

*Mexico, Les larmes du Christ, Les blessures de la vie, La femme à l'aiguille* are highly appreciated by numbers of Canadian readers. The highest perfection of the writer's talent appears in *De la Brunante*, a collection of Canadian legends. These stories bear some resemblance to Hoffmann's *Contes Fantastiques*. Wild, weird, grotesque pictures of the glamour and enchantment of *faerie*, a border land of misty phantoms, wherein fact and fancy are inextricably blended, the author displays the magic of his power, the iridescent play of imagination in dealing with ancient superstitions, visions of ghosts and witches, Will o' the wisps, imps and were-wolves. These legends are strikingly original and national. The best of the collection are *La belle aux cheveux blancs*, *Le Fantôme de la roche*, both tales that are capable of making the reputation of any writer.

Montreal.

BLANCHE L. MACDONELL.

## BALLADE OF THE MODERN TIME.

MEN may talk as they will of the days  
When the world was far better than now;  
They may boast of its wonderful ways,  
And a great many things I'll allow;  
An unfortunate thing is a row,  
And there shouldn't be jarring in rhyme,  
But I'm satisfied quite, Sir, I trow,  
With the ways of this modern time.

As it's only the vanished they praise,  
With their placid and innocent brow,  
One can't judge of the reason they raise  
Such a mighty, almighty pow-wow;  
To superior wisdom I'd bow,  
But if blind, Sir, you'll think it no crime  
That my faith I should blindly avow  
In the ways of this modern time.

Of this luckless, perennial craze  
I know not the why nor the how,  
But I doubt very much if it pays  
To lie down in Despondency's slough;  
Let the youth turn his promising prow,  
Put about for a happier clime,  
And the waters of gladness 'twill plough,  
In the ways of this modern time.

ENVOI.

Brother, 'tis thine to endow  
The years with a purpose sublime;  
For thine own of the ways seek thou,  
The ways of this modern time.

Univ. Coll.

J. J. FERGUSON.

## TORONTO AS OTHERS SEE IT.

THE authors of *B. C. 1887*, a very interesting record of the travels, observations and experiences of three young Englishmen in British Columbia, devote a chapter to Toronto where they tarried some days *en route* to the Pacific Province. We quote the whole chapter.

All this time we are forgetting Toronto; but our stay there was short. If the reader will kindly imagine two days of really hard shopping—groceries, cartridges, a tent, fur-rugs and blankets being the most important requisites—he will get a pretty accurate idea of what we saw of the town. It is, however, a first-rate one as towns over here go, barring its mud, which appears to be composed of Portland cement and glue in equal proportions. It would, according to our notions, be an improvement to the appearance of the streets if a glimpse of the sky were here and there allowed to be caught through the fabric of electric wires which pervade the atmosphere. The very sparrows have given up trying to fly and now cautiously walk about from place to place on the net-work like Wainratta.

One evening we boated upon the lake and crossed over to an island—"The Island," in fact—which is opposite the town, where dancing, singing and high jinks and junketings generally seemed to go on with great spirit. But as Mr. Burne Jones says, "How they vex the soul!" They did ours, for we lost no less than two shillings in trying to perform an absurdly easy feat which we have never seen at English festivities of a like nature. A table is marked out with many circles about six inches in diameter, as closely as they can be drawn. The player is provided with half-a-dozen metal discs of the same size as the circles, and all he has to do—a ridiculous all—is to cover up one, only one, and any one out of all those circles with his six metal discs, throwing them from about a yard away. When other trades fail, we know a certainty now, which is to be a proprietor of one of these unhallowed boards. We suppose there is not a more impossible thing to do in this wide world than to obstruct the view of even half one of those magic rings; and yet it seems so easy.

Toronto is characteristically English as compared with the utterly French Quebec and the Anglo-Frenchness of Montreal. It is a nice place to stay at: there is plenty of society more nearly approaching to that of home than, as far as we know, any other Canadian city can boast, though any traveller knows what a vast difference there really is between the social composition of England and that of even the closest imitation, not always, however, in favour of England. There is tennis and boating in summer, and in winter ice boating, snow-shoeing, tobogganing, and all the well known sports which we associate with the name of the Dominion.

