Term Opens 3rd Thursday in Sept. 1887, with a full corps of Teachers.

Special rates for girls from Western North Carolina.

Pre-eminent in Point of Location, in Higher English,

Music, Art, and in

Refining Influences and Home Life.

Will H. Sanborn, Pres't.

A GREAT WRITER.

Wilmington Star.

Yesterday was the birthday of Sir Walter Scott. The celebrations in his honor were numerous and enthusiastic. No tribute can be too great for the memory of the man who wrote the imperishable stories of Scottish and English life. —*Baltimore American of 16th August.*

The *Star* noted this announcement and purposed three days ago dwelling upon the pleasing event. No man in all literature is more deserving of having his birthday—15th August, 1771—commemorated annually, for no man in letters was personally worthier or has afforded more delight to the readers of three generations. In personal character Sir Walter Scott was of the noblest. There is not a more manly life written. He was utterly free from all petty jealousies, and while recognizing the greatness of all rivals he had a depreciated view of his own splendid powers. He was as fascinating in social life as he is instructive in his wondrous, pictorial and magnificent pages. In all biography it will be hard to find so engaging a personality. We confess we love the man. Like Dr. Sam Johnson, Sir Walter was very fortunate in his biographer. Boswell has done possibly more for Johnson's fame than Johnson was able to do for himself. At any rate, he produced the most perfect biography in any language. The work done by J. G. Lockhart, a man of unique powers, and son-in-law of Scott, was different. He has not followed on the lines of Boswell, but has given a most charming, fresh, faithful picture of Scott from birth upward, and has added a biography to the English language that is as interesting as Boswell's great work and deserves to rank next to it. Every youth in the land should read Lockhart's life.

But it is not because of his charming personal qualities and great nobility of soul that he deserves to be held in perpetual remembrance, but because of his great gifts and absolutely original, fascinating and splendid productions. Somewhat familiar with the greatest writers and greatest productions of the teeming, fertile nineteenth century, we are much inclined upon a review of the last eighty-seven years to give the palm to Walter Scott as the supreme genius among English authors. The only man who might be excepted in the literature of Europe would be Goethe. We would not make the exception, but doubtless a consensus of opinion among critics might be secured as to the rival or superior greatness of Goethe. A man should write always his own convictions and not some one else's convictions. Be honest and catholic in letters. We hesitate not to say, that Scott's poetry and novels have a far greater charm for us than Goethe's prose and verse, not even excepting "Faust."

But if Scott was not the greatest creative mind of the English speaking world in this wonderful century then we know not whom to name. It is not any of the greatest poets—not Wordsworth or Coleridge, Shelley or Keats, Byron or Tennyson. Scott's best poetry does not equal the best of any of these superior geniuses perhaps, but he was far more *Homeric* than any or all of them, and the picturesque splendor, and heroic episodes, and vivid descriptions, and magic scenes, and exquisite portraits and glamour of genius has rendered them immortal. The greatest of his poetical works—"The Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Marmion" and "Lady of the Lake," will be always a treasure of fascination and beauty so long as pure taste asserts itself among English readers. Well may that accomplished and eloquent critic, Prof. Thomas B. Shaw, say: "There is no author in the whole range of literature, ancient or modern, whose works exhibit so perfect an embodiment of united power and activity as is to be found in Walter Scott. He is as prolific as Lupe de Vega, as absolutely original as Homer."

He is among all nineteenth century authors nearest to Shakespeare in the creation of characters that live forever on his canvas. In no other productions of the modern world will you find the fire and dash and energy divine that run through the exciting and animating eight syllable lines of the Scotsman. Byron comes nearest to him perhaps in these qualities. This brings us to write briefly of his novels.

They are at once the glory and delight of literature. There are no fictions comparable to the greatest of Scott's. He is as easily first among story tellers as Shakespeare is first among dramatists. It will be a sad day when the educated men and women of an English-speaking country shall ever cease to read Scott and shall prefer the best and greatest that preceded or followed him. Fielding, Richardson and Smollet may be read by the student of literature with pleasure, but how small they are when compared with Scott's masterpieces. "Tom Jones" is virginal, original, coarse, and is immortal. We would not underrate it. So with the greatest productions of the best of English and American fiction writers. Thackeray, Dickens, Bulwer, George Eliot, Charles Reade,

Charlotte Bronte, Nathaniel Hawthorne, George Meredith, Kingsley, Blackmore, Macdonald, Black, Hardy, Mrs. Gaskell, and a few other novelists, should be read, for their best works constitute a great literature; but never neglect Scott for any. Wilkie Collins, a very successful story teller, says Scott is so much greater than all other that he refreshes him when broken down and makes him feel like never writing again.

