

THE BOOK SHELF.

(Conducted by ALBERT LEE, '91.)

To a recent number of the "Chap Book" (Chicago. H. S. Stone & Co.) Mr. Joseph Pennell contributes an article on "Robert Louis Stevenson, Illustrator," and it is somewhat surprising to those of us who have read and admired Stevenson for a number of years past to note, in the opening paragraph of this contribution, that the little books under discussion "are virtually unknown" save to Stevenson's friends. Mr. Pennell tells us ingenuously that for some years he has "been aware of the existence of a whole series of little books." Who has not, who knows anything about Stevenson's work? No doubt Mr. Pennell is also aware that the same writer gave us "Treasure Island" and "The Ebb Tide."

Aside from the patronizing tone of his introduction, however, Mr. Pennell's article is interesting, and forms a valuable contribution to our Stevensoniana. Mr. Pennell is especially qualified to write upon this subject being an artist of talent himself, and a clever writer besides; and in addition he has in a way been brought closer to Stevenson than most of us by having visited the region made famous by "Travels With a Donkey." He very justly comments on the fact that it is astonishing that Stevenson "could start from a town like Le Puy and yet barely mention it in his book," and any one who has read Mrs. Pennell's article on "The Most Picturesque Place in the World," which appeared in the "Century" a few years ago, will readily agree with him. But this is an aside from the "little books." The latter have never before been so fully and carefully, not to say affectionately, described, although their titles have long figured in bibliographies; and it is the first time, I believe,

that any of the cuts have been reprinted. Mr. Pennell takes a somewhat exaggerated view of Stevenson's talent as an illustrator, but his enthusiasm and admiration for the man doubtless overcame his critical judgment.

It is by the publication of just this sort of thing that the "Chap Book" maintains, in the estimation of book lovers, its position of pre-eminence among the countless periodicals that claim to belong in the same class; and by steadily maintaining the standard for "new" material that it set for itself at the start, the "Chap Book" has succeeded in earning for itself a place that cannot be denied or disparaged, even by the old folk who are stumbling along with the rear guard.

In its new form the 'Book Buyer' (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons) may now take rank as one of the chief of the many periodicals that talk bookishness to us once a month. It has been greatly improved typographically, and there are signs that it intends to reach forth into a wider field. If the publishers can succeed in entirely eliminating those features which have hitherto stamped the "Book Buyer" more or less as an advertising medium, they will render a service not only to their readers but to themselves. The Christmas issue is particularly complete, and the large number of illustrations re-printed from the holiday books of the year form a valuable guide for the prospective purchaser by giving him a very fair idea of what the new publications contain.

In the same field is the "Bookman" (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.), but this journal aims to be more than is demanded by the conditions which warrant its existence. For instance, a serial story in a magazine of this character seems a trifle out of place. For my part, I look to the "Book Buyer" and the "Bookman" for news of literary people and events and for criticism and comment upon current literature. A very valuable appendage to the "Bookman" is the monthly report of the retail book sales in the principal cities of the country; these reports have a sort of "money talks" value.

THE SEVEN SEAS.

But to turn from the magazine to books, let me recommend as one of the most important, if not the most important, publication of the year, Rudyard Kipling's "The Seven Seas" (New York: D. Appleton & Co.) I hope it is not my enthusiasm for Mr. Kipling's verse that leads me to praise his work as of the strongest and best that is being done at the present day. There is no poet alive who can turn out the virile, swinging, soul-stirring rhythm that Kipling gives us. You may talk about Dobson's graceful forms, which I am second to no one in appreciating; you may quote me Swinburne, and you may stumble through the stilted platitudes of the salaried Austin, but when it comes right down to power and manhood and human nature, you must turn to the author of "McAndrew's Hymn" and "Danny Deever." I wish Kipling were an American. He is the next thing to it,—but yet not close enough to the land to give us patriotic verse. I wish he were a Yale man. If the Corporation wish to honor themselves, they should confer upon Mr. Kipling a degree in 1897, and thus make him a Yale man. In the meantime I advise all of you fellows who have degrees already to get "The Seven Seas" and read it, so that you will have some sort of an idea of the kind of a Yale song Mr. Kipling will write for us when he gets that degree.

At a regular meeting of the New England Intercollegiate Triangular League at Boston on Saturday, December 5, the following officers were elected: President, C. E. Carr, Dartmouth; Vice President, C. W. Merriam, Amherst; Secretary and Treasurer, A. C. Twitchell, Williams. The football championship of the season was awarded to Dartmouth.

The University of California had a live bear as a mascot in their Thanksgiving Day game.

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UNION SQUARE NEW YORK

Christmas Morning.

(Charles Edward Thomas in Yale Courant.)

With flare of trumpet and roll of drum Tho' never a stick have we, And never a horn save a dimpled hand— A roistering, rollicking, warlike band, Right valorous soldiers three.

Our line of march through the parlor dim, And out to the open hall, A step and a stamp and a fearless stride— And a paper-knife strapped to each valiant side, Then way! we are heroes all.

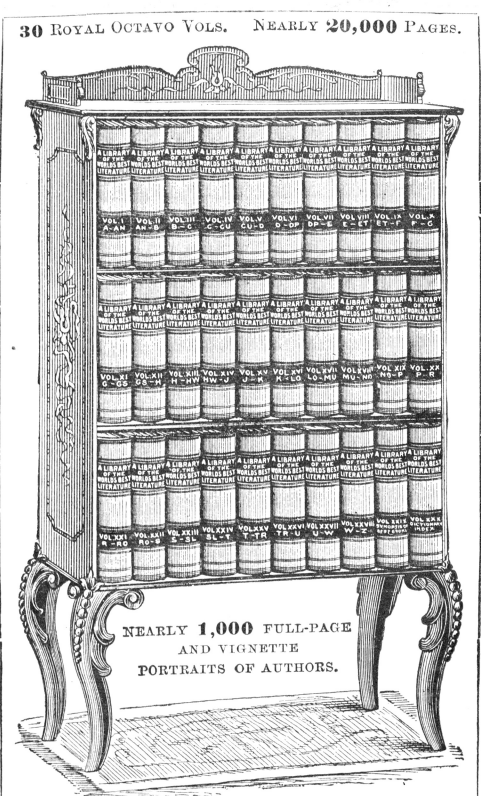
Shall it be a charge on the rocking-chair? Or a siege of the balustrade? Or a slow, strategical night-attack On the castle walls of the old hat-rack, Or merely a dress-parade?

'Tis one I vow to the soldiers three, Polly and Prue and I, With never a horn save a dimpled hand, We'll march all over this Downstairs Land. Till the stars peep out in the sky, And the moon says bed-time's nigh.

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