

the paper, a matter of regret that it has not been more energetically supported. There has seldom been a time in the history of the Diocese, when a journal of independent views was more urgently required. The *Colonist*, which, to a certain extent, represented the opinions of Churchmen, has ceased to be; and we are almost entirely left to the mere secular press—the opinions and sympathies of which are too often hostile to the Church. The fact, moreover, of Churchmen allowing "*The Press*" to fail, makes it a matter of absolute certainty, that the prospect of having any sound Ecclesiastical organ in this Diocese, is now remote indeed.

THE Editors of *The Canadian Church Press* would be obliged if those Clergymen, or others, who have taken our paper but have not remitted their subscriptions would forward to our Office the sum of One Dollar, the subscription for the half-year.

Literature.

[In view of the flood of most objectionable "light literature" which is poured in upon us from the States, and which when not translated from, is too often modelled upon the French Novel, we think the article which we insert below well worthy the attention of parents and guardians.—*Eds. Ch. Press*]

ASPECTS OF MODERN FRENCH LITERATURE.

At the present time we are so engrossed with the external relations of France, and her position towards ourselves, that we are careless about her internal position, and the way in which she stands with herself. Yet even to us the latter is almost as important as the former. It is well to keep a vigilant eye upon the increase of her armies and fleets, upon the building of new fortresses and arsenals, and upon the extension of her territory; but the wise man will not neglect also to watch the indications, so undoubtedly to be discerned, that if France is not at peace with her neighbors, still less is she at peace with herself. In the eighteenth century, the acute observer must have prophesied with undoubted certainty, from the more examination of the literature of that period, that some such convulsion as the French Revolution was inevitable. May we not discover in our own day, in the state of the French book-world, many symptoms that 1859 may see as extraordinary, if not as overwhelming, a revolution as seventeen eighty-nine? If we consider the writings now most popular in France, their common characteristics, and their common tendencies, we must come to the conclusion that they reveal a condition of the national mind which is truly portentous. And it is not only the works which issue from the French press at the present day that force us to such a conclusion, but the works which do not issue; it is not the publication and success of bad books, but the absence of good ones. Ever since the commencement of the present régime, philosophy, poetry, and history have been almost silent; and this silence is the more marked as coming immediately after an epoch when the literary greatness of France was almost unprecedented. Comte, Guizot, Villemain, Michelet, Cousin, Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Thierry, constituted perhaps the most brilliant band of historians, metaphysicians, and poets, that has ever been seen in France and where we they now? Only two of them, Comte and Thierry, are dead, the others, like the Titans under Ætna, are crushed beneath a huge desecration, enduring obscurity and ignominy in a land of which they are the chief ornaments; others preferring poverty and exile in a strange country. Michelet, a man whose singular genius, combined with the profoundest erudition, has seldom been equalled, who writes in himself the epigrammatic brilliancy of a Frenchman, with the industry and accuracy of a German, has almost forsaken the domain of history for a species of study which in England is unknown, but in France is most popular—a strange mixture of materialism and spiritualism, of lofty sentiments and base physical details, and which is as deleterious in its effects as disgusting in itself. That the author of the "*History of France*" should have abandoned that, to write books such as "*L'Amour*" and "*La Femme*," speaks ill for the age and country which allow of such a degradation. In the department of history, it is true, M. Thierry perseveres in his work on the Consulate and Empire; but M. Thierry is a comparatively feeble historian. Further, it is hard to write when every sentence has to be composed in fear of offending an autocratic ruler; and though Tacitus wrote one of the greatest histories the world has ever seen, under Domitian, M. Thierry is far from being so successful under Napoleon III. In philosophy, we find scarcely anything but futile though able articles in the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," by Rémusat, and occasionally by the once eloquent Victor Cousin. In poetry, we look in vain even for the humblest productions; and after roaming from Dun to Beersheba, we can only cry, "*All is lost*." In modern France most intellectual efforts are political offences; and a sovereign whose only real title to his sovereignty is his ability, is naturally jealous of ability in others. Secondly, there is a difference in temperaments. A despotism may be one to make a nation glory in it; it may be one to make a nation ashamed of it. Elizabeth was a despotic sovereign, but she was true and straightforward, and her reign was as popular as any rich great men as any other before or after. So the absolutism of Louis XIV. had a deep nationality about it, and every Frenchman felt proud of the

