

by shutting up or exterminating them; but the weak prey upon themselves in obedience to the original natural ordinance, because there is no social power to eliminate them otherwise. If the remedy is a melancholy one, so is the disease; and humanity appreciates it on account of the benefits flowing from the general law of elimination of which it is an important factor. Nature applies her sharp but merciful knife to the sore which society shrinks from touching.

A third classification has been mentioned in this paper under the head of Moral Responsibility. A better heading might be chosen, but this will suffice for the present purpose. Suicide is often spoken of as the last refuge of cowardice. Now, cowardice is a complex weakness, and the assertion in relation to suicide lacks precision. Courage is not merely the negation of fear, but a quality of a higher character quite independent of the offices of the senses. Take a suicide which is not the consequence of sudden impulse but of a deliberate act of the will, and it will be hard to associate cowardice with such an act. Let the possible justification of self-destruction in certain special circumstances be discussed by those competent to decide the point. Without touching their province it is permissible to affirm that there have been, and probably will be to the end of time, suicides which appeal to the admiration of the world rather than to its judgment. There are characters so created and endowed as to have a conception of intellectual and moral dignity so high and uncompromising that they will suffer death by their own hands rather than submit to degradation. They feel responsible for the untarnished brightness of their high prerogative. They may be wrong; but they command our admiration all the same. The death of Brutus was not that of a coward, and Antony expresses the conviction of all men when he exclaims, "This was a man!" Women have taken their own life in order to protect their honour—and who has condemned the deed? Who would dare to condemn it? Lucretia, environed with her virtue and the light of classic fame, will receive the homage of the generations to the end of time and history; but the Roman matron is not the only heroine who has sacrificed her life for the sake of that which is dearer. And Lucretia's sacrifice, too, was a bootless one—an *ex post facto* oblation on virtue's altar.

The old law, as has been remarked, shields the *felo-de-se* behind a merciful fiction; a newer civilization has abolished the legal penalty and discarded the useless fiction. It is time that moral lawgivers were as compassionate as the one, or as just as the other. He who takes his own life incurs a tremendous responsibility, which is accounted for between him and God. Our judgment should be one of silence, at least. P. L. McDERMOTT.

#### PARIS LETTER.

THE fair sex are the strongest advocates for incineration in place of burial. Paris has now her mortuary furnaces in full working order. All objections against cremation have been of no avail; the possibility of consuming the evidence of crime by incineration of the dead has not been allowed to stand in the way till a means was discovered to remove that possibility. The French Academy of Sciences has a reward-prize of 100,000 fr. outstanding since several years, to whoever discovers an infallible means for recognizing when a person is dead. Yet of the stacks of essays sent to the Academy, the prize is still to be won. But the non-discovery of the test for death does not prevent the presumed departed from being interred all the same.

In the official crematory tariff, the poor have this advantage over the rich, that they will be calcined free, but their ashes will be cast into a common bin, in the Colombarium or Pigeon-Hole Mausoleum. A uniform fee of 50 frs. will be charged for the actual process of incineration in the case of non-indigent families. This will include the right to a pigeon hole for the ashes during five years, but the relatives of the consumed must provide the urn to receive the *cendres*, and that ranges in eight scales, from 200 frs. down to "this style" at 12 frs. To encourage the plan of incineration, reductions of certain fees will be made for bodies exhumed to be burned, or for remains brought from elsewhere to Paris to be so treated. Nothing has been decided as to what destiny awaits those ashes after the expiration of their right of pigeon-hole asylum during five years. A pamphlet recently published advocates that all the ashes should be employed to fertilize mother-earth, who gave them, and that every spring, the accumulated ashes should be divided between the local agricultural societies, to be presented to a selection of indigent farmers. Imagine the ashes of a celebrity applied as a fertilizer to Swedish turnips, mangold-wurzel or drumhead cabbages!

Strained attention is given to the significance of the visit between the Czar and the Emperor of Germany. Ostensibly, it was a return of politeness, and the occasion was sought to be improved by Prince Bismarck to discuss propositions for settling a few of the burning questions of the hour. The Chancellor does not appear to have walked round the Czar, or secured him for the triple alliance. It is pointed out that while Emperor William drank his guest's health in German, the Czar replied in French. The Emperor's allusion, on a later occasion, to the feats of arms accomplished in common, by their grand sires over Napoleon I., was not reciprocated by the Czar. Further, when the latter received the Ambassadors, he got rapidly through the presentations, till the representative of France appeared to whom he spoke during fifteen minutes. Sum total;

the termination of the visit must have been a grateful relief to both guest and host. It is quite clear the Czar tacitly leans to France—a duel against a triple alliance, the end of both being peace—and to make "sicker," augmented bloated armaments.