The purity, the elevation, the splendor, the graphic power, the eloquence, the wit, the humor, the pathos, the naturalness, the wisdom, the poetry of Scott's immortal, unapproached romances give them the highest place in the noblest fiction. They present human beings not mystical absurdities, or mere sticks. Take "Guy Mannering," for instance, and see how many rich, striking, original personages walk and talk before you.

Prof. Shaw says: "If the highest manifestation of creative genius be the power of inventing scenes and persons which are at once surprising and natural, strongly individual in themselves, yet in perfect accordance with the types of reality, then it is impossible to deny Scott the honors due to the highest creative genius." In Guy Mannering there are characters that are as sure to live as those of Shakespeare. Dominic Sampson, Pleydell, Glessin, Dandy Dinnot and Meg Merrilies will never fade from the canvas. In every one of his best novels are immortal characters, but we cannot particularize. His best, with possibly two or three exceptions, are his Scotch stories. These are Waverley, The Legend of Montrose, Old Mortality, The Monastery, The Abbot, The Fair Maid of Perth, Guy Mannering, Rob Roy, The Antiquary, Black Dwarf, The Heart of Midlothian, The Bride of Lammermoor, and one or two others. Of these Waverley, Guy Mannering, The Antiquary, The Heart of Midlothian, The Bride of Lammermoor and Rob Roy are the best. The only other novels of his that might be classed with these in excellence are Kenilworth and The Fortunes of Nigel, as we think. But there are many others that are delightful, such as The Talisman, Ivanhoe, The Pirate, The Betrothed and so on.

Scott wrote seventeen novels that may be classed as *historical*. Of these seven are Scottish; seven are English, and three are Continental. Then he wrote twelve that may be classed as *personal*. With a knowledge of this classification the selections may be made more satisfactorily. Take the Scottish historical novels for instance; Waverley illustrates the period of the Pretender's attempt to gain the British throne in 1745; The Legend of Montrose, illustrates the civil war in the seventeenth century; Old Mortality illustrates the rebellion of the Covenanters; The Monastery and The Abbot illustrate the deposing and imprisonment of Mary, Queen of Scots; The Fair Maid of Perth is laid in the reign of Robert III., while Castle Dangerous brings before us the time of the Black Douglas. So the English and Continental historical novels illustrate prominent reigns and events.

But we can dwell no longer on a pleasant theme to us. We thank God in our heart that we are able to thoroughly enjoy Scott. At our leisure we are once more going over his charming romances, and just now we are reading that splendid picture of the times of James I. of England, "The Fortunes of Nigel." What a romance! What other pen but that of "the Great Wizard of the North" could have painted the sixteenth century as has been done? The colors are "true, the light and shade are in their proper proportion" and the life is real, animated, stirring. It is indeed a wonderful book, overflowing with scenic description; delightful or startling incident, and the numerous characters individualized and striking and natural. What other writer ever so transported himself into the past and so saturated himself with its tone, its life, its wickedness and imperfections, its pomp and splendor, its manners and customs, as to reproduce them with a graphic power and richness that stand unrivalled. Kingsley in Westward Ho and Hypatia produced very interesting and powerful works located in the remote past. Bulwer in the Last Days of Pompeii, Last of the Barons and Rienzi, has shown skill and vigor and splendor in re-creating the past and reproducing scenes of stirring interest; and Charles Reade, in his great novel, his masterpiece, The Cloister and the Hearth, has done wonders in his powerful picture of Continental life four hundred years ago, in which his realism is startling and his creative genius of a very high order, but after all how they fail in interest when read with Scott's greatest stories. Reader's novel is beyond doubt the greatest historic picture drawn since Scott, but it has scenes that are not interesting to us.

But the theme is endless. One of the noblest of English poets—the grandest of all contemplative singers—William Wordsworth—has said of Scott's wondrous productions: "Blessings and prayers in nobler strains than soaring King or laureled conqueror knows, follow this wondrous poet's."

A NEW VENTURE.

"Among my books—what rest is there."

FOR THE TOPIC.

In pursuance of a plan outlined by Mr. Howells, in the "Editor's Study" of *Harper's Magazine* for August, Messrs. Harper & Brothers, with their well known habitual enterprise and public spirit, set at once about leading the way toward furnishing, by means of local papers and other periodicals to their clientele, more assistance in the selection of books than has otherwise been possible.

