

politics, the issues of which hardly make a ripple outside the country that is their immediate scope, or, in American society, dating from yesterday, as American and every other people take in politics that are felt the world around, and in the most honourable and historic social body on earth. In addition, the sun of course favours the sending of English news to America, and rather discourages the timely receipt of the return budget: this, however, is an insignificant reason in comparison with the other.

MR. REID says a very few things succinctly, almost everything truly, and makes one or two statements in a way that shows quite deliciously the average Briton's incapacity to understand American humour. For instance: "The English press" he says "belongs to the leader-writers, and the American to the reporters," which puts the matter in a nutshell at once. "There is nothing" he discovers about the *Boston Herald*, "to identify it with the cultured community supposed to centre in the 'Hub of the Universe'" which is undeniable of Boston journalism in general. But the *bonne bouche* of the article presents itself thus: "Sometimes editors use their papers for the exchange of personal civilities, as when Mr. Watterson, of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, invites Mr. Dana, of the *New York Sun* to visit him. 'Come' he says, 'and see us, and bring your knittin', and stay most all day;' and Mr. Dana regrets editorially that he cannot accept." The American editors who exchanged them will doubtless be convulsed to see their "personal civilities" taken seriously.

THE many Canadian readers of Mr. Walter Besant's novels are well acquainted with the extent to which social problems form their foundation. Few living writers of fiction can be pointed to whose work has exercised a stronger educational influence along the lines especially designed for it, upon the social body of England in relation to its under strata. Mr. Besant's appeal through the *London Times*, his being the voice of a committee, for the sympathy and assistance of the British public in obtaining facts and figures relative to the true state of working women in England, will strike most people, therefore, as coming from a source which approves it. Mr. Besant wants all the information he can get in connection with the female labour market, in order that at a conference held toward the end of the year they "may be clearly and dispassionately set forth; the extent, area, and nature of the evils which undoubtedly exist, be laid down with some precision; and, if that may also follow, remedies or alleviations be found." Mr. Besant's method is peculiar in that it makes no immediate demand upon either the Local Government Board or upon Parliament. The issues of the conference may be presented to either or both of these bodies, but no official assistance is invoked in collecting the data it requires. The object of asking the general public for it is evidently the stirring up of national interest in the matter, as any number of authorised "reports" would fail to stir it up. How Mr. Besant proposes to obtain the system, the precision and the completeness that usually attaches to such compilations, and guard against the looseness, one-sidedness, and imposition that is very likely to characterise a general public response more or less, is not so apparent. Whatever the result, the motive is unquestionable; and in the meantime pessimistic philosophers are requested to find in it a gratifying indication that in England at all events the rich are more and more making a business of the concerns of the poor.

IN Canada the condition of the working women is happily not one to cry out for such an investigation, however desirable some knowledge of it, based upon careful statistics, may be. The conditions of the female labour market, ever dependent as they are upon the general social and economic conditions, differ radically from those of the Mother Country. We were born, as a people, too late to inherit the abuses which are still suffered to some extent in the relation of employer and employed as it is in England. We do not yet suffer from over-population, and we have educated our masses. Here, as in the United States, the wide and most unsatisfactorily occupied field of domestic service spreads its easy solution at the very feet of imaginary victims of the counter or the sewing machine. There is really in this country no woman labour problem as distinct from the common question. What creates the semblance of one is the tendency of women to rush in unreasonable numbers into two or three of the many avenues of industry open to them. Here as everywhere the law that regulates the price by the demand and the supply is surely operative, and often produces wages that philanthropists among us consider painful and anomalous. In this respect as in every other, the market for women's labour is governed exactly as the market for men's; and but for this discrimination in the female mind, resulting in distribution of women out of proportion to the distribution of men in the various departments of industry, their condition

might be calculated—making allowance uniformly for the depreciation of sex in the value of their labour—from that of men.

THE suit of Mrs. Thurber against the American Opera Company to recover \$32,000 she mistakenly put into the scheme has re-opened discussion of this unfortunate subject, in some quarters more violently than ever. Mrs. Thurber having, according to popular belief, been mainly instrumental in organising and conducting the company along the lines which it has pursued so disastrously, very little sympathy but rather a fresh outburst of criticism and condemnation is evoked by her effort to get back her money—an effort which, if successful, involves the failure of most of the mechanics, costumers, chorus-singers, and supernumeraries to obtain the comparatively trifling sums due to them. There can be no doubt that the grossest mismanagement and the most tasteless extravagance characterised the scheme from the beginning, and this action on the part of one of those most completely identified with and interested in it will go far to confirm the suspicion of dishonesty that has also rested upon the Company for many months. That Mrs. Thurber, while her bill for a Receiver was actually in preparation, appeared in print with the assurance that the small creditors and all others might rely upon the integrity of the concern, makes the situation still more unpleasant. The most unhappy feature of the collapse is however that, from the very first, by a system of arrogant assumption, false pretence, and impudent ignoring of the fact that for over a hundred years the American people have listened to opera in their own language, rendered not seldom by companies worthy of all respect in their artistic achievements, this organisation has managed to give itself a national stamp. It becomes therefore, not only a national mortification, but a stumbling-stone of very large and offensive proportions to the feet of all who are sincerely desirous of accelerating musical progress in the United States. Dependent as to such a great extent we are upon our neighbours for the production of opera in the stage sense, these facts have a lively interest for all music-loving Canadians.

THE *Nation* is one of the few American journals that promulgates and carries out the doctrine of genuine independence. It has, as a consequence, a large, respectable and respectful *clientèle*, to whom its fresh and forcible utterances must come like manna in a wilderness ravaged by partisan politicians. The *Nation* puts the Irish where they belong—a locality which, it is needless to say, they are unaccustomed to in the United States—vigorously backs all worthy and admirable features of Americanism, and as vigorously condemns unworthy democratic characteristics; supports the Administration in general, but does not fail to criticise it in particular. Its attitude on the fisheries question has always been a refreshing one. Referring to developments that are still fresh in the memory of the public, the *Nation* says: "The habit of the mackerel are not more remarkable than those of the gallant fisherman who pursue them. A few years ago these wanderers of the deep abandoned the three mile-limit and took to the broad ocean, with such unanimity and persistence that the fisherman said that they wanted nothing from Canada or Great Britain or anybody, and that they would be thankful if Congress would annul the Washington Treaty so far as they were concerned, and remit them to their rights under the Treaty of 1818. In this they were accommodated. But now the mackerel have changed their minds and run in shore again, the fishermen naturally following them. The right to fish within the three-mile limit was conferred by the Washington Treaty, but was not included in that of 1818. To be caught fishing in those waters is to forfeit one's boats as well as one's catch. So when a couple of seining parties belonging to the schooners *French* and *Argonaut* were plying their vocation within a mile and a half of Prince Edward Island (according to the *Tribune's* report at the time of the occurrence), and when a Canadian cruiser went in pursuit of the seining parties, the schooners, although they were outside of the three-mile limit, made for home as fast as possible. Having arrived at Gloucester, they have reported to Capt. Babson, President of the Fishery Association, that their seining parties were at least four miles from shore, and that an excellent judge of distances has found other testimony which convinces him that the seizing of the seining parties of the *French* and *Argonaut* was a new outrage; for if they were really outside the three-mile limit, the Canadian cruiser had no right to molest them. Might it not be added that if they were outside the limit, the schooners to which they belonged had no right to abandon them to the enemy? Why does not the President of the Fishery Association give us his opinion of the two captains who had so little consideration for their own rights and their own men that they surrendered both without even making a protest against the seizure?"