

READ THE WRITERS OF TODAY.

American Intellectual Life Shaped by Living Authors

The journeyman writers write almost all that almost all Americans read, says Walter Page in the Atlantic. This is a fact that we love to fool ourselves about. We talk about "literature" and we read it, but the writing of the books—living books, that is, men and women that write for pay. We may hug the notion that our life and thought are not really affected by current literature, that we read the living writers only for utilitarian reasons and that our real intellectual life is fed by the great dead writers. But our hugging this delusion does not change the fact that the intellectual life even of most educated persons, and certainly of the mass of the population, is fed chiefly by the writers of our own time. Let us hope that the great writers of the past do set the standards whereby a few judge the writing of the present. But, even if this be true, it is still true also that the intellectual life of the American people is chiefly shaped by current writing.

SHOWED THE PATH OF DUTY.

Timely Advice That Shaped the Destinies of Great Men.

At a critical time in the life of John Wesley, when, to save his soul, he was about to retire into a remote privacy and give himself up to prayer and self-discipline, an unknown adviser, a "serious man," gave him back to England and humanity by saying to him: "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to Heaven. Remember, you can not serve Him alone. You must find companions or make them. The Bible knows nothing of a solitary religion." A few words spoken by a servant maid to Charles Wesley led him to step, before his long-struggling brother, into life and liberty of soul. And when Whitefield was setting out for America some wise friend said to him: "If you have a mind to convert Indians, there are colliers enough in Kingswood." He went to the Kingswood colliers, and in his so doing the great evangelical revival in England was begun.

Women as Story-Makers.

Women write with color and spirit; an unexpected number of them are showing genuine humor. A few have brute force, as well. Women novelists have the sense, too, of situation; they construct plots that are intricate and then carry them through with dash. They manufacture good dialogue, and they know human nature under all aspects save one. The woman who knows man is yet to come. She can handle him domestically, perhaps, though there is often more of masculine objection to a fuss than great feminine diplomacy in his concessions. But she cannot maneuver him in a book. Man, though, has plummeted woman's heart and charmed it better than she could do herself. Until she can do as much for him, he has no fear of being entirely ousted from the field of fiction.—Cleveland Leader.

Through Purifying Process.

A business man who had purchased a Salvation Army paper from one of the blue-bonneted peddlers handed her a five-dollar bill which he asked her to turn into the treasury with his compliments. As she thanked him, he said: "How do you know how I made that money? Perhaps it is tainted." She looked at the money for a moment, and then folded it up and put it in her purse, as she answered: "No money can be so bad that it cannot be fumigated in passing through our treasury. In this gift, sir, you have done good for yourself, good for the army, and good for some poor sinner who needs aid. How can money be tainted that does so much?"

The Family's Night Out.

In one large family a pogrom on which the members can record their outgoing and incomings at night is a valuable article. It is a board with holes in it like a cribbage board, arranged in two vertical columns. Each column has as many holes as there are persons in the family, with the names in between. When "George" goes out he puts his peg in the "out" column and when he comes in he puts it back in the "in." The last one who puts the last "in" for the night has to lock the door and make things secure for the night.

Living Books.

Arizona Indian library is an interesting one. An Arizona judge, who has been studying this tribe, says that they select several promising youths of their tribe from time to time for living libraries of their traditions, and they are carefully instructed in the historical legends pertaining to their tribe, being required to commit them faithfully to memory. They in turn instruct their successors, and thus preserve the traditions in the exact language recited by their ancestors of many years ago.

More Practical.

"Did you hear that the professor had succeeded in squaring the circle?" "No, I didn't; but if he would figure a while longer and toll a man how to square his wife when he comes home at two a. m. I think he would have a more appreciative audience."—Nashville American.

LEARNED BY SAD EXPERIENCE.

Kafir Lad Found Out Just What a Beating Meant.

Just as a Kafir is slow in locating pain which is being experienced in his own body, so is he slow in imagining what others are suffering. A grown-up Kafir related, says Mr. Dudley Kidd, in "Savage Childhood," that when he was a child his father threatened him with a beating if he did something or other.