One not familiar with the matter would be surprised at the amount of reading done in neighborhoods far from commercial centres, and complaints issue frequently from comparatively isolated districts that they cannot tell whether they want to buy this book, or that, as commonly advertised, because there is doubt as to its character and aim.

In instituting the proposed system of review attempt will be made to give an idea of a book's contents, and an opinion as to the more or less satisfactory quality to those for whom literature is a factor in education, is society, and the least disappointing of friends. It is expected that the system will be of gradual growth, by constant increase in the number of firms sending their publications to a chosen reviewer, in the number of papers all over the country willing to give a little space for the purpose (which is not meant to advertise as usually understood) and the widening of the intellectual horizon of many who are too busy to waste time on an undesirable book, and do not find it convenient to have many papers and magazines. Any reader wishing the reviewer's opinion of works not noted is asked to send word to that effect to the paper containing the regular notices.

Reviews of books from several publishing houses will follow those now offered.

AUTHORIZED REVIEWS.

For *Harper's Days*, by Mrs. Burton Harrison; Harper & Brothers, illustrated, \$1.25.

One may be sure that a book is both bright and clean when Mrs. Harrison's name is on the title page and none who found pleasure in reading Golden Rod, Helen Troy, or other of her writings, will be content to miss enjoying the breezy chapters of the later volume overflowing as it is with suggestive glimpses of the moods, fashions and experiences of all sorts of ages and people, and of Paul Pry and Dame Trot, in a way to be entirely agreeable reading for old and young, although it may be meant especially for boys. Absurdities prevalent among our people are touched delicately, for example, in this manner: "A gentleman who hasn't any ankles, but he drives a four in hand and you read about him a great deal in the society papers, which is every bit as good." Peculiarly feminine strategy is humorously admitted in telling how the two terriers got permission to go gypsying to Eagle Lake, with the family "belonging to them." But however trenchant the satire it is always tempered by cheerfulness and the contrasting sentiment of passages here and there is strong and sympathetic. The odd conceit of letting Dame Trot tell the story of the season gives the author more freedom of expression than she might otherwise have used, although the vivid and vigorous descriptions of scenery come with at least extraordinary grace from the little creature whose encounter with "Flossy" is indeed sufficiently human. Not the least charming portion of the pretty little book is its musical prologue reading which one may fancy himself again surrounded by the beauties of Bar Harbor, even if the snow is flying before the wind.

The slightly paradoxical character of this title is nevertheless a correct thing, for the instruction to be gotten from the beautifully printed and well illustrated book is valuable to both men and women, whether they wish to ride or drive. So much harness and cruelty prevails among horse handlers that one thing in the author's directions is particularly noteworthy,—stress is laid continually on the importance of gentleness and steadiness in training the dumb animals that serve people, as a rule, to the best of their ability. A landholder with daughters could hardly do a wiser thing than to give them this carefully prepared manual calculated to assist young women in the best methods of selecting and of using horses with either saddle or harness. The owner of good animals will not fear to trust them in the hands of trained horsewomen but will rather urge their use. Southern women who have been familiar with the saddle ever since they were big enough to be trusted in one under the guidance of some old "uncle" may indeed gaily discard the technicalities of the book, but Northern girls, with their short riding seasons, need just such minute descriptions of ways and means, and will not object to the methodical carrying out of the plan of instruction. We may believe that it will be good for the coming

generation when our young women are as skillful riders as were their great grandmothers, for excellent horsemanship calls for gentleness, firmness, neatness and thoughtfulness of courtesies as well as of possibilities, and is a refining, healthful and praiseworthy accomplishment. Like other studies, this needs practice as well as precept, no amount of rule making a fine horseman, if unaccompanied by experience.

ADELAIDE CILLEY WALDRON.

The Irish Situation.

Baltimore Sun.

