

and to make use of its faculties during the last half century or so, and every day it is developing such fresh powers and making such new discoveries that it seems but a child-world as yet, and most of us, I fancy, would like to linger awhile to see what it will be like when it has grown to be the big man-world of the great future.

Every day something is happening to open our eyes wider, and to cause us to lift our hands in renewed wonder. We have got over steam and electricity, those giant forces of the new birth, which have changed the face of the world within the memory of the living. It is already difficult to realize the condition of things when they did not play their now familiar part. We have ever accepted quietly and as a matter of course the wonder of the spectrum—that most exquisite of scientific triumphs, which, by the simple means of a triangular piece of glass—enables us to determine the composition of the sun and the planets, and to detect the presence of poison in the stomach of a dead man! Already we are off and away on new tricks, and busy in the realisation of novel ideas. Foremost amongst these may be noted the invention for seeing by telegraph. It is not enough that we have conquered the lightning, and made it play the part of Mercury, in carrying our messages from one side of the world to the other. We have already divined that it is capable of more than this. We can make it utter the messages aloud in the voices of those who send them! But something more remained to be accomplished, and science has been equal to the effort. To read and to hear by telegraph were almost incredible achievements. But to see! That is the crowning triumph. It annihilates space more effectually than anything yet attempted. To stand at the end of a wire and look on the faces of those at the other end of it, though half the world divide them from us, is a feat surpassing anything that the imagination of the past ever conjured up. The most that the authors of the "Arabian Nights" dreamed of was the conveyance of a person bodily through the air, as when the Prince sat on the enchanted carpet which bore him over land and sea leagues away. The nearest to the idea was the enchanted mirror, in which were beheld scenes and persons in far-off climes; but then it was understood, even by those who looked into the mirror, that the object presented was unreal, and merely conjured up by magical art dealing with the "shows of things." When Faust beheld Marguerite as she sat spinning at her wheel, it was a piece of diablerie performed by Mephistopheles, and no more real than is the vision of Helen of Troy, who has been dead thousands of years. But science gives us the means of seeing and conversing with real persons, whatever the distance by which we may be separated from them, and so reaches the limits of the conceivably wonderful.

It is a very pretty question whether we have conquered the bulk of the myteries of Nature available for the use of man, or whether we only stand as yet on the threshold of a vast scientific future. Like many other questions, it is the more fascinating from the impossibility of any answer being forthcoming. This much, however, may be surmised with certainty, whether or not new initial forces will be discovered, there can be no doubt that those who come later into the world, and have experience of it in its more mature state, will have the benefit of new combinations of known forces, which will help greatly to smooth the path of life, and facilitate the intercourse between individuals and nations. Science is the good Fairy of the world, and may yet have many a blessing in store for those who woo her with becoming ardour. Certain it is that we have not exhausted all the possibilities of what she has already given us, and every year must yield something fresh either in the way of discovery or invention.

It would seem, too, that the world itself is destined to present a new aspect to those who come after us. One of our latest manias is for cutting and hacking the world about so as to fit it to serve our purpose more nearly and compactly. The success of the experiment of the Isthmus of Suez, by the severing of which a short cut to India was obtained, has been sufficiently encouraging to set us thinking about the possibility of getting from one sea to another without rounding a cape. Already two schemes are on foot in connection with the Isthmus of Panama, which lies so invitingly in the midst of the American continent, and seems only to need a slice with a knife to enable us to reach the further ocean within a few hours. This sort of thing used to be left to Nature, who certainly has made some striking alterations in the world's surface in her time, but Nature is slow in her operations. She wants thousands of years to effect a desirable improvement, the benefits of which we desire to realize out of hand. Modern impatience cannot wait for her, especially as it has no guarantee that she will effect what we want just in the way we want it if we allow her ever so much time. She has before now done many things which were, to say the least of it, inconvenient, in the way of submerging islands, silting-up rivers, and breaking down bulwarks essential to the preservation of property, in which respectable, well-to-do people had vested interests. The results of leaving these matters to Nature are often very questionable; but it is not at all certain that when man takes such operations in hand he will do much better. This is strikingly illustrated by the suggested Panama cutting. There are many things to be considered in such an undertaking, and one point which I think has not received consideration. The theory has been broached that should an opening be made through the narrow

ligature which unites the North and South Americas, the Gulf Stream will in all probability avail itself of this new opening, and take a fresh direction. The result of this it is scarcely possible to foretell. Deprived of this source of heat and fertilization, the British Isles might lapse into the condition of other countries occupying the same latitude, and the wonderful climate, which is their glory, would be gone.