The child was puzzled as to what sort of thing a beating might be, for although he had often seen his bigger brothers beaten, his imagination was unable to work on the sight and reconstruct the experience of these others into terms of his own senses.

When his father threatened him, therefore, he simply laughed, for he had not the remotest idea of how a beating really felt. It took a very short time for the young gentleman to extend the boundaries of his knowledge.

Swift retribution followed the unpardonable sin of showing disrespect to his father. As the children about entirely bare, there was no delay for preparation. The father took a stick and applied it vigorously, "according to directions," and with entire success.

"When the tears and smarting were over," said the Kafir in his old age, "I sat down and thought it over. 'Well, I said to myself, 'now I know what father means by a beating. I don't know what is the reason of it, but anyhow I know what sort of a thing a beating is.' I often laugh when I think how stupid I was before that."—Youth's Companion.

CIGAR THAT LASTS ALL DAY.

Device of the Ease-Loving Indians of South America.

Cigars a foot and a half long, which are made for one day's smoking, have been placed on view in the American Museum of Natural History at New York. With them is a holder which looks like a tuning fork and is large enough to be used for pitching hay.

Far up the Rio Nigra, a tributary of the Amazon, two explorers, Henry Schmidt and Louis Weiss, made a collection of articles for the museum. The Indians there made cigars 18 inches long and as big around as a child's arm. One of these cigars is too much for any ease-loving man to clasp, so the Indians put the fragrant roll between the tines of a fork two and a half feet long, stick the sharp end of the handle into the ground at a convenient distance from their hammocks, and take a puff from time to time as they sway lazily backward and forward.

There are many other picturesque articles in the collection, which was made during a three months' journey from the coast. The material is of the highest value, and nothing like it has been seen, except a few articles in a German museum.

A Vegetable Freak.

A freak in vegetable growth has been added to the collection in the museum of the zoological division of the Pennsylvania state department of agriculture. This freak was a radish which grew in the garden of Martin Hershog, a Tyrone cigarmaker, and was sent to Harrisburg by Representative Thompson of Blair county. The radish is six inches long and so closely resembles the human form that at a glance it would be taken for a newly-born babe. It is marked so as to resemble the eyes, nose, mouth, neck, breast, waistline, abdomen, thighs and legs of a human being. In a letter which accompanied the radish Mr. Thompson says that in looking over an English record in which were shown illustrations of peculiarities in vegetable growth he found nothing among the illustrations or descriptions that equaled this one.

Statistics of Writers.

And the writers' craft is now become a very large craft. In numbers it ranks perhaps second or third among the professions. There are more teachers and possibly more lawyers than there are persons who make their living wholly or in the main part by writing; and possibly there are as many physicians. But if you could count the reporters and correspondents, the special writers for the newspapers, the makers of text-books, the writers for magazines, the novelists, the playwrights, the writers of government and other public documents, and all the rest who make their living wholly or in main part by writing, you would be astonished to see how large a company they are.—Walter H. Page, in Atlantic Monthly.

Duchess a Vegetarian.

The duchess of Portland and her daughter are strict vegetarians. "I always feel so greedy when I dine with her grace," confessed a friend of the duchess to me once, "she drinks no wine and eats only vegetables. It makes one appear a perfect cannibal." Skim milk, biscuits, butter and cheese are the only items on her grace's menu for lunch, while invariably for breakfast more skim milk, lettuce and a boiled egg form her daily repeat year in and year out.—Bylander.

Marital Deceptions.

He—You promised when we were married, to love, honor and obey me, and it was false pretenses. She—And you promised to endow me with all your worldly goods, and you haven't got any.

TOILET A REAL WORK OF ART.

Maiden of Japan as Equipped for Festive Occasion.

The Japanese college girl entertained the fudge party with oriental reminiscences.

"On every holiday," she said, "the Japanese maiden must rise and have her toilet finished before the sun looks over Fujiyama, our sacred mountain.