The old parliament of France legally expired on the 15th inst. at sun rise, so it is the new chamber that rules the roost. The non-elected ancient deputies cease henceforth to have the right of free railway travelling over France, and their 25 frs. a day for doing nothing, or kicking up rows, not to forget the free run at a Pantagruelian buffet in the chamber, where members can fortify themselves for twenty-four hours. It is curious to observe, how some little great men have collapsed since the electors turned them adrift. It is perhaps that wound inflicted on their *amour propre*—which reduces them to native insignificance—that they feel most. The new chamber will consist of 363 Republicans, instead of 366, and of 221 Oppositionists, in place of 210. Perhaps that is all the change the general elections have effected.

The Maniaists of the 1889 Exhibition will have some concrete souvenirs of their fad preserved. The Grévin Museum of Wax Works is to create a special department, where the Me de Caire, the Javanese, etc., will be reproduced. A few of the Hungarian restaurants, including also that of Roumania, are to be taken up by a joint stock company, and established permanently in Paris. The Russian restaurant is already a success in advance. It is to be opened on the Boulevard des Italiens—a name many Chauvinists desire to change—and will have departments and separate entrances for three classes of clients. Beyond these, there are no other relics of the big show likely to survive the 6th November. No foreign aliment or beverage has taken root in French manners and customs.

On 7th October, 1870, Gambetta, accompanied by his friend Spuller, now Foreign Secretary, quit Paris in a balloon. The Prussians sent bullets and shells at the balloon, but it escaped, and descended at Favières, near Amiens. The balloon, the *Armand-Barbès*, was anchored to an old oak, situated on an estate owned by a Royalist. The latter a few years ago felled all the timber, and though the woodman was implored to spare that tree, and not to touch a single bough, yet it was cut down. Still the spot of ground where the balloon rested was purchased by some of Gambetta's friends, who erected a monument thereon, and that has just been inaugurated, commemorative of the descent. I happened to be in Amiens when Gambetta arrived, after quitting the balloon, when he delivered his famous speech, calling upon all patriots, "to make pact with death," rather than be vanquished. Alas! the pact had the same fate as the "not an inch of territory, not a stone of a fortress" of Jules Favre.

The Panama Canal Co. is still remembered. A Commission appointed to inquire into what can be done with it, and composed of engineers, is examining the whole situation. Public opinion views the entire subject with profound indifference, and the shareholders keep demanding the liquidators' report as to how the money went. Odd, the name of M. de Lesseps is never heard now; he is rarely to be met with in society, and if he does happen to be present at a ceremony, there is no alacrity shown to place him in the highest seat of the Synagogue. I came across a few days ago, an old cartoon, depicting M. de Lesseps, in the halcyon days of Panama, bending under an umbrella, nearly battered in by a Pactolus shower of gold; he was all smiling; and peering out of his breast-coat pocket was the head of John Bull, as red as a turkey cock from rage at the success of the taken-up loans.

In the journal of a suicide, by charcoal-fumes, the victim gave himself 65 minutes to die; he was nearly up to time, as his hand ceased recording at 55 minutes. Z.

#### INDIAN SUMMER.

WHY call them melancholy, these bright days,  
The euthanasia of the aged year?  
When Nature dyes her garments, worn and sere,  
And hides decay in glorifying haze.  
Even stormy Winter's near approach conveys  
No gloomy fancy to my mind nor fear;  
But welcome vistas of unwonted cheer,  
And promised joys its frosty front displays.  
Then rugged Toil and Care from troubling cease,  
And literature's wide realm inviteth me,  
With lyre that long for Labour's silence waits;  
To this white heaven of leisure, song and peace,  
Fair Indian Summer with her golden key,  
Unlocks the rainbow-tinted, pearly gates.

WILLIAM MCGILL.

