

taken out licenses, and, except in one instance, no collisions with our authorities having occurred. In the case of the only seizure that was made, that of the Mattie Winship, the owners of the trespassing craft acknowledged their offense. It is to be hoped that ere long another and successful attempt will be made to settle the long vexed question.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

Certain recent events have, for the third or fourth time since the boon of Responsible Government was granted to the people of Canada, prompted a doubt as to whether that boon is fully understood and appreciated by those who enjoy it. It was only conferred after a long and bitter struggle, not unattended in two of the provinces that constitute the Dominion, by the shedding of blood. On the very eve of the sanguinary crisis, which was destined to bring about the change from the sway of an oligarchy to the rule of the people through their chosen and trusted representatives, the Gosford Commission hesitated to put Canada on the same footing as England as to ministerial responsibility. The reason alleged for the refusal was that the Governor would thus be divested of his traditional and lawful power. It must be recollected, however, that the doctrine was not of universal acceptance at that time, even in the United Kingdom. In 1834 William IV. did not shrink from dismissing the Melbourne Ministry, though it was supported by a large majority in the House of Commons. It was the last occasion on which the sovereign ventured to defy that body and the public opinion of which it is the expression.

Lord Durham, in his famous Report—the most fruitful result of his mission—in recommending the reunion of the Canadas, made it clear that, to restore order and contentment in the then troubled country, it was essential to give the people the fullest benefit of representative institutions. Such institutions involved the principle that the government should be administered by persons who enjoyed the confidence of the people. It was at length recognized that only by that system—the system of Responsible Government—could harmony be maintained. Mr. Poulett Thomson (afterwards Lord Sydenham), on being appointed Governor-General, received definite instructions to carry out the ideas which Lord Durham had suggested as the only practicable basis of conciliation. Resolutions were also passed in the Legislature, which met after his arrival, insisting on the advisers of the sovereign's representative having the confidence of the people. These formal expressions of assent to the great principle of Responsible Government did not, nevertheless, ensure its unbroken observance on the part of either Governor or governed for some years to come. Difficulties arose when Lord Metcalfe refused to surrender what he claimed as the prerogatives of his office; and, in defending his course, that well-meaning but self-willed Governor cited the despatches of Lord Sydenham to prove that his professions did not accord with his real views as to the limitations of his power. In fact, according to Lord Metcalfe, Lord Sydenham held that responsibility, as well as authority, was still vested in the Governor rather than in the Government. Certainly that was the theory to which Lord Metcalfe himself clung with obstinate conviction. Viewed from the standpoint of later usage, his conduct was entirely unconstitutional;

while to him the functions of a Governor, as they are understood and discharged to-day, would have seemed to imply an inexplicable self-effacement.

In Lord Elgin's time the development of the principle reached another stage—the Governor binding himself to the strict execution of his instructions, while a portion of the Legislature and the people found fault with him for doing so. Lord Elgin's firmness, however, prevailed, and, though it exposed him to some temporary unpopularity, his good sense and judgment were abundantly vindicated in the sequel. The illustrious son-in-law of Lord Durham took pride in showing the world that the enlightened and liberal policy of that statesman could be carried out in Canada, and, although the test proved more severe than he had reason to expect (the opposition to Lord Durham's theory having hitherto proceeded from the Governors), his unflinching courage carried it to a triumphant issue. Henceforth, notwithstanding some passing perils, Responsible Government could rest on a safe foundation. The approval of his course by the Home authorities was a pledge that they would never again interfere with the constitutional rights of the Canadian people, or support any Governor in so doing. And what had come to pass in Upper and Lower Canada had also come to pass in the Maritime Provinces. It had become an admitted principle of the constitutional system that no administration could remain in power unless it commanded a majority of the people's representatives, and that no Governor should overrule any ministry which enjoyed the popular confidence.

After the establishment of the federal régime, this principle was in force throughout the whole Dominion. Temptations to forget or disregard it, nevertheless, did not fail to present themselves. Shortly after his arrival in Canada, Lord Dufferin was assailed by the Opposition of the day for hearkening to the advice of his responsible ministers. But, as in the case of Lord Elgin, his critics, in their cooler moments, acknowledged that he had been true to the spirit of the Constitution. Again, when the Marquis of Lorne, from conscientious scruples or delicacy, shrank from exercising his authority in accordance with the wishes of his ministry, and thought it well to lay the question at issue before the Government at Home, the reply that he received from the Colonial Secretary was explicit as to the duty of following the opinion of his cabinet.

In fact, the Sovereign (or the Sovereign's representative) and the Ministry are, as far as the people is concerned, an absolute unity, for all that is done in the name of the former the latter is responsible. To whom? To the people's elected representatives, who, in turn, have to answer to the people for their words and acts. Ultimately the power resides with the electorate. But Responsible Government recognizes no severance between the power and will of the Queen or Governor and those of the Cabinet. To appeal to one is to appeal to the other. The attempt to divide their functions is to assail the principle for which Britons and Canadians struggled so long, and, to succeed in such an attempt, would be to overthrow the balance of our Constitution.

