

## Our Toronto Letter.

[From our own correspondent.]

TORONTO, November, 1890.

The sale of tickets for the Stanley lecture has been enormous; everybody that is anybody—and we are all somebody, surely?—is anxious to see the great explorer. It is hardly likely that he will have anything to say additional to what has already appeared in the press, but the occasion will be availed of to do honour not only to Stanley himself but to Mrs. Stanley, who has a history of her own not less interesting to the student of humanity than that of her illustrious husband. As Miss Dorothy Tennant, Mrs. Stanley painted a picture of a street Arab, which, after an interval of slights and sneers, suddenly made itself felt as a type, and has led to that charitable and useful class of enterprise inelegantly termed "slumming." A very representative collection of Toronto's philanthropy and intellect will occupy the Stanley platform, and an address is to be presented to Mrs. Stanley at the close of the entertainment.

The Toronto Street Railway arbitration case drags a slow length along. The 'secret' committee, as it is called, because it closes its sittings to the reporters, has, through its chairman, Mr. Ald. Vokes, offered the plant of the railway for sale by tender, while, as the city's counsel angrily advises them, it is not theirs to sell. Moreover, outsiders regard it as a strange sample of their business 'gumption' that they should offer to sell the lines of rail without which, of course, the rolling stock can have no value beyond that of old iron should the purchaser of the rails ever turn ugly and refuse the use of them. Terms of contract might cover this difficulty to a certain degree, but never wholly.

It is satisfactory to learn that the new conduit from the main pumping station of our waterworks, connecting the service with the intake pipe at the south side of the island, is almost finished. A large supply of purer water to the city will be the desirable result, but nothing that can be done in this direction will prove as gratifying to our citizens as a proper disposal of our sewage, thereby removing a prolific source of fever and malarial troubles. It is worthy of particular attention on the part of all civic committees having such matters before them, that it is said on high scientific authority that cattle grazed on sewage-fed grass are subject to typhoid conditions, and this affects and infects their milk.

It is a sign of her people's faith in the future of the city, when districts that had not even the dignity of suburbs a decade ago, are developing their own resources, and apply for admission into the limits of the city. Of course such admission means higher rates, but it also means water, light, police and fire protection, beside a much higher standing in the matter of public influence than they could ever hope to enjoy as small corporations. Both Chester (at the north-east of Toronto) and Swansea (at the west) are anxious to be adopted.

The troubles in the English money market have not touched Toronto, nor has the failure of the Central Bank, disastrous and disgraceful as it was, seemed to shake public confidence in good men. G. W. Yarker, almost as well known to Montreal as to Toronto, is to take the management of a new bank, the York County Bank, the shares of which are being taken up rapidly.

The success of the Boys' Industrial Home at Mimico, the result of Mr. W. H. Howland's large-hearted sympathy for the neglected waifs of the city, has led to the inception of a similar school for girls. Special power having been requested of the Public School Board by the Industrial Schools Association, it was granted on condition that, for sanitary reasons, the proposed school site should be at least a mile beyond the city limits. Ten acres is the size of the site required, and it is to be advertised for, in the hope that some one will make the Board a free gift of it.

A similar institution, arising out of a little mission begun by some ladies of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church and called the Dorset Street Mission, having for its centre of work one of the oldest residences in Toronto, called the London House, has just been built and opened. It is to be called St. Andrew's Church Institute, and its work is well indicated by its arrangements. These embrace kitchen, gymnasium, bath-rooms, savings bank, offices and class rooms. And yet the Marquis of Queensberry, in forwarding to General Booth his donation towards the General's new scheme, says he does not believe in Christianity because it has done nothing for the masses.

It is interesting to note that the students at the Women's Medical College have formed themselves into a Students' Association, holding meetings, not for amusement, but for improvement and research. At the last of these meetings Dr. Susanna Boyle, the latest graduate of the College, and a daughter of Mr. Boyle, the well known antiquarian and late curator of the Canadian Institute, occupied the chair. Miss Patterson read a paper on "Internal Antiseptics" and Miss McDonald on "The History of the Blood Corpuscle," each paper being fully discussed by members present, with the assistance of Dr. Sweetman and Dr. Nevitt, of the Faculty, two members of which are invited at each meeting, all or any being, of course, welcome.