These illustrations will serve to show that there is very much which should make a reasonable man accept the position that he is really somewhat in advance of his time rather than behind it. The glory of the world, so far from having departed, is perhaps not yet realized, while on the other hand, science may bring about changes infinitely curious and important, and in respect of which every one must desire to be in the position of him who chronicled the adventures of John Gilpin, and who expressed the wish as to his future exploits, "when he next doth ride abroad, may I be there to see." The future of the world will never be realized by this generation, and it is idle to speculate on the forms which it will assume in the years that are to come. In all probability, much will be done to relieve human labour and to ameliorate the condition of humanity generally; but, on the other hand, of this we may rest assured—humanity will remain the same in all its essential respects. It will be animated by the same hopes, stirred by the same passions, subject to the same ailments, and pursue in the main the same path from the cradle to the grave. Science will shed around the man of the future many blessings; but, like the man of the past, he will have to accept his fate as he finds it, and to work out the great problem for himself. The changes wrought will lie chiefly on the face of things; but it would be pleasant to know what forms those changes will assume, and for us, "the airs of all the ages," to be assured that, even though we do not linger to participate in the good things, we shall be able to know what is comprised in our possible heritage.

THE FRENCH PROTESTANT PEOPLE IN MONTREAL.

(Concluded from our last issue.)

PARTY SPIRIT.

We now make some general remarks upon the work of evangelization in stigmatizing the sectarian spirit which is being continually manifested therein. For instance, a zealous worker for himself but not for the Saviour, who evidently disagrees with what St. Paul says on this point in his first epistle to the Corinthians, is constantly to be seen in the homes of members of denominations different from his own. Another, who believes in the advancement of the interests of the church rather than of Christ, is as unscrupulous in the means he employs to add to the church. The great want in the administration as well as in the evangelization departments of this work is that of men who while loyal to their denomination, put Christ first and denomination last. These men are very few and far between. The spirit of party everywhere prevails. In very many cases, self is put first, sect next, and the Saviour last. This is a sad statement to make, but it is made thus frankly that a change may be brought about as soon as possible. Our Saviour prayed that his followers might be one, in order that the world might believe that He had sent Him. Let us be profoundly convinced that our fellow countrymen, so largely citizens of the great Catholic world, will not believe on the Christ of the gospel until we not only present this prayer of our Saviour, but *honestly work* to bring about an answer to it.

MORAL CONDITION OF MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH CHURCHES.

In this connection we may say that we have met with cases of converts from the Church of Rome of most indifferent moral character, and on the other hand we have come across many whose moral life would do credit to any evangelical congregation. We have found men and women holy in life and active in spreading the doctrines of their new faith among the followers of their old one. We might speak, for instance, of the very efficient labours of a French Canadian lady, not a member of any one of the churches referred to, but specially interested in one of them. A convert of Father Chiniquy, she joined an English congregation with which her husband is connected, and has since that time, without fee or reward, devoted herself with Apostolic fervour and zeal to the moral and material advancement of her fellow countrymen and countrywomen. Or I might refer to that good mechanic who has, in spite of persecution, patiently persevered in his profession and practice of Protestantism, who as an office-bearer of one of the churches to which reference has been made, has visited regularly its members, and has, with much acceptance to those whom he has visited, read and prayed with them. I might also speak of another case of a convert to Protestantism, well read in religious and general literature, with a very good knowledge, ecclesiastical, commercial and political of his countrymen, who remains faithful to the tenets of his new faith and promises to be useful therein. Many other cases present themselves, but these three suffice as specimens to show that the Protestant movement of a few years past has been successful in working a change for the better in the hearts and lives of many men and women.