Jarvis Street is one of the very prettiest roadways in the world: an avenue of well-to-do dwelling-houses all standing back a long way from the road, with the sweetest of English gardens and lawns in front, no two houses being alike, and all vying with each other in quaintness and picturesqueness of design. On a blazing day, such as was now making life almost insupportable and very thirsty, it was a real treat to walk down this shady street for a mile, or so, and gaze at the refreshing green lawns and bright flower beds, from among which often came the tinkling splash of a little fountain, while from lattice and verandah dense masses of cool feathery climbing-plants hung in festoons, lighted up here and there by brilliant clusters of blossoms.

Nor must we omit the important fact that they have—or had—a pack of hounds. A good many years ago we were here during the season, and hearing that a hunt was to take place, we went forth to the chase, let it be whispered only in a "shay." The meet was fixed for 3.30, to suit the convenience of business men, and was at the only real public-house that we ever saw in Canada, with a real sign board swinging in the breeze—a most unique specimen, for here every pot house calls itself an "hotel," and most of the first-rate hotels are dignified by the title of "house." There were about thirty horsemen, and a few other shays had come like us to see the fun. There are no bad horses in Canada, and though those at the meet were not hunters, they were a very neat and shapely lot of good-looking hacks: but the men—ah me! Tautz and Lock would have torn their hair with envy and despair; and the fancy-free methods of equitation of some of them were indeed a wild weird sight. The master was correctly costumed in pink, and riding a bay horse lately imported from Ireland. And now we must confess that the object of pursuit was not invariably a fox, but when it was a fox, then he was brought in a bag, as the lateness of the hour gave no time for drawing coverts, or any subterfuges and interludes of that nature. On this occasion the more humble red herring was, we believe, the quarry we were after.

Another difficulty in carrying out the sport in old country fashion is the form of fence peculiar to the country. They are composed of several heights of huge split rails, and present insurmountable obstacles to any jumping horse. We think the object of their existence must be to prevent any creature getting over them—unlike our English fences, which we believe to be constructed entirely for the maintenance of gaps, for there can be no question that the day which sees the last fence will also witness the extinction of that great institution the gap. Therefore the sportsmen who run the drag take care to remove a certain number of the rails of each fence they cross, so that every jump is made of a legitimate and convenient elevation—in fact, not too much obstacle, but just obstacle enough.

Soon after we arrived on the scene, an agreeable old gentleman of sportsman-like appearance came up and entered into a description of the whole proposed run for our benefit. We soon discovered that he imagined we were two direct descendants of Pomponius Ego, and were out here for the special purpose of describing for an English newspaper a run of the Toronto Hounds. The *Daily News*, of all papers, we believe it was! It was of course useless to deny it: he politely assented, but continued in his description of all the principal performers, and kept close to our carriage all the afternoon, so that we might always be in the best place for observing the chase. This benevolent intention we regret to say caused considerable ill-feeling between him and our driver, who imagined he knew quite as much about the matter as his self-appointed mentor.

The hounds went straight away for a quarter of an hour's sharp burst at the start, then there was a short check, and amid frantic excitement they went off at score again. Our old friend, after galloping madly up and down the road for some time, and quarrelling with our driver till we were nearly dead of suppressed merriment, selected a spot where he had ascertained the drag had crossed and the fences were reduced to a practicable condition. Then presently we were gratified by the sight of the whole field, who, led by the master in a most masterly manner, leaped into the road with an air which showed that they felt that the eyes of England (as represented by two *Daily News* reporters) were upon them. And then as a fitting climax the first whip jumped off his horse and handed down his hat to the spectators in the carriages, as who should say, "Now don't that beat a circus? But you don't see all that for nothing you know." We drove home much impressed by the sport of Canada known as "foxhunting," and wished that the *Daily News* myth had had a solid foundation, for truly the experience was well worthy of a penny-a-liner's attention. Doubtless things have changed much since those days; they have a knack of doing most things well in Canada now.

One noticeable feature everywhere is the absence of mongrel dogs: dogs are plentiful enough but, almost without exception, seem to be exceedingly well-bred English types. Setters are the commonest, Irish, Gordons and Laveracks; pointers fairly numerous, mostly the old liver and white; spaniels we saw of several kinds, the Irish water spaniel and Sussex being the most popular; and a few terriers, retrievers and collies, but not a bad bred dog among the lot. And this is a pretty good illustration of the modern Canadian method. They believe in their country, and think that any money spent now in pushing her to the front will be a safe and, before long, paying investment.

