

have been, however, not unfavorable. Statistics demonstrate that in some parts of the West «farm lands are selling for much more than they brought half a dozen years ago,» and mortgages are being paid up. Uncertain climatic conditions have had to do with the distress in certain sections, also competition, over-production, and other causes not allied to currency conditions. The questions for inquiry are as to the true causes of discontent and as to practicable and genuine cures.

It has always been a desire of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE to make each section of the country known to all

other sections. Hence the «Great South» and the «Great West» papers; the papers on farming in different localities and by different methods, and on great features of natural scenery; the recent papers on forestry, irrigation, etc. The magazine expects to continue in this line. For while actual travel cannot be forced, as the writer of the open letter generously wishes to force it, it is possible, and it is a public duty, to cultivate mutual understanding and good will by means of those «fire-side travels» on which the illustrated magazine can conduct its immense company of tourists.



OPEN LETTERS

Sloane's Napoleon.

(SEE PORTRAIT ON PAGE 912.)

YOU are to be congratulated upon the publication of the most satisfactory life of Bonaparte which has yet been presented to the public. Professor Sloane deserves the highest praise for his recent contribution, in the pages of THE CENTURY MAGAZINE, to the verities of history. He will receive it not only from the lovers of a vivid and picturesque style of historical writing, but also from the scholar who searches the historic record with an impartial spirit, that the very truth of motive and of character may be ascertained. A still higher aim of the true historian is the interpretation of the underlying providential order of cause and effect which science finds in nature, and which the historian should find in the progress of humanity.

I have never read a story of Napoleon Bonaparte's life or career which so nearly attains this sum of attractions as does the work of Professor Sloane. While escaping the influence of the blinding hostility of English criticisms of the Corsican adventurer, he equally refuses to subordinate his judgment to the adoring enthusiasms with which the French surrounded their military emperor. He never loses sight of the *man*, whether his ambition is limited to the partizan seizure of a fortress on his native island, or contemplates the partition of the world between himself and the Emperor of Russia. The *man* is always revealed, within the lieutenant's uniform, or behind the embroidered robe of this ruler of kings. Nearly all previous writers upon this brilliant theme—the twenty-five dramatic years of France—have been thrown off their mental balance by the scenic glories of the stage as the curtain was lifted and revealed the greatest actor of modern centuries. This author, on the contrary, keeps his feet on the ground, and his eye steadily fixed upon the central figure, and the studied effects which he produces, from his first entrance to his final exit. And so he has been able to tell us the true life-story of the most astonishing international actor in all history.

Such a book is needed in all our libraries. The author has evidently put his material under great pressure of condensation. I could have wished to read his more com-

plete portraiture of other great characters of the time associated with or against Napoleon, and drawn with equal candor and accuracy. But within its constrained limits the book is a treasure, is almost the only life of Napoleon to be safely submitted to the youth of the country as a part of its culture in history. Its characteristic portraits add a charm to the text.

John A. Kasson.

«The Century's» American Artists Series.

FRANK W. BENSON. (SEE PAGE 917.)

FRANK W. BENSON, the painter of «Summer,» was born in Salem, Massachusetts, thirty-four years ago. When eighteen he entered the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where he studied four years. In 1883 he went to Paris, and became a pupil of the Academy Julien. There he had the benefit of two years' study under the eminent masters Boulanger and Lefebvre.

In 1889 he was chosen instructor in his former school, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, a position he now holds.

Mr. Benson is a member of the Society of American Artists; a winner of the Shaw, Hallgarten, and Clarke prizes, National Academy of Design, New York; Jordan and Art Club prizes, Boston; and the third prize in the recent competition for the decoration of the Philadelphia City Hall. He is one of the artists at present engaged in the decoration of the new Congressional Library, Washington.

If what the distinguished French critic Albert Wolf said is true, «What gives value to a work of art is the artist's own sentiment added to his science,» Mr. Benson's works are precious. His sentiment seldom rises into poetry, but it is often akin to it. His science is excellent (by science I understand mastery over paints and brushes, and knowing how to *make* a picture). He composes with taste and rare decorative perception, and executes with charming freshness and delicacy of color.

