

March.

Likesome reformer, wh with mien austere,
 Selects dress and loud mist n tones,
 More aspiring than the wrongs which she be-
 m an,
 Walks through the land and wears all who hear,
 Whil' yet we know the need of such refo n;
 So com s u lvely March, with wind and storm,
 To break the swell of winter, and set free
 In prison's brooks and crocus beds oppressed,
 Severe of face, gaunt-armed and wildly dressed,
 She is not fair nor beautiful to see.
 But mercy April and sweet smiling May
 Come not till March has first prepared the way.

ELLA WILKINSON WILCOX.

A Letter on Western Canada.

The following extracts from a letter by Mr. McNeil, manager of the coal mines at Cammore and Anthracite to an American paper will prove interesting. Mr. McNeil's object in writing was to dispel some of the wrong impressions held by Americans regarding Western Canada, and also to direct the attention of Iowa farmers who contemplate emigrating to the exceptional inducements offered by this country to the agriculturalist:

"I have a Wall street friend, somewhat noted for his pithy way of putting things, who made this telling remark: 'Better go west for a start than stay here. There are more acorns in the woods and not so many hogs after them.'

"The trouble is with the United States now that there scarcely remains a west within its borders to go to. The cream at least of its government agricultural land is gone. There is no material within my knowledge with which to make another Minnesota or Iowa. Even the casual thinker knows well that starting this decade with 65,000,000 people the overflow will elbow each other a little in every state in the union in the early years of the next century. If every emigrant that reaches our shores could be diverted to Canada or elsewhere there would be no mourners among our people, unless the patriots of the new south who have planted a town site on every available piece of ground should wear some crape.

"I reached Iowa in 1869 and for nearly four years, connected with railway construction, travelled the territory from Marshalltown north and northwest into Minnesota and the Dakotas. What northern Iowa and western Minnesota and the best wheat belt of the Dakotas was then, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories or Canada now are to the pioneer farmer, mechanic and merchant.

"Last fall I drove over this country from Brandon southeast perhaps 200 miles, principally on the line of new railway construction, and so had a chance to make the comparison given. Here and there, long distances apart, stood the log houses of the pioneer, located many years in advance of the railroad. The people told me over and over again where we would stop to feed or pass the night, the same old story of long hauls from home to market, and the empty-handed return because the cost of the journey had eaten up the value of the load of grain. It required no effort for me to go back twenty years to the American dugouts during the recital. The same enthusiasm was manifested over the near approach of that great civilizer, the locomotive. It meant to all these people the very wide difference between a bare living gotten by the hardest labor and comparative wealth. It always does mean this to every new country.

"Undoubtedly the further parallel will be re-

marked later on that the same gratified sovereigns will reach out after the railway company with the distance tariff and cheerfully smoke their well earned cigars while the shareholder of the railway does the spitting. I borrowed this simile from the story of the two newsboys who combined their capital, and with the result bought a penny grab cigar. The largest boy lighted the weed and smoked until the junior demanded a whiff, which he denied him with great sangfroid, saying, 'You ought to be satisfied, you are a joint stockholder; I will do the smoking and you can spit.' Charles Dickens would have said that this must have been an American newsboy.

"My drive over this wheat belt was a revelation. No where else in any country on earth is there such an unbroken expanse of soil adapted to wheat raising as this territory from Winnipeg to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. The crops uniformly grade No. 1 hard. The yield 30 to 50 per acre. The price of land from \$2 to \$5 per acre. The cost of production, liberally figured, 20 cents per bushel. The value this year at the station is 75 to 80 cents. Young men pay for a quarter section of ground and improvements in one season with the crop they raise. Single owners with little or no starting capital cropped last year as high as 50,000 bushels of No. 1 hard wheat, and own the property they raised it on. Thirty million bushels of grain went out of this stretch of country to the market last year, and I would exaggerate it if I stated that there was one farm house for every ten miles square. Canada, which has more area than all Europe, could beyond any doubt absorb the entire population of Europe and feed it out of this granary.