Crematories for the city garbage being decided upon by the Board of Works, tenders are called for. Owing to some irregularity other tenders are now asked, but it is said in certain quarters that the Council have decided the city cannot afford these most necessary erections, and the question is indefinitely postponed, that is, until after the municipal elections.

The Trade and Labour Council at its last meeting dealt

with several questions of importance, one being the need of a handsome city grant for the Central Art School, which has superseded the Ontario School of Art, after a prolonged effort for existence on the part of the latter. The matter was referred to the Education Committee of the T. & L. Council. Another was the report of the Municipal Committee on the ward system, deciding against it and in favour of condensation, either by reducing the number of wards or by electing the Aldermen by general voice as the Mayor is elected.

The reclamation of Ashbridge's Bay, which is in fact an extensive marsh, breeding ague and maldria to the detriment of the health of the eastern portion of the city, the making of high schools free, like the public schools, and the formation of a new paper, the *Labour Advocate*, under the editorship of Mr. Phillip Thompson, were among other important matters reported on by the committees. The Trades and Labour Council is becoming a more and more important body, and its *dictum* is looked to with increasing respect.

The appointment of Captain D. M. Howard, Royal Grenadiers, to the position of Inspector of the North-West Mounted Police, has given general satisfaction. Capt. Howard, who is a son of Mr. Allan McLean Howard, has many warm friends in the city who will miss him, but who are glad to see an efficient soldier and gallant officer honoured by the Government.

It is said that the Degrees in Music, granted by Trinity University, are held in no greater respect in England than are "Philadelphia" degrees in Arts or Medicine. This report has put Toronto University on its mettle, and at the meeting of the University Senate, held on the 21st inst., a committee, consisting of Dr. O'Sullivan, Dr. Ellis, Professor Ramsay Wright, Professor Loudon, Mr. Aylesworth and Mr. Torrington, was appointed to "prepare a scheme for examination and degrees in music and a curriculum of studies for the same." Examiners for next year were appointed in all the faculties. These now embrace Law, Medicine, Dentistry, Arts, Civil Engineering and Agriculture.

## Our New York Letter.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have brought out charming volumes of poetry by (Miss) Edna Dean Proctor and (Mrs.) Mary Elizabeth Blake, both poets whose writings have been especial favourites of mine ever since I came to America. The bindings are as diverse and as charming as the contents, Miss Proctor's being in the plain dark green buckram dear to scholarly Englishmen from Swinburne and William Morris downwards, and Mrs. Blake's in one of those delightful bindings due to Mr. Mifflin's exquisite taste, with a white back lettered in gold, and terra-cotta sides arabesqued in gold. Nothing could be imagined daintier than these part-coloured bindings of Houghton, Mifflin & Co. They are especially happy in their use of white and gold. Miss Proctor's poems are especial favourites of the venerable Whittier's, and rightly, for she is intensely patriotic both to the history and the scenery of her native country and her native State of New Hampshire, and her patriotism extends to the Old Land, whose blood flows so purely in the veins of old New England families. Here is a sonnet to

ENGLAND:

O, Mother Country! Of a continent  
The fairest lands and climes we proudly hold,  
And flocks and herds and corn and wine and gold,  
And stately cities of earth's rarest blent,  
Are richly ours; and we are well content  
With our bright world, our banner's starry fold,  
And would not be by other name enrolled—  
Yet how we love thee, through our long descent,  
Our common tongue, our old, immortal story,  
Imperial England, throned amid the seas!  
Under all suns thy daring bugles blow,  
The east wind and the west waft thy decrees;—  
Forever light, law, liberty Lestow,  
And farthest ages celebrate thy glory!

"El Mahdi to the Tribes of the Soudan" is sublime; "Brooklyn Bridge" is a noble treatment of a difficult theme well worthy. "Frederick III., of Germany," deserves quoting, as summing up so much of the political creed of a woman with masculine intelligence and courage and feminine tenderness of heart.

FREDERICK III., OF GERMANY.

Not the bold Brandenburg, at Prussia's birth,  
Nor yet Great Frederick when his fields were won  
And her domain stretched wide beneath the sun;  
Nor William, whose Sedan aroused the earth,  
Was hero, conqueror, like the king whose worth  
And woe subdued the world beside his bier.  
Serene he walked with death through year and year,  
Slow measured; bearing tortures deep in dearth  
Of hope. The faithful, steadfast, lofty soul!  
Ah! chant no dirge for him, but joyful psalm  
While Baltic laves its borders Rhine doth roll,  
No truer life will seek the empyrean  
Than his whose fame, nor realm, nor age can span—  
The manliest Emperor, the imperial man.

