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Methods of Literary Work.

The public is always interested in the methods of work adopted by literary men. Occasionally Dickens talked confidentially to his readers, telling them how he "set about" his work, and how, during the hard labor of composition, ideas flirted with him, just keeping out of his way, sipping here and there like a humming bird. This is yet the area there was a which Mr. is not the exact language which Mr. Dickens employed, but it suits my purpose just as well; and, I have no doubt, the great novelist, were he living, would accept my statement. Trollope was the most systematic of all the English novelists. Sitting down to his desk he would take out his watch and time himself. It may his custom to write so himself. It was his custom to write so many words per minute. Should an idea caper around beyond his reach, thus causing him to fall behind his usual number of words, he would hastily shut out the idea and put down the words anyway. By following this vigorous method he was, during a long life, enabled to write a great many words. While looking over one of his books the other day I found it to be almost full of words, but remembering how earnestly he had worked, I was not in the least surprised.

Thackeray had no literary system. He only wrote when he felt like it.

He only wrote when he felt like it. Sometimes he could not even write, "Please send three bottles of wine and charge them to me." Then, again, he could sit down and write so rapidly that he would keep three sheets in the wind all the time. While he was editor of an agricultural publication—the Cornhill hagazine, if I mistake not he never succeeded in getting copy enough ahead for more than five issues. In this negligence he fell far behind some of our magazine editors. They always have bundles of copy on hand. My grandfather, when he was quite a young man, wrote an article for a leading American magazine. The other day a letter came for him, and, as he died many years ago, I took the liberty of opening the communication. The

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letter read as follows:

DEAR SIR—We have accepted your article, "The Romance of a Grindstone; or, the Chicken That Had Two Heads," and we are pleased to inform you that it will appear at an early day. George Eliot was a hard worker, and

like many gifted writers she was often tempted to burn at night the lines she had written during the day.

Carlyle was similarly tempted and it is to be regreted that the great growler, in many instances, did not carry out the design. George Eliot, like Queen Anne, liked to work in the shade of the trees. I will here remark that I know nothing of Queen Anne's habits. It was Elizabeth who was fond of working in the shade; but as this fact has been so often used by writers who are struggling for reputation, I disregard Elizabeth and take up Anne. I would say more of George Eliot's methods, but the truth is I don't know anything to say—that is, I cannot add anything to the elaborate memoirs recently brought out by a man who knew the novelist quite intimately.

Wilkie Collins makes the skeleton of a novel and then proceeds to put the flesh on it. He is the greatest plotter that ever lived. He has never created a truly great character, but his stories are full of thrilling pitfalls into which the reader lunges. I hear that he eats morphine. I do not know of a more unhealthful diet. Corn bread and salt pork form an annoying diet, but morphine is much worse. I have a friend vao wanted to write a dreamy article. He took a dose of morphine and went to work. The article was never finished. Collins has doubtless done his best work. If he should, in the future, do better work than he has done in the past, I can very easily revise this assertion.—Opic P. Read, in N. Y.,

Mark Twain Was Neighborly.

The Rev. J. Hyatt Smith relats this: "When I was living with my brother in Buffalo, Mark Twain occupied a cottage across the street. We didn't see very much of him, but one morning as we were enjoying our cigars on the veranda after breakfast we saw Mark come to his door in his dressing-gown and slippers to look over at us. He stood at his door and smoked for a minute, as if making up his mind about something, and at last opened his gate and came lounging across the street. There was an unoccupied rocking-chair on the vorunde and the control of the cont the veranda and when my brother offered it to him he dropped into it with a sigh of relief. He smoked for a iew moments and said: "Nice morning."

"Yes, very pleasant."
"Shouldn't wonder if we had rain

by and by.'
"Well, we could stand a little.'
"This is a nice house you have here.' "Yes, we rather like it."

"How's your family?"

"'Quite well—and yours?'
"'O, we're all comfortable.

"O, we're all comfortable.
"There was another impressive silence, and finally Mark Twain crossed his legs, blew a puff of smoke into the air, and in his lazy drawl remarked: "I suppose you're a little surprised to see me over here so early. Fact is, I havn't been so neighborly, perhaps, as I ought to be. We must mend that state of things. But this morning I came over because I thought you might be interested in knowing that

might be interested in knowing that your roof is on fire. It struck me that it would be a good idea if ——' "But at the mention of fire the whole family dusted up-stairs, trailing language all the way up. When we had put the fire out and had returned to the veranda Mark wasn't there."—Krinsas City Times.