Messrs. Macmillan & Co have published *in extenso* "The Recluse," which completes the triad, of which "The Prelude" and "The Excursion" are the other parts. The author's characteristics as poet and thinker are said to be "presented in an admirable epitome in the sweet and smoothly flowing fragment."



Prof. Paul Lafleur, of McGill University, has an appreciative article on Dr. Fréchette, the poet, in the last *Atlantic Monthly*.

The marriages of British peers with American heiresses will form the subject of a novel which the author of "Aristocracy" is now engaged in writing.

"The Songs of the Great Dominion" has, we are glad to learn, had a hearty reception in England as well as in Canada. Mr. Lighthall's spirited patriotism is its own reward.

"A Modern Mephistopheles," lately published by Mr. J. Theo. Robinson, of Montreal, is unlike most of Miss Alcott's works of fiction. It is a strange story, marked by originality and vigour, and is interesting in more ways than one.

The *Literary World* says it will be welcome news to the thousands who have been delighted with her "Records," to learn that Fanny Kemble has written a novel. The scene is laid in the Berkshire hills of Massachusetts. It will be published shortly by Henry Holt & Co.

We are glad to learn that Mr. J. M. Le Moine's new volume, "The Explorations of Jonathan Oldbuck, F.G.S.Q., in Eastern Latitudes," has already had an extensive sale. It is one of the most interesting and valuable of his admirable and patriotic series. We hope to have more to say of it before long.

Landor's "Pentameron," Poe's "Tales and Essays," and "Political Orations," edited, respectively, by H. Ellis, Ernest Rhys and William Clarke, are the latest issues of the Camelot series of Walter Scott, 24 Warwick Lane, London. The firm is represented in Canada by W. J. Gage, Toronto, and W. Drysdale & Co., Montreal.

Mrs. Deland, the clever author of "John Ward, Preacher," is said to be a rather pretty, little, plump and very pleasant-faced woman of about thirty. She looks upon life, and especially upon literature, as very solemn affairs indeed, and there is little of the *insouciance* and superficial brilliance and brightness of the modern American woman-novelist about her.

Lovell's Canadian Copyright Series, every work in which is published by arrangement with the author, to whom, moreover, a royalty is always paid, comprises "The Wing of Azrael," by Mona Caird; "The Fatal Phryne," by F. C. Philips; "Derrick Vaughan, Novelist," by Edna Lyall; "The Search for Basil Lyndhurst," by Rosa Nouchette Carey; "The Luck of the House," by Adeline Sergeant, and "Sophie Carmine," by John Strange Winter. Several others are announced.

"Acadian Legends and Lyrics," by Arthur Wentworth Eaton, is the latest addition to our growing library of Canadian song. It is brought out in handsome form by Messrs. White & Allen, of London and New York, and does credit to the author and to Canada. A review of the book will appear in our next number. The Rev. A. W. H. Eaton, who is at present doing duty in Boston, Mass., has won high praise for another work, "The Heart of the Creeds: Historical Religion in the Light of Modern Thought." It was published by Messrs. C. P. Putnam & Sons, and has reached a second edition.

We find the following appreciative reference to one of our prized contributors in a late issue of the *Portland Transcript*: We note the entrance of another singer to the growing choir of the Dominion, and mark a distinct and individual voice ringing sweet and clear down on that shore of mine, the fairest, most romantic of the Maritime. Mrs. Sophie Almon Hensley, daughter of the late Rev. Henry Pryor Almon, D.C.L., and the recent bride of Hubert A. Hensley, Esq., of Stellarton, N.S., is the singer in question, and the author of a little volume of songs, sonnets and rondeaux, printed for private, but worthy of an extensive, circulation.

Mr. Theodore Watts, the leading literary critic of the *Athenaeum*, and the intimate friend of Dante Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, and most of the great poets of our time, is remarkable for having obtained, and deservedly, a widespread reputation without having published a single volume. To the newly started *Magazine of Poetry*, published at Buffalo, Mr. Mackenzie Bell will contribute an article about him, prefixed to a selection from his poems. Mr. Bell is well known as the author of "Old Year Leaves," a volume of poetry, which obtained high commendation from the British literary press, and of "Charles Whitehead: a Monograph," biographical and critical.

A gentleman well on in years, the possessor of a thin, sensitive, refined and well-cut face, may often, says a contemporary, be seen on the trains of the Hudson River Railway between New York and Yonkers. The shape of his silk hat is a little old-fashioned and the general air of the man is distinctive and withal aristocratic and intellectual. He scans his morning paper with an eye as clear as when, nearly three decades ago, it epitomized the follies and foibles of New York society in that brilliant satire "Nothing to Wear." This old gentleman is none other than William Allen Butler, whose *Flora McFlimsy* will ever stand as the classical American appellation for the "girl of the period."