W. Lewis Fraser.

Some Results of the Higher Education of Women.

MOST readers of THE CENTURY are familiar with the work of Toynbee Hall, in the east end of London, where

a number of Oxford graduates live for various periods of time, following their own personal business or study, yet taking part as neighbors in the life of the people of that neglected region. They are probably not as familiar with an enterprise of English college women on somewhat similar lines, whose modest beginnings antedate our American women's college settlements. In the spring of 1887 certain members of the Oxford and Cambridge women's colleges organized the community known as «The Women's University Association for Work in the Poorer Districts of London.»

The germ out of which grew this organized work of college women—individual workers having for years filled the positions which the University Association recommends to its members—was the conviction of Miss Grüner, the gifted first head worker of the association, and her chief assistant, Miss Elder, that they could do better work if they lived, for a time at least, among the people they wished to aid. An organization was consequently effected, and a house was taken at 44 Nelson Square, Blackfriars Road, Southwark, where the founders felt they could be most useful, while at the same time it would be near enough to other parts of London to serve the convenience of resident workers and those who might wish to help in special evening entertainments.

The chief object of the community is the promotion of the welfare of the people of the poorer districts of London, more especially of the women and children, and the lines along which the association works tend more particularly to the giving of better opportunities for education and recreation. An executive committee is formed exclusively of university women, and consists of seven members: two representatives of Girton College, two of Newnham, one of Somerville Hall, one of Lady Margaret Hall, and the head worker, the resident worker appointed as mistress of the house and director of all work. The committee has full power to arrange and control the work of the association, to appoint or remove the head worker, to admit or dismiss the resident workers, and to administer the funds of the community. The weekly expenses of the house—about \$3.50 for each person—are divided among the «residents,» and each one, if able, is invited to help pay the rent of the house, etc. Each one must make to the head worker a daily report of all work done by her, and no one can undertake, without permission from the executive committee, work not already organized. Private almsgiving is not allowed.

The head worker is assisted by four or five residents in the settlement, who remain there for not less than two weeks, and in some cases indefinitely, as the good these women hope to do as members of various local committees and in direct work among the people must

depend largely upon the personal influence that only time and knowledge can give. There are also non-resident workers, who either help occasionally in special work, or regularly on one or two evenings in the week, when there are meetings of library club, part-singing club, art-needlework club, or sewing, reading, and writing classes, lectures, etc. Most of the young women entering into the scheme have occupations of their own aside from their work in the settlement, as the committee think it an advantage for workers to have such occupations, partly because a variety of interests helps to keep the minds fresher, and partly because workers are more likely to be in sympathy with other workers.

The duties assumed by these social missionaries are numerous. As managers on the local committees of board schools, which correspond to our public schools, they have an important influence upon educational work, and as associates of the girls' division of the London Pupil-teachers' Association, they take parties of pupil-teachers to the National Gallery on Saturdays, and give evening receptions to the teachers of board schools, for the purpose of introducing a higher element and a broader interest into preparatory educational work. Also, as members of the Education Reform League and the Recreative Evening Classes Association, they aim to give a more general use of school buildings and grounds to the whole population, and to encourage boys and girls who have left the board schools to join evening classes in studies in which physical and technical elements are prominent. As active members of charity organizations and local sanitary aid committees, and as zealous workers for the spread of the coöperative movement among women, and the undertaking of fresh-air funds for the benefit of children, they are doing a work of incalculable value. The latest development of this London Settlement's work is an arrangement for several scholarships in social science, open to students of the several women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge; they entitle the holders to two years' instruction and work at the settlement, and offer valuable preparation to women who wish to fill posts in charity organization societies, reformatories, and other philanthropic and governmental institutions.

One of the most pronounced features of social development in modern society is an increased sensitiveness on the part of educated men and women to the claims of their wide outside duties toward humanity; and must not the most conservative admit that the growth of the movement for the higher education of women is reassuring, when the association of graduates and students of the women's colleges at Oxford and Cambridge presents among its first fruits the University Settlement in Southwark?

Catherine Baldwin.