monarch who raised his nation to the loftiest position ever enjoyed by any Power. When Louis XVI. said that he was the state, he said no more than the truth. He was the embodiment of French nationality. But not so now. This despotism, got falsely, and carried out as it was got, represents one man and not France, as no wonder that its rise is equal with the disappearance of a literature which did represent France. But not only did the rise of the contemporary form of Napoleonism extinguish, till some high influence rekindles it, all that had been as brilliant and so glorious in French literature, it left room for, if it did not actually evoke, the most extraordinary phase of thought and the most extraordinary class of literary compositions which can be found in any age or country. We do not scruple to pronounce the works which are now most popular in Paris to be more diseased, unwholesome, and what is still worse, more dangerous, than anything that twenty years ago could be imagined. The grossest selfishness, the sickliest sentimentality, the filthiest revelling in indecency, and that indecency as foul as it is new, are the chief characteristics of the books now most largely read in Paris. The novels of Paul de Kock and Soulié are immoral, and by no means good in their tendency, but they are pure and innocuous when compared with the productions of the younger Dumas, or still more of M. Ernest Feytaud. Georges Sand has unquestionably written much which will long survive her, but even she has contributed a book to modern literature which equals, if it does not outdo, the chief *débauchée* of M. Feytaud. We might continue *à l'infini* to cite names of writers and examples of works most popular in France, all of which are of the same diseased character—as those to which we have alluded; if any one is incredulous as to the assertion that this poisonous trash is popular, let him ask any French publisher or intelligent Parisian with whom he may have the opportunity of conversing, and the answer will be unanimous that Scott did not create a greater *furor* in England, than M. Feytaud is now causing in France. Painters, musicians, and the whole class of artists, are fully impregnated with, and steeped to the lips in, this "*Literature of Desperation*." Without any English prejudice, and being careful to remember that "*a foreigner is not an Englishman*," we firmly believe that the prevailing literature of France is the most base and ruinous power of evil that her most bitter enemies would design against her. It helps to develop all that is most selfish; it sneers at domesticity, and never mentions patriotism. But we forget a Frenchman is not allowed by law to be "*pitoyable*," and perhaps here we may detect the prime cause of the deadly mischief we have been describing. When a man is not permitted to have love for his country, his love becomes concentrated on himself; the affection which belongs of right to his native land and his home turns to self, and the intellect which ought to be exercised on every or any subject with unobscured liberty, in want of this, becomes morbidly introspective, and the whole man is envenomed and degenerate. Now, if we believe, as we can scarcely help believing, that no nation can continue to receive a lie and a delusion for more than a certain time, we may be convinced that the time of feeling in France which is diseased and represented in the literature of our day, and which oppresses the true greatness of the nation like a hideous nightmare, must pass away before long time, and Napoleon III. may have to witness as great a destruction as the less guilty and less fortunate Louis seventy years ago.—*From the Literary Gazette*

University Intelligence.

CANADA.

TRINITY COLLEGE.—Professor Hind's work is thus referred to by the Editor of the *Churchman*:—"The '*Narrative of the Canadian Exploring Expedition*,' the preparation of which is intrusted to Professor Henry Youle Hind, who fills the chair of Chemistry and Geology at Trinity College, Toronto, will be a very important addition to our knowledge of this continent. It will include a full report of the two expeditions dispatched by the Canadian Government in 1857 and 1858, at a cost of \$60,000, for the exploration of the southern part of Rupert's Land, or the basin of Lake Winnipeg, including the country within the now crown colony of Red River, as well as the region traversed by the proposed overland route from Canada to British Columbia. Much of this large area has never before been described, or, unless visited by white men, until crossed by these expeditions, the second of which was under the command of Professor Hind, and is known as the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Expedition. Particular attention was paid to the physical geography, geology, and climate of the territory by the scientific corps, and as a practical photographer was one of the staff, the illustrations of the grand and romantic picturesque scenery, and of the ethnology of the native Indian tribes, will be very abundant. The work will probably appear this Autumn, (forming two volumes, octavo), from the house of Messrs. Longman.

It is with feelings of no ordinary satisfaction, that we welcome again amongst us the Rev. George Clarke Irving, M.A., who took no small part, during the infancy of our noble Church University, in framing its rules and regulations of discipline, and in its general management. The five years during which he shared in the administration of Trinity College, were characterised by the unbroken prosperity of that institution. When Mr. Irving's departure from us was necessitated by affairs of a private nature in England, he was followed by the regrets of all who were acquainted with him, and the affectionate regard and esteem of those who had enjoyed the benefits of his instruction, both in the lecture room and in the University pulpit. His appointment to be Vice-Provost augurs well for the continued success and more assured stability of our University, which cannot but prosper from the principles on which it is founded, and the ability of its professorial staff.