

The chief social time at Ottawa is during the session of Parliament, for at this period the kindred of members of the sitting Houses, and scores of others, including the pretty daughters of ambitious parents, are to be found at the capital. And the reader will allow me to state that whatever of unkindness may be noticed in the tone of this paper towards the society aspirations of the capital is not directed against the people of Ottawa so much as against those who gather there during the session from the highways and the byways. Nor will any one suppose that all, or even a considerable portion of goers-out at Ottawa can come within the category which I have been describing, or that all the civil servants are possessed of the Rideau mania. I simply have in mind that large and ambitious class that evolve their own crests. One genteel person in this country, whose father pulled his forelock when he met his betters, put, it is said, a Latin motto around an armorial looking stamp which he saw on a cast-away tobacco package, and straightway traced his ancestors back to the Norman Conquest.

When the session opens society circles take on the active phase. The chief event of the season is the State Ball at Rideau. During the time of the Dufferins one ball, attended by seven or eight hundred persons, was given each year, but the Lornes discovered that the walls of the residence could not accommodate many more than half the aspirants for viceregal recognition. Therefore two balls were given, at which attended about thirteen hundred persons. There are a good many English folk at the capital, and their dismay can be judged at discovering in a *vis-a-vis* the gentleman who carried round their coal oil or cobbled their boots. Several of these balls, however, passed over quietly, without many cases of intoxication; but in some instances the stairway has been blocked by persons who rendered themselves helpless by a too liberal acceptance of the hospitalities.

In addition to the ball, their Excellencies gave an At Home once in each week, the chief amusement on such occasions being skating and tobogganning. A very pretty sight it is to see among the tall evergreens of the park, groups of ladies and gentlemen attired in their artistically-wrought costumes. The light sea-green, with scarlet or lake trimming, seems to me to be richest and warmest-looking of those worn, though the white flannel coat, trimmed with blue, and a crimson sash, seems to find most wearers. The tuque, sometimes of Zingari colours, oftener of white and blue, or crimson and blue, with Oriental tassel, is likewise very picturesque. The sport as the toboggan lunges down the steep, fleet as if shot from a bow, is the most exhilarating that can be imagined, though one wonders at the slovenliness of his interior arrangements as he feels his heart midway up his throat. There are frozen lakelets about the grounds, and, what so many of the guests like, plenty of spirits and cake inside. For the rest the viceregal folk set limits to their hospitality by giving quiet dinner parties, or now and again holding private theatricals.

I may say that the absence of one's name from the State Ball list, as the same appears in the *Citizen* and *Free Press*, on the "morning after," means social extinction. In the newly painted aristocratic quarters of the city, the first question put to the visitor is: "Have you been at Rideau yet?" A friend of mine was so accosted, and replied: "Not yet," whereupon they all began to look at his coat and boots. There was great consternation last winter, and the Governor-General nigh undid his popularity by giving only one ball instead of two, thus accommodating only seven or eight hundred persons out of thirteen or fourteen hundred. It is said that the scene each day in a certain Civil Service department, as the time for sending out invitations passed, and no cards came, beggars description. Numbers of the overlooked ones were very glad, however, when they came to think over it all. "All sorts of cads go there, and all that sort of thing, you know," they said. The grapes are not ripe about Ottawa so late as midwinter.

Of course, Ottawa, like every other place, has its sets, and to one at least of them, it may be said, nothing of disparagement in these remarks will apply. Quiet, courteous, dignified, they accept the hospitalities of the head of the State as a matter of course, and one feels glad to be able to say that this set is not a small one at the capital.