"And what a toilet! The long, coarse black tresses are washed, combed and greased till the head shines like a knob of polished black marble. The cheeks are rouged a fine pink. The throat, neck and bosom are powdered, but at the base of the neck there are left three lines of the original brown skin, in accordance with the rules of Japanese cosmetic art.

"With charcoal she rounds and lengthens her eyebrows. She reddens her lips with cherry paste, adding a gilt diamond to the center of the pouting lower lip. She puts on eight fresh garments and she ties her obi, or great sash, in a symbolic knot. Her socks—she doesn't wear stockings—are very white and pure, and her cloaks are lacquered till they shine like a silk hat.

"Now she is ready to set out. She fills her silk tobacco pouch, thrusts her pipe in her girdle, puts six paper handkerchiefs up her wide sleeves and sallies forth, turning her toes in and waving her fan with a demure grace."

DOING AWAY WITH HAND WORK.

Device Sought by Which Poultry May Be Artificially Plucked.

Six turkeys slain that morning revolved slowly on a kind of spit in a small room on the ground floor of a great poultry farm, and as they revolved they were miraculously plucked. Invisible hands stripped off their plumage; the air was gray with falling feathers.

"Wind plucked turkeys—it is an experiment," said the foreman. "Those birds are being plucked by cross-currents of electrically driven air. But experiment is not a commercial success.

"For many years we have tried to invent a poultry-plucking machine. We have not succeeded well. Air plucking seems to be the idea that offers most promise, but it still wants a lot of working out. Yet eventually, I have no doubt, these turkeys that now take a half hour and cost ten cents apiece to pluck by air will be air plucked in a few seconds, and at no more cost than ten cents a thousand."

Laughable Linguistic Errors.

The mistakes made by foreigners in endeavoring to use some of our slang phrases are often quite amusing. This was shown the other day, when a Teutonic friend, in trying to make evident the social prominence of a common acquaintance, exclaimed: "Oh, he's the biggest pebble in the peach!"

On another occasion, while admiring the fair complexion of a baby, brought forth by a fond mother for his inspection, he said: "He is fine. What nice white meat he has got."

Then, in taking leave of his hostess, he remarked: "Well, so long. See you farther on. Cold out, don't you."

New French Machine Gun.

Although the French army remains unshaken in the belief that its new machine gun, firing 650 balls a minute, is the most formidable in the world, certain important defects have been pointed out in all the gunnery camps where it has been tested.

Owing to its practically unceasing fire gases generate, which throw it out of gear, though in some cases 10,000 shots have been fired without revealing any fault. The arsenal at St. Etienne has been furnished with designs for modifications which will remedy the defect, allowing for which officers believe that no regiment could advance 500 yards without most of the men and horses being hit, owing to the gun's differential action.

A Risk.

"Many a man has by simple economy laid the foundation of a fortune."

"Yes," answered the man who doesn't figure closely, "but by the time you get your fortune you are so liable to be grounded in habits of economy that you won't enjoy spending the money."

Explanatory.

"Why are you raising the price of milk two cents?" asked the housewife grimly.

"Well, you know," returned the milkman, "winter is coming on and—"

"Oh, I see," resumed the woman, not softening in manner, "the water will be needed for making ice."

Hope Realized.

Editor—So this joke is absolutely original with you?

Humorist—It is.

Editor—Well, now, isn't that interesting? For years and years I have wished that some day I could see the originator of that joke.—Somerville Journal.

Brute.

"I shall never speak to you again," declared Mrs. Jawback, reduced to tears at the end of the argument. "Just like a woman," scoffed Mr. Jawback, brutally. "If you can't get your way in any other way, you resort to bribery."

LAWYERS AVOID DEAF CLIENTS.

Are a Handicap to Their Efforts in the Courtroom.

A man in the Tomba for theft consulted three different lawyers, each of whom seemed unwilling to undertake his defense, says the New York Press. The fourth man interviewed was also on the point of declining the case.

"Look here," the accused broke out angrily, "what's the matter with you fellows, anyhow? This isn't a difficult case. You ought to be able to get me off easily, and I'm willing to pay."