#### MONTREAL LETTER.

THE Annual Committee of the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers met on the 24th, 25th and 26th instant, with morning, afternoon and evening sessions, graced by the presence of the Hon. G. Ouimet, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and attended by a large number of educational men. The meetings were held in the Normal School, and papers and discussions covered a varied and interesting field. The Association being entitled to an increased representation on the Council of Public Instruction, three new members were chosen by ballot for recommendation to the government. One of these was appointed, and the other two vacancies were filled up regardless of the ballot, in connection with which the committee entrusted with the election reported that "having

so far succeeded they did not consider their duty accomplished, inasmuch as the gentlemen appointed, although representative teachers in whom they all have confidence, were not after all chosen by the committee itself, do not hold their position at the will of the Association, and are not directly responsible to it." The number of pensioners during the year was 234, 51 men and 173 women, and the sum appropriated in this necessary department was \$21,653.

A paper on physiology by Dr. Reed of the Normal school illustrated the action of the human heart by that of a sheep. In one upon Latin Pronunciation Dr. Eaton of McGill college adhered to the Roman system which has been adopted by almost every University in England and America; but the discussion elicited the opinion that since Latin was a dead language and becoming dead and dead-er, the time of the Provincial Staff would be more wisely devoted to some more practical end. A paper on Manual training, by Prof. Boney, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science in McGill College, advocated the introduction of a greater proportion of technical education; but some members thought that in districts where more attention had been given to manual training, it had come to be regarded as the chief, if not the only claim upon the time of the schools. Dr. MacVicar, of Toronto, contributed a spirited and pointed paper on "The Products of True Education," and a lady member of the Association, engaged in practical kindergarten work, advanced, in a most winningly enthusiastic manner, the claims of her own special department. A committee of gentlemen, peculiarly qualified, have been for months occupied in examining the various systems of drawing books with a view to compiling one suitable for the general aims and methods of Canadian instruction. In presenting their results to the Convention, they were met by a counter current of opposition in favour of existing American systems. In a discussion however, upon a resolution in the direction of a text-book on Canadian history, the same men were enthusiastic in their desire to awaken patriotism. Probably when some patriots take the pains to compile said text-book, a similar under-current of opposition will then arise in support of a Canadian history prepared in the United States. In a discussion upon subjects of study, dissatisfaction was expressed with the standard of examinations for the A. A. degree, and the desire to have it raised was evident. The venerable Dr. Home warmly explained that such an elevation of standard was next to impossible in this province, as the sixth form, once the pride of the High school, had been abolished by the Principal of McGill College in order that it might become the first year in the University. Now, the High school has only a good fifth form. The qualifications of teachers as temperance and anti-tobacco men (and women), the grading of elementary education by annual promotion examinations, the increase in numbers and in pay of the profession, and other topics of universal and individual scope, filled up the programme, and the Convention was invited to a reception in the Redpath Museum on Friday evening.

The Ministerial Association, at a recent meeting, adopted the following programme for discussion during their winter sessions:—

- Deaconess—The need and duties of such an order of workers in Protestant churches.
- Evangelists and evangelistic services—their place and value.
- Organic Union of the sections of the Christian church—its desirability, possibility and basis.
- Sensationalism, (good and bad) in the pulpit.
- Christian Science—its errors and dangers.
- Jesuitism—Some of the more reprehensible parts of its doctrines.
- Modern Christian Apologetics.
- In what sense is Christian doctrine progressive.
- Christianity viewed as an ethical system.
- How should the church deal with amusements?
- Social purity—how best to treat it in the pulpit.
- The new theology.
- Plymouthism and Adventism.

In the Montreal Presbytery attention was called to the unequal distribution of churches in the city. In the neighbourhood of Dominion Square they cluster in unnecessary profusion, and the tendency seems to be to accumulate more and more in this vicinity. A proposal was before the reverend fathers that one or two churches should be induced to consider themselves superfluous, and to face the advisability of moving. Erskine Church, one of the largest and most popular, with perhaps the finest spirit of Christian work and Christian liberty, is the favourite for the experiment.

The Methodist Church has just opened a handsome new college as an institute for their mission work. The building is one of tasteful economy, suited to present needs, and capable of development with future requirements. Under the presidency of the Rev. Principal Hall, devotional services on the 20th, congratulatory addresses on the 21st, and a social evening on the 22nd, inaugurated the auspicious event.

An incident suggestive of infinite possibilities took place on the 24th inst, when a conference was held between the Dominion Alliance and the Knights of Labour. The object of the meeting was the discussion of the best method of combating intemperance, and the joint societies may congratulate each other upon the step thus taken. Frequent meetings and united action were resolved upon, and a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Municipal Council to crave that all saloons within the city limits be closed at seven o'clock on Saturdays.

The Countess of Meath has paid us a short but appreciated visit. Her Ladyship addressed various Sunday Schools explaining the principles of the Ministering Chil-