The proclamation of the National League in the manner in which the victory of Ireland has executed that performance was preliminary to obtaining the sense of Parliament upon the matter. It is not the suppression of the league, but a warning which will be acted upon after a while in case only that Parliament refuses to interfere. Next Thursday the Commons will begin to debate the matter on the basis of a motion offered by the opposition disapproving the proclamation. But the result is not in doubt. The unionist majority is overwhelming, and the motion will be rejected. Thereupon the work of suppression will begin. It is a question with the nationalists whether the power of suppression will be exercised upon the league as a whole. They seem to believe that obscure local branches will be suppressed, but that the great central offices at Dublin, which have the proportions of a government department, will not be touched, owing to the great authority exercised therefrom over the people. But this is improbable. It is doubtless the purpose of the present government to attack the national League as a whole, and, if possible, extirpate it, as the Government of Mr. Gladstone did the Land League in 1881. The section of the crimes act upon which it relies is comprehensive; punishment may be inflicted by a magistrate, without judge or jury, upon any one that attends a league meeting, reports its proceedings, or takes any part whatever in it. Like swift sentence will fall upon persons found to have been engaged in boycotting, intimidation or committing outrages upon persons or property. The ingenuity of the leaders of the league is adequate, however, it may be supposed, to enable them to offset their sins under a new name and by methods not yet tried. It is a contest full of interest, and one may well hesitate to say which side will come out victorious. The proclamation of the league has already weakened to some small extent the unionist party. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain thought the step unnecessary and disapproves of it, though he will continue to give Lord Salisbury's government his support. Another unionist, Mr. T. W. Russell, of Ulster, has taken about the same position of qualified opposition. Both, however, it may be apprehended, will be found voting for what they disapprove as inexpedient if at any time there is a critical division, the result of which would be effected by a change of two votes. A great fight is in prospect. The situation is different from what it was in 1881, when all England, Scotland and Wales opposed Mr. Parnell. Now Scotland and Wales and a large party in England are on his side, with the Grand Old Man, a politician of great experience and infinite resources to assist. On the other hand, there is no second Gladstone whose conversion hopeful nationalists may look forward to. The trumps are all out. Strength of hand and skill in the game to be played will be the decisive factors of the result.

In Brief and to the Point.

Dyspepsia is dreadful. Indigestion is a foe to good nature. The human digestive apparatus is one of the most complicated and wonderful things in existence. It is easily put out of order.

Greasy food, tough food, sloppy food, bad cookery, mental worry, late hours, irregular habits and many other things which ought not to be, have made the American people a nation of dyspeptics.

But Green's August Flower has done a wonderful work in reforming this sad business and making the American people so healthy that they can enjoy their meals and be happy.

Remember:—No happiness without health. But Green's August Flower brings health and happiness to the dyspeptic. Ask your druggist for a bottle. Seventy-five cents.

The Emperor of Austria has become a life member of the Goethe Society.

Happiness is a wayside flower growing by the highway of usefulness.

Agents Wanted.

I wish to engage several good salesmen to sell Pianos and Organs. None but experienced men and those able to give good bonds need apply.

J. L. STONE,
Raleigh, N. C.

Secretary Lamar and the Public Lands.

Baltimore Sun.

The recklessness with which public lands have been granted to railroad corporations was never made apparent until the committee of the House of Representatives, under the leadership of its indefatigable chairman, Mr. Cobb, of Indiana, devoted its energies to the sifting investigation which furnished grounds for the interposition of the present administration. The result, among other praiseworthy actions, was Secretary Lamar's recent decision revoking a conditional grant which involves, as is stated, the re-assumption by the government of from 25,000,000 to 30,000,000 acres of land in the case of the Atlantic and Pacific Company alone, although the principle enunciated and applied bears upon other grants where the generosity and confidence of the government have been misplaced and abused. The question of title to and proper disposition of the public lands was one of the earliest that invited the attention of the fathers. In the April preceding the adoption of the constitution by the convention, Mr. Madison, in a very remarkable letter because of the suggestions which were embodied in that instrument, writes to General Washington that "the disposition of the public lands" was one of the subjects which claimed the particular attention of Congress, and that "the States which have lands of their own for sale are suspected of not being hearty in bringing the federal lands to market." By letter of September 6, 1787, to Mr. Jefferson, he says "Congress have taken some measures for disposing of the public land and have actually sold a considerable tract. Another bargain, I learn, is on foot for another sale." It will be seen from this that, even before the adoption of the constitution the national government was possessed with the rage that has since characterized many, especially recent administrations, for getting rid of the public domain. Mr. Madison had two theories by which he thought that the nation might get a return commensurate with their liberality in this respect. One was to devote the proceeds of such sales to the purchase, emancipation and colonization of slaves; the other was the dedication of the proceeds of the sales of public lands to internal improvements. All recent extravagant grants to railroad corporations presumably had this latter object for their basis. But it shows an exceedingly bad administration of a great public trust when one set of national trustees are called by an imperious sense of duty to reassert title to immense tracts of lands imprecipitantly granted to railroad corporations, and it is not a subject for gratifying reflection, this contemplation of hundreds of thousands of acres of land lying idle and profitless, both to the people and the government. The action of Secretary Lamar is highly commendable, we may say courageous, since the rule of action in such cases has heretofore been one of timidity. With the exception of the Louisiana and Florida lands, the result of purchase, the great body of remaining public lands were ceded by some of the old States, notably Virginia, New York and North Carolina, and as Henry Clay, in his report of 1832, said: "The clear and positive terms of these acts of cession was a great, public, national trust created and assumed by the general government. It became solemnly bound to hold and administer the lands ceded, as a common fund for the use and benefit of all the States, and for no other use and purpose whatever." With this statement of the national title and trust to and in these lands, no intelligent person can find fault. The corollary is that the utmost jealousy and honesty should characterize the administration of the trust, and the action of Secretary Lamar is highly commendable because it recognizes and emphasizes this to be the only rule of action.

