

to have taken irremovable root in public opinion there. Titles, it seems, are the bane of the democrat. In proof of which, he confers them on his fellow-democrat upon every possible occasion for every conceivable and inconceivable reason. It is quite possible that there are to-day in the American Republic more men with "handles" to their names than in all England. True, the title represents little, sometimes so little as an unsuccessful candidature for legislative honours; but its owner has a life tenure, and his six sons, if he be so blessed, have an equal opportunity of wearing his easy dignity. Since title has no ruling power, however, it is perhaps bestowed as a queer democratic compensation for the lack of the fabulous riches to which it is every citizen's privilege to attain. Millionaires are seldom honoured in this way; the multitude knows them chiefly by their nicknames.

As to social rule, the statement that "a thoroughly stupid millionaire" cannot inspire reverence will be received with incredulous wonder. What, then, mean the columns of descriptive eloquence devoted to the doings and sayings of the immoderately rich in the American Sunday Press? From what quarter does the New York novelist draw his picture of the social rise and rule of the man of millions? What unfounded rumour is this of a Gothamish clique, so select and so rich that even a stockbroker is excluded from its gilded interior? Politically, it is interesting to note the number of millionaires in the United States Senate. Of course it is possible that they owe their positions to their innate fitness, but it is difficult to assure the public of this. As typifying the influence of money in municipal politics, the unmentionable New York aldermen will rise before the heated imagination of everybody who pursues the subject. Theoretically, the American citizen is a free and independent personality. Practically, he is dominated, to some extent at least, by what seems to him a worthier master than rank. Men are ruled everywhere. Republics change the form of the ruling power, and make the chances of wielding it even. But the domination is always there, and it is rather too much to ask us to believe that even in the advanced and enlightened United States its manifestation is mere "jocular curiosity."

SARA JEANNETTE DUNCAN.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

In the "Jottings along the C. P. R.," in our issue of August 19, we made Golden City sixty-seven miles from Donald, instead of seventeen, the true distance; we also made our correspondent say, "The high bank (instead of the 'right' bank) of the Columbia spreads itself out in a dense second growth of balsam pines;" and, further, we somewhat disrespectfully, but not intentionally, dubbed His Honour Judge Vowell—"Jude Vowells." For all these errors we are, figuratively, wearing sackcloth and ashes. But fortunately for us, our injured yet valued correspondent has gone into the interior of the country to the Columbia Lakes and Kootenay Valley, with which there is no postal communication; and, therefore, unfortunately, the Jottings will be discontinued for two or three weeks, to be resumed with an account of that district, and of the course of the C. P. R. from Donald to Port Moody, with a sketch of Victoria and its vicinity.

### A PLEA FOR THE THOUSAND ISLANDS.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Nearly all Canadians who have taken a series of holidays have, no doubt, at some time or other passed through the Thousand Isles. For those who have not enjoyed that marvellous panorama, there is a source of pleasure yet in store if they hasten to avail themselves of it before all the islands are turned into camping grounds or hotel gardens. It is on this point I would beg to write a few words on the demolition of the temple of nature to make room for the erection of saloons and eating houses; the desecration of one of the fairest pieces of Canadian scenery to suit the depraved tastes of modern holiday fiends and picnic ghouls. What are the words and works of man beside the words and works of God? Nature is the work of God made eloquent; art is the dumb creation of human imbecility. God made man in his own image; man has effaced that image of Divine origin long ago, and not content with his work of self-destruction, must needs seek to destroy also the works of God in nature. The beauty of the Thousand Isles cannot be in any way exaggerated—indeed it cannot be justly described, except summarily, as the most beautiful example known of river island scenery. Isle after isle arises, sometimes slowly in the long distance, and at other times suddenly, and as it were magically, in the bright freshness of virginal beauty, clad in varying tones of brown, green, and gray vegetation, firmly fixed upon their rocky beds that jut sharply from the ripple of the broad tree-terraced river.

The wind sings along the crests of the waves, scattering the foam; whistles among the pine tops, gilded with the glory of the summer's sun; and murmurs gently along the tufts and beds of grass, in which insects innumerable find a home. Swift swallows skim along from isle to isle, now touching the wave-tops with their white breast-feathers, now glinting their purple backs in the sun as they curve upon the air. All of which is delightful and refreshing to eye and ear and soul, and compels most men into a state of ecstatic admiration, if they possess eye or ear or soul, and urges others into a peaceful state of religious contemplation. But the boat turns, and there, in the midst of our reverie and reverence, right before our astonished eyes, rises up a formidably ugly structure of hybrid architecture. It dispels at once the inspiration of the place. The paradise of loveliness has gone at once and for ever, because of the sight of this ungainly shed of wood, built for man's pride in front of the island, noble trees and natural rock-work being ruthlessly sacrificed to make way for

