

THE BOOK SHELF.

[Conducted by ALBERT LEE, '91.]

The story of Dr. Jameson's raid into the Transvaal Republic was pretty fully told and retold in the newspapers at the time of its occurrence, and it has been described again and again since then in monthly and weekly publications on both sides of the sea; so that it is not at all unfair to presume that any one who follows the news, even in the most casual way, must be fairly familiar with the history of that movement. Nevertheless it is pleasant to have the thing summarized and placed before you between covers, and this has been done by Mr. Richard Harding Davis in "Dr. Jameson's Raiders," (New York: Robert Howard Russell). The author claims that he has "sundry facts here collected and set down for the first time," but they are few and far between and not easily discoverable. However, it is not new facts that the readers of Mr. Davis's pamphlet should desire. We all know that he was not with Dr. Jameson and that all he knows about the raid he got from the newspapers and from men who were with Jameson, so, at best, his tale comes to us at second or third hand. But that again, is a matter of minor importance. What we welcome is the tale itself, told connectedly and interestingly in Mr. Davis's pleasant manner and enlivened here and there with occasional expressions of opinion with which we may agree or disagree, without feeling that we are showing any want of respect or confidence in our writer, for we know that he was no nearer the scene of action than we were. It is very enjoyable to be able in this manner to put one's self on an equality, so to speak, with the author in hand, and especially so over a story of this kind—a story which I think is the best that the dreary world has offered us for some two hundred years. As Mr. Davis puts it: "Dr. Jameson's act was suited to the buccaneering days of Sir Francis Drake. He tried to put back the hand of time some hundred and fifty years, but he only succeeded in jarring the works for a few seconds, and the hand swept him out of its way and moved steadily on." The art

of the romancer lies in giving verisimilitude to his narrative, and the greater the semblance to truth the more enjoyment is there for the reader. But here is a tale that may rank with the wildest romance, and yet we all know, as we read along, that the events actually occurred a little over a year ago. It must have been Mr. Davis's journalistic instinct that recognized this as a "good story"—better probably than any he could fabricate—and led him to put his name to the telling of it. Whether he has given us any new facts or not, is of small moment; the pamphlet should be read for the very fun to be had out of the story.

Stories about dogs are almost always interesting, unless the dog is a very sad dog indeed. Miss Maria Louise Pool has collected all the stories she knows about dogs in a little volume named "Boss, and Other Dogs," (New York: Stone & Kimball), a little volume with a binding covered all over with dogs and a dedication addressed to a dead dog. The whole combination, therefore, is exceedingly doggy, and the tales themselves almost wag. Here you may read of every kind and condition of bow-wow, and although the book is not of the kind that one finishes at a sitting, it contains a number of good yarns, of which the title story is by no means the best. There is a quaint turn of humor in "Concerning Laddie and Others," but most of the stories are pathetic. Why not write about funny dogs? Is not there enough sadness in the world as it is; the man or woman who laughs makes a better citizen and a better neighbor than the one who sighs and weeps.

A very well written book is "Life the Accuser," by E. F. Brooke, (New York: Edward Arnold), but the author has drawn out her discourse to a most unnecessary length and has woven a number of minor issues into her main plot that might better have been left out. The theme is matrimonial infidelity—the same old note that has been harped on for the past

five or six years by those writers who have not enough imagination to build a plot on any other foundation. The discussion of the subject is not going to help matters any, and so long as Miss Brooke has certainly failed to bring us any closer to any kind of a solution of the question, we cannot help but feel that she would have done better had she spent her time in writing upon some other topic. A woman who has the command of language possessed by Miss Brooke can do more for literature by working along another line.

President Eliot on Athletics.

(From Annual Report to Harvard Overseers.)

The conduct of intercollegiate sports during the year proved afresh that the management of these sports at Harvard has been for some years unintelligent, and for that reason unsuccessful. The evils of overtraining and excessive exertion on the part of the members of the principal teams were exhibited in a high degree.

A fundamental defect in the athletic organization has been that coaches of limited experience, who may be either unobservant or obtuse, can override on the spot the advice of the trainer and physicians. The result is that the principal players of football are almost all more or less injured early in the season, and are then brought to the principal games in a crippled or exhausted condition; while the crew comes to the final race less capable of endurance than they were a month earlier.

The remedies are the subordination of coaches to an expert in training or to a medical adviser, and the general adoption of more reasonable views about all training for athletic sports. It must be perceived and admitted that training which goes beyond pleasurable strenuous exercise is worse than useless, and that so-called sports which require a dull and dreaded routine of hardship and suffering in preparation for a few exciting crises are not worth what they cost. They pervert even courage and self sacrifice, because these high qualities are exercised for no adequate end.

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Professor Lounsbury's Address.

Prof. Thomas R. Lounsbury recently gave an informal talk before the pupils of the Harry Hillman academy. A press report condenses his speech as follows:

The gist of the talk was that just as the body is trained for athletic contests so should the mind be trained for the work of life. The student who starts out to train for an athletic contest does not prepare himself by spurts, but by long weeks of daily application. The same laws which govern the body govern the mind. It is the steady work of every day that assures success. The speaker alluded to cramming for examination and said this led to permanent impairment of the memory. Knowledge cannot be gained in that way, but only by reviewing and re-reviewing. Knowledge is a matter of growth. We may know when we have mastered a problem in geometry or memorized certain facts in history, but we cannot tell when we have become educated any more than the athlete can tell when he became strong. In both cases the process was one of slow and imperceptible growth. Today is a king in disguise. The man who is doing his daily work the best he can, will other things being equal, show his superiority over his fellows. Regular, systematic training, whether of mind or body, will develop strength and nothing else will.

Contents of Yale Courant.

The issue of the Yale Courant for the first week in February has appeared with the following table of contents: "Layson," by A. D. Baldwin, '98; "Recompence," (poem), by R. L. Munger, '97; "The Island of Beria," (concluded), by F. Tilney, '97; and the regular departments, "Bachelor's Kingdom," conducted by F. Tilney, '97; "At the Round Table," conducted by R. L. Munger, '97; and "Clippings," conducted by C. E. Thomas, '97.

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