

## READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

## THE "SMART" WAY OF SHAKING HANDS.

If there is a custom which is supposed by our neighbours on the Continent to be essentially British, it is that of shaking hands. They speak of the English "shake-hand" as if it were a practise only indulged in by that eccentric islander whose manners and customs they affect to despise, and yet not unfrequently imitate. It is certainly the case that we are more given to shaking hands than other nations are. Where the Frenchman or the German would content himself with a comprehensive bow that includes a whole company of people in one courteous sweep, the Englishman, especially if he is country-bred, will patiently and perseveringly shake hands with anyone who is present. Perhaps it is owing to a feeling that an unnecessary use of the practice is provincial, that we may trace a visible decline in it at the present day. But it is difficult to say to what cause is attributable the present extraordinary form which it takes among certain people when they do practice it—a form which is especially prevalent among those people whose ambition it is to be known as "smart"; a term, by the way, which is at once curiously inclusive and exclusive, and which can only be earned by a rigid performance of certain social rites, and a strict obedience to mysterious and unwritten rules, rules that are unknown even to the rest of the world. When two members of this class, or of the far more numerous class that imitates them, meet each other, they go through a ceremony which certainly bears a faint resemblance to that of shaking hands, but is in all real essentials absolutely different. The lady lifts her elbow as high as a tight sleeve will permit her, and dangles a little hand before her face, carefully keeping the wrist as stiff and as high as possible, while she allows the fingers to droop down. The man contrives to lift his elbow a little higher, and, by a dexterous turn of the wrist, touches her fingers—that is all. That is the whole ceremony; it sounds a little awkward, it looks very awkward, and it is difficult enough to require a good deal of practice before it can be performed at all. It is a very curious development of an ancient practice; but the reason that is assigned for this, its last development, is more curious still. It is said that ladies who are bidden to Court, and whose privilege it is to exchange greetings with royal personages, find it difficult to combine a curtsy with a shake of a gracious hand without raising their own hands to the level of their faces. Hence their too frequent communications with illustrious people have corrupted their good manners; they acquire a habit, and are so forgetful as to introduce it into their ordinary life and their relations with more ordinary people. It may be so; but it is strange, at least, that they should remember to forget the curtsy, while they forget to remember to lower their hands. But a defective memory is also very often a result of keeping good company. It is the same forgetfulness that causes a butler to address his new master as "My lord—I mean, sir;" the force of habit is too strong for him, and the poor fellow cannot remember that he is not always associating with peers. Another reason that has been suggested for this greeting, as it is practised by the best society, is that they have borrowed it from the coachman. With his reins in one hand and his whip in the other, the only approach to a salutation that a coachman can make is by a sharp upward movement of the elbow and whip hand. Indeed, this explanation is a very plausible one, for there is a kind of natural affinity between the manners of the stable and those of the very smart people. "Smart" is a detestable word, but it is the one by which they love best to describe themselves. Perhaps it would be fair to conclude that the form of their greeting has been subject to both of these influences, for it is difficult to think of any other source from which they can have derived it. It is hardly possible that the habit can have come to them from the bar-loafer of the United States, though it is certainly the custom among bar-loafers, as the Americans term them, to lift their elbows by way of greeting; but the gesture with them is merely indicative of a hospitable wish to "stand" each other drinks, and can hardly be dignified by the name of a salutation. Wherever the habit was derived from, it is not a pretty one, and by no means an improvement upon the original custom. How ancient a custom is the shaking of hands no one can say. Mankind always employed some kind of ceremony of greeting. The oldest forms, those of kissing and the rubbing of noses, date from even pre-historic times. Authorities declare that uncivilized men by these means either tasted or sniffed at each other, in order to distinguish their friend from their enemy. The custom of rubbing noses is still practised by the Polynesians, and some of the Malays and Mongols; but it does not appear to have ever made its way into Europe. The kiss, or salute by taste, was and is still much more extensively used; it is not unknown in England. The giving and clasping of right hands had its origin most probably in a wish to show that the right hand was unarmed, and that no danger need be apprehended from its owner. In the same way, among certain African tribes, it is the custom on meeting, not only to disarm themselves, but also to unclasp the upper portion of the body, in order to show that there is no weapon concealed. There is evidence to show that the clasping of hands was an ancient Hindoo usage in legal transactions, as it was also among the Romans in such matters as a marriage contract. As a mode of salutation, it certainly existed among the latter; for we have Horace's description of a bore:

Arreptaque manu, "Quid agis, dulcissime rerum?"

from which we may argue that the methods of the bore in those days, and his ingenuity in button-holing, did not differ greatly from those in use now. In yet further antiquity, it is said of the heroes in the "Odyssey," when they meet, that "they grow together with their palms"—an energetic, a Homeric description of the clasp of hands. But these are matters of ancient history. Nor do they explain how the action of shaking the hands came in; probably this too, in its time, was an innovation, but one that was adopted for the sake of displaying greater heartiness, which the latest innovation certainly does not.—*Spectator*.

## PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH ON THE AMERICAN TARIFF.

THE days of Protectionism in the United States, I begin to think, are now numbered. The McKinley Bill is the darkness which precedes the dawn. I would rather say that a streak of dawn is already in the sky. Economical truth has been preached in vain. It was preached in vain even by Mr. David Wells, much more by the Cobden Club, to whose tracts the ready answer has always been, that they were put forth in the British interest, though in point of fact Great Britain probably gains more by the handicapping through a suicidal system of her most dangerous rival in the markets of the world than she loses by partial exclusion from the market of the United States. But that which no preachings, however convincing, could effect is now likely to be brought about by the force of circumstances, and especially by the growth of surplus revenue. To those who looked on from a distance, the last Presidential election, in which Harrison and Protection triumphed over Cleveland and the Revenue Tariff, might seem a decisive verdict of the nation in favour of the Protective system. To observers on the spot it seemed nothing of the kind. In the first place the election was bought. There is no question about the fact that the manufacturers subscribed a great sum to carry the doubtful States—New York, Indiana, and Connecticut. In the second place, the farmers' vote which, contrary to expectation and to reason, went for the Republican and Protectionist candidate, was given not on the fiscal issue but on the party ground. Words can hardly paint the stolid allegiance of the farmer, both in the United States and Canada, to his party shibboleth, which in many cases is hereditary. More truly significant on the other side was the increased vote of mechanics in favour of Free Trade. The mechanic has been all along enthralled by the belief, sedulously drummed into him, that Protection keeps up wages. As soon as he sees through that fallacy the end must come, and the last election showed that his eyes were beginning to be opened. After all Mr. Cleveland would probably have won had he been content to stand on the general principle which he first put forth, that the Government had no right to take from the people more than it needed for its expenses. That proposition unquestionably commended itself to the good sense of the people. The mistake was the Mills Bill, which specifically threatened a number of protected interests and scared them into making desperate efforts and subscribing large sums to carry the elections. Republicans were also enabled to appeal to their party, perhaps with some show of reason, on the ground that the Bill was a Southern Bill. The farmer has paid the cost of the Protective system while he has himself been left to compete unprotected not only with the "pauper" labour of Europe, but with the more than "pauper" labour of the Hindoo. This even his dull eyes had begun to see; and it was evident that unless an interest, or an apparent interest, could be given him in the system, the mere party tie, tough as it was, would not hold him for ever. To give him an apparent interest, and thereby to secure his vote for the autumn elections to Congress, seems to have been the main object of the McKinley Bill. I was at Washington when the Bill came before the House of Representatives. To me it seemed evident that on the economical or fiscal merits of the question hardly a thought was bestowed. The only question was how the claims of different local interests could be satisfied and reconciled. The duty was put on hides and taken off again, again put on and again taken off, not because the minds of the legislators were undergoing changes about the fiscal merits of the tax, but because there was an evenly balanced struggle between the Eastern and the Western vote. The perplexity of the framers of the Bill, thus called upon to satisfy and reconcile jarring interests, was extreme. It boded the catastrophe of the whole system. Protectionist legislators who undertook to mete out a fair measure of Protection to every interest in a country so vast and embracing interests so diverse as the United States have a tangled web to weave. The wider the area becomes and the greater grows the diversity of the interests, the more tangled becomes the web. It has long appeared to me that the extension of the field and the multiplication of the objects would in the end prove fatal to the system. A New England Protectionist may talk about native industries and patriotism, but what he wants is the immunity from competition which will enable him to make twenty instead of ten per cent. It matters not really to him whether his competitor is an Englishman, a Canadian, or a man in Illinois or Georgia. It would not greatly surprise me to see New England some day step out of the ranks of Protection and declare for free importation of raw materials and Free Trade. Between the protected manufacturer and the protected producer of the raw materials of manufactures there is, happily for the ultimate deliverance of the consumer from both their monopolies, an antagonism which nothing can stifle. The Power

of Commercial Darkness cannot reconcile the interest of that part of his family which makes cloth or shoes with the interest of the part which breeds sheep for wool or cattle for hides. Nor can the Protectionist politician afford to let any interest drop. If he did, the ring would break, and the jilted interest would at once become the fiercest enemy of the system.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