"The trouble is this," said the fourth man frankly, "You are very deaf. No lawyer likes to defend a deaf man unless he is hard pushed for clients or is going to receive a tremendously big fee. A deaf man is so very likely to queer his own case. If he would only trust implicitly to the lawyer he would be all right, but that is something he seldom does. He cannot hear what is going on about him, so he flies into a panic and fancies his lawyer is neglecting his interests, and the first thing anybody knows he bursts out something that ruins the case. I really can't blame those other men for turning you down. I shall do the same thing unless you will promise upon your honor not to speak only when I tell you to."

BROUGHT BACK BAD MEMORIES.

Good Reason Why This Man Disliked Particular Perfume.

"You always have the odor of hencene or something in your rooms," he said as he entered. "Why is that?"

"Somehow I think it affects my work," he answered. "I can do more beautiful work in an atmosphere of incense. If I write a poem while there is the odor in the room they accept it and pay for it. Yes, in sure enough money. If there isn't incense, they send it back."

"I am like that a little, too," he admitted. "Once I thought a lot of a woman and we quarreled. Quarreled bitterly. I had used a delicate perfume that I loved. She sent me a little lace handkerchief in a letter perfumed with it. Great! I went straight to her."

"And then?" she asked as he began restlessly walking up and down.

"Well," he explained, "I hate that perfume now. Hate it like poison. Every time I send her an installment of the alimony I hate it more."

Suppression of Opium Smoking.

An observant traveler who reached Hong Kong the other day from the interior by way of the West river tells of a great change so far as the use of opium is concerned, says the North China News. He points out that the edict issued by the throne on the subject has had a marvelous effect on the people—and especially those who have learned the seductive power of the drug.

On the river steamers and passenger boats, where hitherto there has been a free use of the pipe, there is now a marked diminution. The steamers trading to Chiangmen have notices conspicuously posted prohibiting the use of the drug on board, and not only are the notices posted but they are observed. The traveler declares that on a voyage on a passenger boat to Chiangmen he did not see a single opium smoker. This speaks well for the action of the Chinese authorities.

Wanted It Kept Up.

The family was gathered in the library admiring a splendid thunder storm when the mother bethought herself of Dorothy alone in the nursery. Fearing lest her little daughter should be awakened and feel afraid, she slipped away to reassure her. Pausing at the door, however, in a vivid flash of lightning which illumined the whole room, she saw her youngest olive-branch sitting straight up in bed. Her big brown eyes were glowing with excitement and she clapped her chubby hands, while she shouted encouragingly: "Bang it again, God! Bang it again!"

Splash of a Raindrop.

Even the splash of a raindrop is of sufficient importance to receive scientific investigation. Prof. A. M. Worthington of the Royal Engineering college at Devonport, England, has found that a drop of water falling into water excavates a perfectly spherical hollow, which is lined with the liquid of the drop, reaches its greatest depth as the water rises attains its maximum height, but is enormously greater in volume than the water thrown out. With a fall of 80 inches the pit has 360 times the volume of the ejected water, with a fall of 16 inches, 44 times.

A Flare-Back.

"Bradder Jones, if you didn't smoke, you might own a brick house, like what I do."

"Look here, man, don't you come pesterin' wif me like dat. You didn't git dat brick house by not smokin'. You got it by borrowin' mah newspaper to read, an' mah clothes to wear, an' mah vittles to eat. You may be a fy financier, but dat don't gib you no license to set up for a human copy-book!"

A Mistaken Impression.

"Of course," said the analytical questioner, "there is a great deal to be said on both sides of the question."

"Yes," answered Senator Borgum. "Too many of us are getting the idea that all a public question is fit for nowadays is to serve as the topic for a good talk."

COULD NOT BE DISHEARTENED.

One Man's Philosophy Rose Superior to All Afflictions.

Brown's cheerfulness was a source of wonder and admiration to his friends. Either his religion or his philosophy taught him to accept everything as a wise dispensation. But then he had a large share of worldly goods; his friends argued, and nothing but adversity would shake his faith.

