

THE BOOK SHELF.

(Conducted by ALBERT LEE, '91.)

The first volume of Prof. W. M. Sloane's "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte" has just been published by the Century Company of New York. There are to be four volumes in all (volume II. being now also ready), and the last two volumes will probably be completed for publication within the next six months.

The mechanical part of this important undertaking has been carried out by the Century Company in a manner worthy of the subject, with the result that we have here as fine and elaborate an example of book making as has ever been shown in the preparation of any historical work that I have had the good fortune to see. The books are a large octavo, handsomely bound in French morocco. The paper is of the finest quality and the type is unusually large and clear. (For this let us be devoutly thankful!) The illustrations are profuse, and no effort has been spared to make the pictorial part of the work as striking and complete as modern methods and resources can produce.

There are many colored photographs (made by the best house for that kind of work in Paris), reproducing the famous paintings illustrative of the text. There are any number of engravings, made especially for the present history, and a profusion of portraits. At the time of the publication of these articles in the Century Magazine there was some criticism made on the appropriateness of ideal pictures in a work of this nature. It was suggested that the illustration of "The infant Napoleon in the room of his birth" was of no value, since it was a purely ideal conception of the artist, and doubtless wholly inaccurate. This seems almost like hypercriticism, although I have no doubt the critic will find adherents among the over-particular who think it a mistake to introduce ideal pictures into a history. Yet, on the other hand, it would be a poorly illustrated history that barred this class of illustration entire-

ly. The picture of the snowball fight is an ideal picture, but it is valuable because it illustrates an event which we know occurred. We are not so sure about the lady in white gazing wistfully at the cradle. We even doubt if this is a good portrait of Mrs. Bonaparte. Still it is a fine picture, and an addition to the artistic features of the book, and for this reason it deserves the place it holds, and the man who objects to its presence no doubt has a bad digestion or a liver.

To pass to the more important portion of this review, the history itself, it seems no exaggeration to assert that Mr. Sloane's work is beyond question the best history of Napoleon ever written in English, and certainly the most complete and impartial record of the man and his times ever set down in any language. The critics of France and England, commenting upon the instalments as they appeared in magazine form, were almost unanimous over this latter point. There were some who professed to believe that Napoleon was only too recently of the living for his history to be written without bias; but the general sentiment has been opposed to this, and the students of the Napoleonic era have welcomed the American explorer into their realm. Napoleon is perhaps not long enough of the dead for a Frenchman or an Englishman to be able to write impartially of his life. The shadow of the man has not yet by any means faded away from the field of modern events in Europe, and there are still remaining some of Napoleon's finger marks on the map. But for an American to face the intricate problem and the colossal labor of setting down Bonaparte's life as it was—with its motives and a true account of its acts—was possible even within a century of Waterloo. Prof. Sloane has proved that; and his work will endure.

The life of Napoleon was so full of startling deeds and of famous men, and of events, each worthy in itself of a separate history, that most of us who have read the record of the great man's career have obtained only a very general impression of it, and few of us ever learned much of his doings previous to Toulon. There is so much more of living importance to the world in the man's deeds after he became a soldier of some note, than there is before that, that the minor record has fallen to a lesser importance than it should. But, as a matter of fact, it is only by a careful study and a full un-

derstanding of Napoleon's early days that one can come near comprehending and appreciating the true character of the man.

Prof. Sloane has devoted much time and research to this period, and he makes the youth of Bonaparte more interesting and more clear than any author has ever done before—so far as I know. It is marvelous that, with the obstacles he had to surmount as a youth, Napoleon should have succeeded as he did. No ordinary man could have. Herein lay his genius. All this Prof. Sloane makes us see as we have never seen it before, and herein especially, to my mind, rests the value of that portion of the history contained in Volume I.

The Mechanics Lectures.

