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# THE DIAL

*A Semi-Monthly Journal of*

Literary Criticism, Discussion, and Information



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# THE DIAL

A Semi-Monthly Journal of Literary Criticism, Discussion, and Information.

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## BOOKS OF THE COMING YEAR.

The task of indicating, among the contents of a list of books that numbers not far from two thousand titles, the really important and significant announcements, is one that cannot be performed with any degree of thoroughness. We have taken a cursory and impressionistic survey of this vast field of prospective publication, and noted a few things that seem particularly deserving of prominent mention, but we have doubtless passed over two or three times as many more that will prove equally valuable additions to our libraries. The inadequacy of this brief summary grows more apparent with every year, as the activities of authors and publishers become multiplied, and as our classified catalogue of Fall announcements fills with every year an increasing number of our pages.

For American readers at least, we should say that the long-awaited biography of James Russell Lowell is likely to prove "the book of the year." Intrusted to the competent hands of his intimate associate and friend, Mr. Horace E. Scudder, this biography has been prepared with leisurely industry, and the author has had access to practically all of the available biographical material. We have no doubt that Mr. Scudder has risen to the occasion, and produced at the same time the most important of his own works and one of the most important works of biography in American literature. Our English friends, perhaps, will take a less exalted view of Lowell and his books than our own; to them the leading biography of the year is likely to be found in Mr. Graham Balfour's life of Robert Louis Stevenson, or, if not in that, in Mr. Leslie Stephen's "Life and Letters of John Richard Green." The three books together will certainly make this season memorable for biographical writing, even if we take no account of such other works as "The Making of an American," by Mr. Jacob A. Riis, the "Reminiscences" of Mr. George S. Boutwell, Bishop Creighton's life of Lord Grey, the two-volume life of Pasteur by R. Vallery-Radot, Mr. David Masson's biography of Chatterton, Miss H. Augusta Dodge's "Gail

## COMMUNICATION.

## THE SONNETS OF DE HEREDIA.

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

The appreciative notice, in your issue of July 16, of Mr. Frank Sewall's excellent translation of "The Trophies" of José Maria de Heredia leads me to suppose versions of two of the sonnets, lying by me, may be of interest to your readers. They were made seven or eight years ago, on the appearance of M. de Heredia's book. M. de Heredia has a way of fitting the movement of his verse exquisitely to the thought, which of course, like the other subtle beauties of his workmanship, is quite inimitable. In order faintly to hint it, I have allowed myself an anapaestic movement in the sonnet called *The Conquistadores*, Mr. Sewall's version of which you have quoted. This will at least institute a contrast between its tone and the dreamy air of the *Cartagena*, however illegitimate such a movement may be thought to be in a sonnet.

## THE CONQUISTADORES.

Like a flight of gerfalcons out of their nest,  
Tired of the pomp that exalts but enslaves,  
From Palos or Moguer, the captains and braves  
Sailed forth, by a vision heroic possessed,  
Of the fabulous wealth they were going in quest  
That Cipango had ripened in far-away caves,  
And the trade-winds were driving them over the waves  
To the mysterious shores of a world in the West.

Each evening, in hopes of an epical morrow,  
A golden mirage for their dreams they would borrow  
From the phosphorent blue of the tropical sea;  
Or over the prow they would gaze wistfully,  
And watch from the depths of the ocean arise  
Strange stars climbing slowly the unknown skies.

## TO A DEAD TOWN.

[*Cartagena of the Indies, 1532-1583-1697.*]

Ah, mournful town! once ocean's queen wert thou,  
And to thy harbor giant galleons drew,  
Where unscared birds in peace their prey pursue  
And errant clouds alone cast shadow now.  
Black heaps, thy crumbling walls lie low enow,—  
Such work did Drake and England's miscreant crew,—  
While Pointis' bullets, pearls of ebon hue,  
With coronet of glory ring thy brow.

Between the burning sky and murmuring sea,  
When noontide casts the spell of sleep on thee,  
These old conquistadors come back in dreams;  
And, in the stillness of the hot night-calms,  
Thou nursest thy old glory, and it seems  
Returned to thee a-slumbering 'neath thy palms.

BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD.

Princeton, N. J., Sept. 5, 1901.

A COMPLETE pocket edition of Dickens's Works will shortly be issued jointly by Messrs. Chapman & Hall of London, the owners of the copyrights, and Mr. Henry Frowde of the Oxford University Press. It will be printed on the Oxford India Paper and will include all the additional stories and sketches which appear in the "Gadshill" and "Authentic" editions. Upwards of six hundred illustrations will appear, being reproductions from the original drawings by Seymour, "Phiz," Cruikshank, Landseer, Leech, etc.

## The New Books.

## LEAVES FROM A BUSY LIFE.\*

"Is it possible that by any even chance posterity can get hold of these egotistic letters and hold me up to the howls of *hoi polloi*?" inquires "Gail Hamilton" in one of them. And *hoi polloi*, who were her eager supporters through a life of varied usefulness — and mischief, will be glad to know that their knowledge of that bright and indefatigable personality is not to end with her published writings, innumerable as these were, but is to go on to the greater intimacy which her sister has now made possible.

"Gail Hamilton," as most of at least the older readers know, is the pen-name of Mary Abigail Dodge, the "Gail" from the final syllable of her middle name and the "Hamilton" from the little town in Massachusetts where she was born, as had been her ancestors for some hundreds of years. Her life extended from March, 1833 (the day of birth is not given), to August 17, 1896. Into these sixty-three years she crowded the work of many personalities, busying herself about scores of projects, writing not less than twenty-six volumes of prose, verse, juvenilia, essays, history, biography, politics, sermons, editorials, biblical exegesis, and what not. Some of these topics, but not all, can be found discussed in the two duodecimo volumes containing 1090 pages which have been massed together by an elder sister, Miss Hannah Augusta Dodge, to whom many of the letters were addressed.

Through her whole life, Miss M. A. Dodge insisted upon the separation of her private personality from that involved in her authorship and public writings. Letters sent to "Miss Abigail Dodge" she refused to answer. She always felt it a burden upon her to have the two sides of her life brought together, and believed that her power would have been magnified greatly if her pen-name had remained a secret. Yet she took the frankest pleasure in the measure of fame her published work brought her, and these letters reveal a desire for praise and appreciation which is almost childlike.

In the face of this fact, the good taste of such an exposure as is here made of her inmost heart is questionable; nor has the editor showed the highest qualities of her office in making

\*GAIL HAMILTON'S LIFE IN LETTERS. Edited by H. Augusta Dodge. In two volumes. Boston: Lee & Shepard.