this summer resort and its approach-way. What I would urge strongly is that these hotels and resorts and small cottages of nondescript wood-work be built in future on the shores of the river and not upon the islands. If people wish to enjoy the scenery, let them go amongst it and do so to their hearts' content; but I beg to protest as strongly as possible against the increasing destruction of this wonderful island-group by the campers and salooners and rich idlers who live thereon and deface its beauty irreparably. It is a criminal shame, and if it be money that is at the bottom of the ruthless barbarism, then in God's name and in nature's behalf, let all who have regard for the preservation of at least some of God's work through nature, bestir themselves and remedy this growing vandalism. In a few years all the island beauty will have departed, and nothing but ill-built houses and hotels will be left to see. Yours truly,

E. G. GARTHWAITE.

### SHAKESPEARIANA.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Noting your remarks in answer to Mr. Grant Seymour's suggestion, in your issue of the 19th inst., reminds me of an incident that occurred some forty years since in reference to a phrase in Hamlet.

The incident is this: Seated in the gun-room of the *San Josef*, in Hamaze, a discussion arose as to the correct rendering of a quotation that had been used by one of the party. The subject was Hamlet.

Your readers will recollect Horatio's answer to Hamlet's question, as to what had brought him to Elsinore.

Horatio—"My Lord, I came to see your father's funeral."

Hamlet—"I prithee do not mock me, fellow-student, I think it was to see my mother's wedding."

Horatio—"Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon."

Hamlet—"Thrift—thrift, Horatio; the funeral's baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage-table. Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven, or ever I had seen that day, Horatio."

The discussion arose on the word "*dearest*." Some urged that the term was mis-applied—others, that the word should have been *direst*—as of an evil, in the superlative degree. Caldicott, however, goes to the root of the word, as used in olden times, and Knight says, in explanation, it is an "*epithet applied to that person or thing, which, FOR or AGAINST us, excites the liveliest interest.*"

So, in Parliamentary phrase, we must let it "stand," for not one word nor one tittle of Shakespeare's writings should be altered.

The discussion in the gun-room of the *San Josef*—through the porthole of which Nelson sprang when he captured the ship from the Spaniards—led to the study of the works of Shakespeare; and soon after, to the adaptation of parts of his plays to private theatricals.

I can only hope that the spark struck by Mr. Grant Seymour will find an echo in the minds of very many of your readers, and lead to a more enlarged study of a work that has gained for its author the term IMMORTAL.

R. NETTLE.

Ottawa, 23rd August.

### THE RUSSIAN STORM-CLOUD.\*

STEPNIAK'S new book is so full of matter and big with thought, so varied in its contents, and so rich in suggestion, that any one of its divisions might easily be made the subject of a separate review. One of the most interesting chapters, and that to which many readers will give the greatest attention, is the chapter headed, "Why is Russia a Conquering Country?" For the question is one the right answering of which deeply concerns our relations with the greatest of European States and the tranquillity of our Indian possessions, and the wrong answering of which may not only involve this country in heavy expenditure, but give rise to dire alarms and a portentous war. Hence the opinions of a writer like Stepniaik, who is at once an ardent patriot and a warm admirer of England and free institutions, and who has sources of information and opportunities for observation which only a born Russian can command, are of the highest value, and merit the attention both of publicists and statesmen. Russia, in his belief, is a conquering country because it is despotically ruled. It may be objected to this that Stepniaik is a prejudiced witness—that being an avowed rebel against the existing régime, he sees in it the root of all evil, and is actuated more by a desire to discredit the autocracy than to deliver an impartial judgment. But he gives such abundant reason for the faith that is in him, and adduces so many facts in support of his conclusions, that even those who may refuse to adopt his views can hardly fail to be impressed by his arguments. This is what he says:

"A free government does not exclude the possibility of wars, as the example of Europe has shown only too well. But in autocratic States, the ambition and cupidity of the masters is a weighty and an additional cause of strife. And the overpowering strength of Russia, together with its geographical position, is particularly adapted to give full play to such propensities in its rulers. Russia, alone among European States, is a conquering State in these days. Of late the total ruin of the moral prestige of the Government, and the growing disaffection among all classes of society, have converted into a sort of moral necessity what was formerly a mere luxury. The Czar must look on external wars as an oft-tried expedient to divert the storm of discontent from internal questions. . . . And what is very remarkable and characteristic of the present intellectual

\*The Russian Storm-Cloud; or, Russia in her Relation to Neighbouring Countries. By Stepniaik. London: Swan Sonnenschein and Company.