Products and Prices of Wheat.

United Crop Report.

The Commercial press is beginning to note a fact that has been more than once announced in these reports, that there is little connection between production and exports of the wheat of the United States and that price does not always control the extent of shipments. It never does "control" the volume shipped. While as a general statement three-fourths of the corn of the world is produced in the United States, but one-fourth of the wheat is grown here; so that the home price of corn does "control" the price of wheat exported, and the home price of wheat, instead of controlling Liverpool prices, is largely controlled by them. It has more than once happened that prices have been so high when our crop has been large, and low when the product has been small. The cause is no mystery; the law of supply and demand has not been violated, but price has conformed strictly to the supply of the world. Hence the crop is of no especial consequence except as a factor of the aggregate supply.

The present indications point to a more than average European crop. It was late everywhere, perhaps two weeks on an average at the beginning of June, but in growing condition, and its advancement since has been rapid. That of Spain is mediocre, in Germany, France, and England, reports are generally favorable.

The Indian crop, harvested a few months ago, will be 20,000,000 bushels less than the preceding, say 238,000,000 bushels. Australasia will probably produce 15,000,000 bushels more than in 1885-'86, or 37,000,000 bushels. The product of the world promises to be quite as much as for each of the two preceding harvests. A close calculation cannot be made while so much uncertainty exists as to the harvest of present prospects in certain countries. Present indications do not promise material increase in prices; they certainly do not demand lower prices.

Ex-Senator Dorsey, ex-Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, C. E. Coon, Hon. D. W. C. Wheeler and son arrived at Alexandria Bay, N. Y., yesterday.

Capt. McDonald, of the J. H. G. Perkins, of Maine, was seized by a Canadian cruiser at Souris, charged with illegally shipping men, and released after a week's detention.

The British Flag in North Carolina.

Hendersonville Times.

The following item, under the above caption, was clipped from the *Asheville Advance*. In the form of a press dispatch, it has appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution* and a Richmond paper, and perhaps others. We thought there was not a word of truth in it, when we first read it, but, nevertheless, we have taken the trouble to investigate the matter, and some of the English colonist themselves, and some of the native Americans in that section, have informed us that the statement is a canard, a baseless fabrication, and that the correspondent who wrote the letter to the *Advance* was either misinformed or did it with evil intent. Our English friends who have made this section the home of their adoption are living on peaceable and friendly terms with their neighbors, and no disputes, so far as we can learn, have ever arisen. Queen Victoria's jubilee was celebrated, and the English flag was unfurled from the top of a long pole during an entire week, but no one objected. We are told that there is not a man in that community who is ninety-five to one hundred years old, and a veteran of the war of 1812 would necessarily have attained this advanced age. The English are welcomed by our people, and we would rejoice to see many more of them come among us. Such falsehoods as the following always accomplishes more or less evil, and no one who has the good of the county at heart would write them:

"A letter received here from Henderson county, tells of an incident which has been kept quiet so far. In that county there is a settlement of English people recently founded. Queen Victoria's jubilee was observed by this colony with sports and games of various kinds. A British flag was hoisted on a lofty pole. A number of residents of that section were made very angry by the display of the flag. They held a conference on this subject, and a soldier of the war of 1812 said the flag ought to come down. These mountaineers at once went to the English settlement, and said plainly that the flag must be lowered. The English colonists were indignant and said they meant no disrespect, and would take the flag down after the jubilee was over. The old veteran, who was spokesman of the Americans, persisted in his demands that the flag must come down at once, and at last said if it was not down by daylight the next day, it would be torn down. The patriots then took leave. They watched next morning and found that the flag had been lowered."

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