Kearsarge, the great mountain which was godfather to the historical ship, looms through her poetry. "Holy Russia" is not only godfather to one beautiful poem, but gives a note of inspiration through much of the book. Nor is Greece, the mother of poetry, forgotten. Cleobis and Biton, the very first poem in the volume, is a lovely tale

told with great beauty in stately verse, and from heroes beginning with the demigods passes to Miss Proctor's noble Christian philosophy.

Mrs. Blake's poetry is very different from Miss Proctor's. Those who have read her former volume and remember her touching poems over lost children, and her brave pathetic war poems breathing the soldier's life more felicitously, perhaps, than any other poems on the subject, will know what they have to look forward to.

Mrs. Blake writes like a healthy woman with the tenderest heart, a wife who has been parted by war from a husband worthy of her, a mother who has borne and lost, and a patriot.

More than one lovely poem attest her devotion to Ireland, and she writes thus without calling England a harlot, or a beast with ten horns, though she, perhaps, does not see that there would be no Irish Question were all the so-called Irish patriots as single-hearted and generous as herself, instead of, as one might judge from recent utterances, thinking it a crime for one so wicked as Mr. Balfour (one of the most respected men in England to-day) even to go and see what he could do to relieve the distress of the Connaught peasants. When the majority of the Irish who desire Home Rule meet the equally large majority of the English who distrust it half way and in a generous spirit, their aspirations will appeal to me as does Mrs. Blake's "Greeting" to Ireland; but Irishmen must learn to be generous if they wish Englishmen to learn to trust them:

A GREETING.

Ireland! mother unknown, sitting alone by the water,  
Lift up your eyes to your own, stretch out your arms to  
your daughter!

Many and many a day have I longed for your green robe's  
splendour.

Your eyes of the deep sea gray, your strong love patient  
and tender.

For the croon of the welcoming voice and the smile half  
joy and half sadness,

Soul of my soul rejoice, for this is the hour of my gladness!  
Sure, if I never had heard what land had given me birth  
And cradled the spirit's bird on its first weak flight to  
earth;

If I never had heard the name, of thy sorrow and strength  
divine,

Or felt in my pulses the flame of the fire they had caught  
from thine,

I would know by this rapture alone, that sweeps through me  
now like a flood,

That the Irish skies were my own, and my blood was the  
Irish blood.

Proud did I hold my race, yet knew not what pride might  
dare,

Fair did I deem thy face, but never one half so fair.

Like a dream with happiness fraught, that some happier  
dawn makes true,

Nothing was glad in my thought, but gladdens still more in  
you—

From ivied tower and wall, and primrose pale on the lea,  
To vales where the bright streams call to the lilted bird  
in the tree.

How can I frame the thought that sets all my soul aglow,  
How can I speak as I ought the longing that moves me so!  
My comrades laugh like a boy whose heart to pleasure is  
stirred,

But my heart is weeping with joy, while my lips never  
speak a word;

Here, where the green hills start from the breast of the  
deep blue water,

Ireland! land of my heart, stretch out your arms to your  
daughter.

And such poems as "June":

March is a trumpet flower,

And May a crocus wild;

May is a harebell slender,

With the clear blue eyes of a child.

and "An Oriole,"

Only an instant and then away

Like the flight of a thought through the summer weather,  
But still and forever the song shall stay

To wake in my soul through the winter's night

The rapturous thrill of that swift delight

When it and the Oriole sang together,

have the charm of the poetical flowers in Margaret  
Deland's Old Garden.

Mrs. Blake seems to me at her very happiest when she is writing about Ireland. It fills her with a glowing inspiration, as is evidenced by such lines as "Till ye look upon old Ireland in the dawning of the year," and "All the world rejoices in the wearing of the green."

DOUGLAS SLADEN.

## To Charles G. D. Roberts,

On reading "In Divers Tones."

As feels the organ's soul, at master's will,

The full-toned diapason strain,

And passionate grows; or, with equal skill

Is soothed to tenderness again.

So, Master of the classics oaten-reed!

Thy skilful strains me deeply move—

Now, to some ardent, high-born, patriot deed

And now, to gentle thoughts of love!

Amherst, N.S.

H. H. PITTMAN.