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LITERARY LITTLEBITS

Kipling's new book, "Puck of Pook's Hill," grew out of a characteristic incident. It is the author's habit to prow through the village of Burwash, which lies near his farm in Sussex, England. One day two years ago he went into an old bookshop and picked up a time-worn "History of Sussex." He began to read the volumes and became absorbed in them. Finally he bought the set. When he brought the books home Mrs. Kipling asked: "Why did you buy these old books?" "I am going to get a book out of them," replied Kipling. The result was the group of fanciful tales which compose "Puck of Pook's Hill," and which have the Sussex background. It is a modern "Midsummer Night's Dream," for it deals with fairies and knights. Henry Van Dyke, in a recent number of The Interior, proposes the addition of two stanzas to the national anthem. He thinks these are required to express the inexhaustible riches of the sublime and beautiful, the broad and varied natural enchantments of all America. He says: "Let us sing the familiar and well-loved verses which come from the East; but let us sing also of the North and West and the South, the great lakes, the wide forests, the vast prairies and the blooming savannahs:

I love thine inland seas,
Thy groves and giant trees,
Thy rolling plains;
Thy rivers' mighty sweep,
Thy mystic canyons deep,
Thy mountains wild and steep,
All thy domains.
Thy silver eastern strands,
Thy Golden Gate that stands
- Fronting the west;
Thy flowery southland fair,
Thy sweet and crystal air—
O, land beyond compare,
Thee I love best!

"When in 1889 I heard appeared in my reception room," writes Dr. George M. Gould in Putnam's Monthly, "although I had not seen any photograph of him, and had not even known of his coming, I at once said, 'You are Lafcadio.' The poor exotic was so sadly out of place, so wondering, so suffering and shy that I am sure he would have run out of the house if I had not at once shown him, on overflowing kindness, or if a tone of voice had betrayed any curiosity or doubt. It was at once agreed that he should stay with me indefinitely, and there was no delay in providing him with a seat at my table, and a room where he could be at his work of proof-reading. His 'Two Years in the French West Indies' was then going through the press and an incident connected with the proofreading illustrates how impossible it was for him, except when necessity drove, to meet any person not already known. He wished to give his reader the tune of the songs printed on pages 426-431, but he knew nothing of music. I arranged with a lady to repeat the airs on her piano as he should whistle them, and then to write them on the music staff. When the fatal evening arrived, Hearn and I went to the lady's house, but as we proceeded his part in our chatting lapsed into silence, and he lagged behind, although he finally dragged himself to the foot of the doorstep. After I had rung the bell his courage failed, and before the door was opened I saw him running as if for life, half a square away."

Homesteads for the Asking.
The United States service for reclaiming arid lands expects to redeem a total area about equal to that of the State of Wyoming, or more than twice the size of Ohio—all of which will become available for the production of crops and the maintenance of a prosperous population, says Robert Franklin in the Technical World Magazine. His article "Homesteads for the Asking," is a startling account of the fine lands that are open to settlers, which Uncle Sam will give free to those who wish to make their homes in the country, but which are neglected and ignored by the toiling masses of the great cities, who should be only too eager to grasp the opportunity. He tells of the great irrigation projects on foot in the West, by which millions of acres will be redeemed for the farmer. He tells many interesting stories of government engineers and irrigation men—how they traveled unknown canyons and traversed miles upon miles of land without water or food, in their efforts to ascertain the best way of getting water to the settlers. The whole article is a stirring tale of endeavor upon the part of the government which has opened tremendous opportunities for the farmer. Eventually some 60 million acres of desert lands will be converted in this manner into the richest kind of farming country.

Not inseparable.
"So, there!" said Miss Passay, in conclusion, "what do you think of that?"
"Well, well," answered Miss Peppery. "I can scarcely believe it. Did she really call you a liar?"
"To my very teeth!"
"To your very teeth, eh? But were you present at the time?"—Philadelphia Press.
It is a good thing for the old-fashioned drudge-mother to insist upon going to church. Otherwise her family will grow up without ever seeing her with a hat on.

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