## GREATER CANADA.

THE comparative study of land areas has many underlying truths which are not seen at first. The striking contrasts in extent, location, climate, soil and physical features of land areas make impressions upon our minds which are not easily effaced, and reveal hidden facts of great value. Canada is the largest of all the British possessions, comprising nearly one-half of the British Empire. It covers more than one-fourteenth part of the earth's surface, and therefore holds no mean position in the affairs of men. The whole continent of Europe is only 146,000 square miles larger than Canada. The area of the Dominion is estimated to contain 3,610,257 square miles. It is nearly thirty times larger than Great Britain and Ireland, and about 18,000 square miles larger than the United States, including Alaska. Greater Canada lies west of Ontario. Toronto has been the centre of civilization for the Dominion, but that is already changing, and no more appropriate advice can be given to our college graduates, enterprising men of business, and farmers' sons, than "Go West, Young Man!" The centres of population must remain for some years east of the great lakes, but these too will follow the centres of land areas and civilization. The city of Winnipeg lies nearly midway between the oceans and may for all practical purposes be fitly called "the hub of the Dominion." The introductory sentence in Principal Grant's "Ocean to Ocean" brings this forcibly to our minds. He says: "Travel a thousand miles up the St. Lawrence; another thousand on great lakes and a wilderness of lakelets and streams; a thousand miles across prairies and up the valley of the Saskatchewan; and nearly a thousand through woods and over great ranges of mountains, and you have travelled from ocean to ocean through Canada." Great ignorance prevails in Great Britain and the United States, and even in eastern Canada, respecting the area of the Dominion, and especially of that part of it which I have designated Greater Canada. Let us see what the land areas contain. Manitoba has an area of 60,520 square miles; this is larger than England and Wales, which contain 58,764; it is larger than the State of New York which has 47,000; it is 4,000 square miles larger than Michigan with 56,243. Pennsylvania has an area of 46,000 square miles; it is much greater than Illinois, which contains 55,405 square miles. The District of Saskatchewan has an area of 114,000 square miles; this is nearly as large as Italy, which has an area of 114,410; it is 8,000 square miles less than Nebraska, which has 122,007; it is larger than Colorado, which has an area of 105,818; it has a larger area than the combined States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New Jersey and Delaware, which contain 113,307; it is nearly as large as New England, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina combined, with an area of 115,987. Alberta has an area of 100,000 square miles; this is larger than Illinois and Ohio, which together contain 95,369 square miles. It is nearly as large as Oregon with 102,606. Colorado has an area of 105,818. Assiniboia has an area of 95,000 square miles; this is larger than Great Britain with 88,584; it is nearly as large as Minnesota, which contains 95,274. The combined areas of Maine, New York, Massachusetts and New Hampshire contain 95,846. Verily, "No pent up Utica contracts our Powers!" There lie within the land areas of Greater Canada, vast tracts of land capable of development whose extent is bewildering to the social and political economist, and the eye of the observant traveller fails to grasp the magnificent distances of even our prairie lands. The following comparison is especially significant to every loyal Canadian: The areas of land lying in Greater Canada embracing within the provisional districts of Keewatin, Alberta, Assiniboia, Athabasca, Saskatchewan, and the other Territories lying north of these districts, are greater in extent than the combined areas of the following countries: England and Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France, German Empire, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Japan, China, exclusive of her dependencies, Norway and Sweden. The former areas contain 2,647,730 square miles, and the latter have a combined area of 2,639,187.—*Robin Rustler, in Moosejaw Times*.

## MARTIAL MUSIC.

THERE is a popular idea that a military band accompanies its regiment wherever it goes, and plays in front of the line in the charge, or at the assault of the breach or entrenchments of the enemy. Although, however, our bandsmen have other duties, as stretcher bearers and sick attendants, to perform, and our fine regimental bands are not called upon to inspire our soldiers in this fashion, any soldier who has campaigned in the field, or performed arduous marches with his corps, will be able to testify to the good effect of martial music when men are called upon to perform something beyond their ordinary danger or fatigue. Mars and music are indeed old allies, and, if the effect of a drum, a fife, a trumpet, a bugle, or a bagpipe, upon the tired or overmatched soldier, has been at times a revival and renewal of vigour and increased courage, how