"The prevailing idea about Canada is that lying between us and the north pole it is inclement, ice bound and sterile. We associate it with bear skin overcoats, toboggan sleds, snow shoes and ice palaces. All writers and artists have seemed to conspire to put a frosting on this country. As early as 1815, De Quincy, in his incomparable summing up of a winter's delights says: 'No, a Canadian winter for my money, or a Russian one, where every man is but a co proprietor with the north wind in the fee simple of his own ears.'

"Charlotte Bronte, in 1847, has Jane Eyre give her readers a chilly idea of man's stern character by comparing his frozen nature to a Canadian winter.

"No artist has ever thought it worth while to make a summer picture of anything Canadian until the Canadian Pacific railway people very wisely combated this foolishness with a series of magnificent engravings, and even they give prominence to the glacier on the Solkirk mountains.

"You can as easily imagine an Esquimaux lolling in a lawn hammock lightly clad in a seersucker and a cigarette as to get up a mental picture of anything Canadian without something cold in it.

"I can testify to 125 degrees Fahrenheit in the sun for enough days last summer in the Rocky Mountains to make me wonder at all this. The facts are that no finer climate favors any portion of the inhabitable globe. Canada has more territory than we have that lies on the lines of the latitude along which have been, and are being produced that race of people which denominates men and things everywhere.

Leaders of men are not bred in the tropics in this century. Vigor, strength, mental and physical, and the courage to do and dare, grows best, if not almost entirely where the winter is long and hard enough to make ice, and I prefer many winters without mud in them. Geographically I should say that latitude 50 was the dividing line of the best breeding ground for the human race, and it is practically the boundary line between the United States and Canada."

The Manitoba Government Headquarters in Liverpool.

Liverpool *Journal of Commerce* of Feb. 5th: The Manitoba offices in James street are at present the scene of considerable activity, and Mr. McMillan and his staff of assistants find it all they can do to keep up with their work. The extraordinary crop of 1891 in Manitoba has called forth so much inquiry for reliable information regarding that country that it has been decided to place in prominent positions throughout the United Kingdom, such as the Imperial Institute and some of the larger museums, samples of the products of the country. Some will also be sent to agricultural fairs throughout the country, and to the continent of Europe. The first consignment of products has just arrived, and they certainly speak well for the capabilities of Manitoba as an agricultural country. On exhibition in the offices are some magnificent specimens of the famous Manitoba No. 1 hard red Fyfe wheat. One of the samples weighs about 66 lbs. to the bushel. Up to this year very little of this famous wheat has been exported to this city, most of the surplus having been used by millers in Eastern Canada to mix with their inferior and softer wheats. As Manitoba has this season about 25,000,000 bushels to export, a considerable quantity is likely to come to this country. It will interest Liverpool grain men to know that the acreage under crop in Manitoba has doubled within the last four years, so that the supply of this wheat is likely to increase. The official grain standards, as fixed by the Canadian Government, are also to be seen in the Manitoba offices. These should be of use to the grain men here. In addition to these there are a few very fine specimens of Canadian barley, such as it is hoped will in a year or two be sent largely to this country. The Government offices in James street are about to be newly decorated with samples of grains and grasses, and photographs, &c., so that any one desiring to see what the country really produces can do so. Some of the samples of grass are 10 to 12 feet in length, and straw from Manitoba farms in several instances shown five feet six inches long. The exceeding brightness of the straw and the hardness of the grain is a very noticeable characteristic, accounted for no doubt by the bright, sunny days so common in that country. Mr. McMillan, the government agent in this city, is spending much of his time lecturing in the country, and he reports that there are indications of a large emigration in the spring. These efforts are a new departure in this country, but we are glad to see the energy with which they are endeavoring to people their vacant lands, and to attract thither the surplus population of the United Kingdom, who to the number of 200,000 annually leave these shores.