Therefore, when a promising crop was washed away by a flood the neighbors were much astonished to hear him say: "It's all for the best. I was blest with an overabundance last year."

In the winter his house was burned to the ground. To his neighbors' solicitations he calmly responded: "The house never suited us anyway, so it is all for the best."

Other calamities befell Brown, but still he refused to be disheartened. The climax came when he was in a railroad accident. Both feet were so badly crushed that amputation was necessary.

Sympathetic friends gathered from all quarters. They drooped to hear the lamentations they were sure would greet them, for even Brown could hardly be expected to pass this lightly by.

"Guess you are pretty well disconcerted, aren't you, with both feet cut off?" ventured some one. "Do you think this is all for the best?"

But Brown nodded his head, smiling wanly, and said: "They were always cold, anyway."—Ladies' Home Journal.

NO LONGER A HERO TO HER.

Last Drop in Cup of Sorrow for Unfortunate Playwright.

David Belasco was being congratulated on the success of his new play, A. R. drama, "Writing plays is risky business," said Mr. Belasco. "Past triumphs don't count. He who has written 20 superb pieces is just as likely to be damned on his 21st piece as any tyro."

"There was once a playwright who set in the first scene of the first night of a new piece of his own. This piece failed, it failed dreadfully."

"As the playwright sat, pale and sad, amid the hisses, a woman behind him leaned forward and said: "Kiss me, sir, but, knowing you to be the author of this play, I took the liberty, at the beginning of the performance, of snipping off a lock of your hair. Allow me now to return it to you."

Maine Buried Treasure.

As an illustration of how justice is sometimes meted out by our courts of law the case of the buried treasure found in New Vineyard serves well. Fessenden Hackett, while employed by Leonard Hackett found some old coin of the face value of \$450. Both the Hacketts, brothers, claimed the coin, and Fessenden finally bought his brother's claim for \$550 in good money and took all the coin, comprising both domestic and foreign money. But he no sooner gets what he believes to be a clear title than two fellow-workmen with him at the time of the discovery claimed the proportional parts of the money and entered suit to recover it. Of the billion value of \$450 Fessenden had already paid his brother \$550; now the jury has decided that he must also pay each of his fellow workmen about \$300, so the buried treasure he found, and which had a market value of \$450, he must pay \$1,150 for. In other words, he is \$200 and court expenses worse off than if he had found nothing.

Novel Telephone.

The dictionary of M. H. Turner, which has been attracting attention in London, is a novel telephone designed, to give convenient communication between the various departments of a business house or factory. A box a foot long, half an inch wide and a third as deep has two recessed openings on its outer face, and a row of switches along its base gives connection with the different departments in the building. Flexible wires lead to the regular system of conductors of the establishment. The openings are transmitter and receiver, and special microphones of great sensitiveness focus and magnify the sound waves. Speaking in an ordinary tone, the persons conversing may attend to their usual work, walking about the room 10 or 15 feet from the instrument. The words spoken at that distance from the transmitter are loudly sounded at the receiver, but depressing a lever throws the loud-speaking attachment out of gear, when a small receiver at the side of the box is held to the ear in the usual way.

George Elliot's Church.

At a cost of \$15,000 the three bells in Chilvers Coton parish church tower are being recast and three others added, says the London Standard. As a child "George Elliot" (Mary Ann Evans), the famous novelist, attended Chilvers Coton church with her parents, and long afterward she drew vivid word pictures of the ancient building and its incumbents. "Mr. Gilli" and "Amos Barton" were the vicar and curate respectively of Chilvers Coton, the "Shepperton" of "Scenes of Clerical Life."

Oh, the Flatterer!

Oh, the flatterer! Weary Willie—Gee, yer a wonder! How did yer manage ter git a hand out from dat frosty-lookin' woman?

Hungry Higgins—Dead easy. When she opened de door I sez: "Good mornin', miss. Is yer mudder home?"

REAL CAUSE OF THE SMASHUP.

Railroad Sign to Blame for Accident It Was Intended to Avert.