The Mechanics' course of lectures in the Scientific School, which has already begun, has on its list some lectures which will be particularly well illustrated. There are four of this character by Prof. D. Cady Eaton on different Egyptian subjects. Another lecture with fine slides is to be given on "The Battlefield of Gettysburg," by Mr. Buehler who has gathered a particularly good selection of photographs for this lecture. The names on the list besides those mentioned are Prof. W. H. Brewer, Dr. E. H. Jenkins, Prof. Hadley, Mr. Burton, Mr. Bumstead and Prof. A. E. Verrill. The dates and subjects are given in the Weekly's musical and literary program.

The Yale Shingle.

The Yale Shingle, the annual publication of the Law School, will be edited this year by N. Candee, '97 L. S. It will be published about May 1, 1897 and will contain the following articles: "Class Poem," E. C. Snyder; "Junior Year," Henry Merwin; "Senior Year," Francis Parsons; "Kent Club," R. C. Stoll; "Law Journal," Roger Baldwin; "Social," J. D. Thomson; "Religions," R. J. Thompson; "Athletics," C. L. Avery, jr.; "Moot Court," G. B. Thayer; also an article to be written by a member of the faculty, as yet undecided.

There will be half tone photographs of every member of the Senior class, and three large autotypes, one of the New Front of the Law School Building, one of the Faculty, and one of the Law Journal Board.

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UNION SQUARE
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Andover Congratulates Herself.

The Phillippian congratulates Andover with unusual warmth on the remarkable record made in the business management of the football team in the past season. It is not possible to give an idea of the satisfaction felt at Andover and expressed by the paper except by the reproduction of the following editorial on the subject in the Phillippian: "Andover's reputation as the foremost among preparatory schools has for a long time been such a well established fact that we have almost come to think it impossible to make any great addition to it. But in forming that reputation she surely has made no one record which could be any more desirable than the one we have made this year in the matter of football subscriptions. It is safe to say that there is probably no other school in the country, as large as Andover and where the student has as much liberty as Andover students have in these matters, which can boast, as we can, of having closed football accounts with no subscriptions whatever due from any one in the school. This is indeed a novel situation for Andover, but certainly a most desirable one and one on which we may well congratulate ourselves. And let us hope that this record may be equalled, since it cannot be beaten by every manager's report in the future. And this is possible if we will each do our part towards it."

Prof. William H. Riddle, instructor in mathematics at the University of Minnesota, was fatally injured in a railway accident on a grade crossing January 9, dying two weeks later. He was only twenty-three years old.

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This is indeed an era of unread books. In this bustling, feverish age of ours few are the favored individuals who can lay claim to being "well read." The vast majority of educated people finish their "serious" reading just as they begin to be able really to appreciate the treasures bequeathed to us by the master minds of the past.

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Gilbert Runkle as associates, the assistance has been sought of an advisory council, consisting of one eminent scholar from each of ten of our leading universities, thus insuring the widest possible breadth of literary appreciation.

A Few of the Famous Contributors.

The arrangement is not chronological, but alphabetical, thus diversifying the matter and avoiding the heavy monotony of ancient or mediæval literature. There are also elaborate articles upon all great authors, great books, and the literatures of different ages, nations and periods, and these articles have been entrusted to over three hundred of the foremost critics and writers of the United States, Great Britain, France and Germany, and signed by such authorities as Dean Farrar, Andrew Lang, Mrs. Humphry Ward, Dr. Andrew D. White, W. D. Howells, Henry James, and many other literary celebrities. These articles greatly increase the interest in the contents, and add a tremendous educational value by collecting for the student the most scholarly literary judgments of our own time.

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The introductory sets available will be so quickly claimed that arrangements have been made with the Club to reserve a limited number of sets for the special benefit of YALE ALUMNI WEEKLY readers. Those who first apply, mentioning this paper, will secure them. Applications for special prices (and sample pages) should therefore be made at once to Harper's Weekly Club, 91 Fifth Avenue, New York.