To some, of course, I cannot help repeating, distinguished acquaintanceships are fatal. When the Prince of Wales visited Canada, he told a certain lady down the line that she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Thenceforth she never appeared in the streets without a veil, and chose perpetual celibacy. The wags have a similar story afloat now, but the payer of the compliment was not the Prince of Wales. For the benefit of any lady who, for the same reasons, has taken or may take the veil, I would recall the story in one of Scott's novels, of the old dame who informed every guest reverentially that King Charles had kissed her on the right cheek, and that no man's lips had ever touched the spot since. The gossips would, ironically, tell behind the Dowager's shoulder that.

immediately after His Majesty had kissed the hostess, he paid a similar compliment, quietly, to each of the two rosy waiting-maids, and that he did not salute them on the cheek either.

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## SCIENCE IN CANADA.

A RECENT article in the *Mail* is full of interest to Canadians, as indicating certain subjects in which scientific investigation is especially required. During the past few years Science has gained very material recognition as necessary to the more thorough appreciation of the resources of the country, and is now universally accepted as one of the subjects to be included in a university training. The recognition of its value in the first case depends on its application to practical uses, and on that alone. Any investigations the results of which have no apparent practical bearings are despised, and the individual pursuing them is regarded by the majority as a pedant comparatively useless to the State. This view, though less general in the intellectual countries in Europe, is largely favoured in Canada, greatly to the detriment of pure Science. The value of Science in a university course depends, on the other hand, principally on the training it affords, not merely developing a faculty of minute observation and quickness of perception, but also affording practice in logical reasoning and in the appreciation of relationships. The development of these faculties is promoted in a greater degree by the study of pure Science than by the direction of the intellect to Science in its application to every-day life.

We have in Canada certain faculties for the pursuit of Science as a means of intellectual culture. The principal universities give instruction in various branches, but one finds those branches most capable of being applied immediately to the advancement of industries are more especially cultivated. Others, Anthropology and Biology for instance, are comparatively neglected. It is not that these and similar studies are less efficient in affording the training to be derived from a course of scientific study, but it is rather because they are not generally understood to have that degree of capacity of application which their more favoured sisters possess. Even among these latter, however, it is rather the introduction to their practical application, than a desire for investigation of the higher truths of a development of the logical and other faculties attendant upon such investigations, that it is sought to impart.

Surely this is working on a wrong basis. The majority of the great scientific discoveries which have led to revolutions in our industries and have increased production economically, have been the sequel of investigations pursued in the domains of pure Science. In support of this statement, take the discovery of many aniline dyes, the wonderful improvements in the magnetic compass, the advancement in the manufacture of lenses for microscopic and other optical instruments, the marvellous protection against many hitherto unpreventable and incurable diseases which we owe to the investigation of the biology of the once apparently unimportant *bacteria*. There is no line of investigation, no matter how abstruse and how likely to all appearance to be barren of important results, but will yield sometime or other wonderful direct and indirect benefits to mankind.

Not only, however, is Canada negligent in the cultivation of pure Science; in the encouragement of investigations having direct practical results in view much remains to be done. Certain branches are fairly represented: thus, much encouragement is given to our mining interests through the maintenance of the Geological Survey; botanical surveys of various parts of the country have been efficiently conducted; chemistry in its application to various purposes has been largely favoured; and meteorology has very properly received a certain amount of attention. But there are, in addition to those mentioned, one or two industries which are deserving of much more encouragement than is at present afforded them.

One of these is Agriculture, with which may be included Forestry. Very little indeed has been done for these important sources of revenue. Ontario has accomplished a little in establishing an Agricultural College and a Bureau of Statistics, but there is yet much to be done by the Dominion Government. What is more especially wanted is the establishment of experimental stations throughout the various Provinces. The Experimental Department of the Ontario Agricultural College is doing valuable work in some lines; but its usefulness is prescribed to a certain extent in others. Results, too, deduced from experiments conducted in Ontario will not in all cases, be applicable to other districts where climatic and other conditions are different. In the United States this is recognized, and nearly every State has its own Experiment Station, and in addition there is a Central Department at Washington where investigations of general importance to the country are carried on. A similar Central Station might, with great advantage be established in Canada, certain