It is a pity that all English Prime Ministers are not compelled to visit our colonies, and thus get to understand for themselves the strength of the love for the old country,

which, like some of our native trees, seems to flourish in the new soil with a vigour unknown at home. We did not come out to talk politics, but could not help hearing the opinion of many Canadians; and the intensely loyal and patriotic feeling common to all classes would surprise our "Perish India" school of politicians. We did meet one specimen of the "Down with heverythink" and "Rightly struggling to be free" type, but we do not know whether even this man's opinions were the same when he was sober, for we only saw him twice. To us who know the devoted reverence with which Mr. Gladstone is still regarded by numbers of his fellow countrymen, it was strange to notice his universal unpopularity (to use a mild term) here. The desertion of Gordon seems to be the unforgivable offence which has aroused and kept alive so long the indignation of a warm-hearted people, in curious contrast to the apparently slight effect it had at home. We came on a lonely hunter in the heart of the Rockies who was what they call "ripping and cussing around" in a very excited state, and we found he had only just heard the story of the Egyptian Expedition from one of the voyageurs who took the boats up the Nile. He wanted to know what England had done about it, and why somebody responsible hadn't been hanged; but as we could not enlighten him on these points, we fear he is still in the same unpleasant state of mind.

Art is the great agency for refining and subduing rugged natures. We are not quite sure that we were the discoverers of this truth, but it was irresistibly borne in upon us at the Queen's Hotel. On the walls of the entrance hall were many paintings, exceeding fine and large, and of surpassing interest. A Yankee, who, like us, was reposing after the fatigues of luncheon, suddenly got up and critically surveyed one of these pictures with an admiring eye. Then he stuck both his hands as far as possible into his pockets, and pushing the inevitable quid over into his left cheek, turned to the Skipper and said, "That, sir, is a remarkably fine work." The Skipper not venturing to disagree, he continued, "Jest observe that light in the top of that light-house; looks nat'ral now, don't it? Wal if that ain't high art, I'm beat." After this, he gravely retired, and whistled softly to himself; and as we watched him gazing vacantly at his boots, we felt that the light from that painted beacon had penetrated his very soul, and in conjunction with the contemplation of the blacking filled his troubled breast with a calm which the quid alone had failed to induce. And he returned to the consumption of his tenth "whiskey sour" with a placid joy hitherto unknown to him.

The system of checking baggage, though we by no means regard it as an unalloyed blessing, is certainly carried to great perfection. Each piece has attached to it by a strap a disc of brass with a number on it and the name of the station to which it is consigned, while the owner is provided with a corresponding disc, on production of which the property will be delivered up to him at his destination. At many of the good hotels you can check your baggage to another hotel, say 1,000 miles away, and thus remove all thought and anxiety on its account from your mind till you find it safely reposing in your next bedroom. The only inconvenience that this causes is that you cannot get at your property anywhere between the two ends of the checked journey, but a man soon learns to obviate this by packing all that he can possibly need in one bag and taking that "right along on the cars."

There is nevertheless another really really terrible objection to the American management of baggage; it is that only trunks which are constituted of about the same durability as a burglar-proof safe have any chance of surviving even one journey. It is a solid fact that a new leather portmanteau is sometimes reduced to a mere shapeless mass of pulp and rivets in about 1,000 miles, if changed fairly frequently from one line or even from one baggage-car to another. The men who look after this part of the business hurl things about in the most light-hearted and unsparing way and we think the check system is to some extent responsible for their conduct. No man with a heart could behave so were he surrounded by the appealing and agonizing faces of portmanteau proprietors, as he necessarily would be if travellers were obliged to keep an eye on their belongings. Moreover those travellers would be willing to give untold largesse rather than see their beloved treasures catapulted about exactly as if they had been intended by nature for destructive missiles.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE RAILWAY ACT.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Referring to the article in your number of November 29, respecting the case now pending in the Supreme Court between the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Province of Manitoba, I think you should acquit the Dominion Government and Parliament of any intention to re-establish, under the provision in the Railway Act, the monopoly they had abolished in the preceding session. It is only reasonable to believe that the Government and Parliament held that the provision of the Constitutional Act respecting the effect of a declaration that any provincial work was one "for the general advantage of Canada," was not intended to prevent a Province from constructing a railway wholly within such Province, but to enable the Dominion Parliament to make such railway, or to subject it, when made by a Province, to such provisions as might be established for the government of railways generally, as the Railway Act does; and under this inter-