The old darkey was suing the railroad company for damages. The man contended that, not being warned by whistle or engine bell, he had started to drive his rig across the company's track when a shunted box car of said company crashed into his outfit, causing the death of the horse, loss of the wagon and minor injuries to himself. After the prosecution had closed its side of the case, the company's lawyer called the old darkey to the stand and went at him. "Mr. Lamson," he began, "your rig was struck by the box car in full daylight, was it not?" "I tink dar was some clouds overhead, sah," answered the caviling witness. "Never mind the clouds! And only a few days before this accident the railroad company had put a new sign at that crossing?" "Dar was a sign dar, yas, sah!" "And didn't that sign say 'Stop! Look! Listen!'" "Now, dar am de whole accusation up de trouble!" declared the darkey, with animation. "If dat stop sign hadn't caught dis chile's eye jes' a Ah war squar' on dat track, dar wouldn't a been no smashup!"—Hohemias.

POWER OF THE ROTHSCHILDS.

Accumulated Wealth Soon to Make Influence of House Enormous.

It has been calculated that at the present rate of accumulation the Rothschilds will own by the middle of the present century some £2,000,000,000 sterling, or nearly enough to pay off the national debt three times over, says a writer in the Grand Magazine, of London, England. The imagination is staggered and fails to realize the power which is represented by such figures. It could finance or it could stop a war; it could delay the industrial development of a country for a generation; or it could, on the other hand, enable a country which it favored to beat all its industrial rivals. A power like this must have its fingers on all the arteries through which flows the life-blood of commerce, the ebb and flow of which it can regulate uncontrolled.

For Happiness in Marriage.

I have spoken of the only true and right motive for marriage, and venture my opinion that marriage should not be too eagerly sought by either sex, but rather waited for until the certainty has come that one loves worthily and well. I mean, that for a man to say to himself, in cold blood, that it is time he should marry, and, for that reason, to look about for a wife—instead of being aware that he loves and therefore desires to marry the one beloved woman—is, to my thinking, an unwise and in almost as poor taste as for a girl to discover that it is time she were settled in life and, in consequence, set about trying to attract a husband. In neither case is happiness in marriage likely to be the result of such a quest.—Louise Chandler Moulton.

Out of the Schoolroom.

A schoolboy was asked to give some information in regard to the Cary sisters, the once famous New England poets, and he said of them: "The Cary sisters were two poets who lived in Massachusetts most of the time. They went to New York where they made many fast friends. Their fastest friend was John G. Whittier." At the time of the Longfellow centennial, when the school children were writing so much about him, one boy wrote: "Longfellow's poems were mostly of his own composure, but he wrote 'Tells of a Wayside Inn' where others did the talking. He was the poet laureate of our country and was a crackerjack when it came to real poetry."—Lippincott's.

Spectacles for Cows.

A Russian firm which manufactures optical goods has just completed an order for 40,000 pairs of spectacles to be worn by cows. These spectacles are necessary because the steppes, the great Russian prairies, are covered with snow for six months in the year, but during part of the time delicate fresh grass tips protrude from the white and dazzling mantle. The cows then are turned out to feed on the new grass, but if their eyes are unprotected from the dazzle of sunshine on the snow it gives them snow blindness. Hundreds have died from this cause; but a rude, cheap kind of spectacles, made of leather and smoked glass, was invented, and since has been used with great success.

What's Geography Good For?

This is from the philosophy of Mrs. Louisa Schmitt, who berated a teacher for not promoting her daughter because the latter was deficient in geography. "Teacher, you don't know it all, I guess," said the irate Mrs. Schmitt. "I wish it that my daughter gets through school so she gets a man. Never mind about the geography; just promote her without it. Why, my other daughter, she didn't know geography and she got a man. And you ain't got any man at all. What is this geography good for? See that my daughter gets through school!"

Serious, Indeed.

"Lady," said the tattered tramp at the gate, "can't yer spare me a dime on a very urgent collection?" "What do you call an urgent collection?" asked the busy housewife. "Why, yer see, I have just been fixed \$25,240.000 for ridin' on an off car an' I've only got two days to get it together."