

frown on his face, but always with the same equivocal smile! We like to listen to him, he may be laughing at us, but then it is his mission to laugh. Your Juvenal is too free with his whip, we are willing to be tickled, but not lashed.

But some doubtful one will exclaim truth is possible to the persifleur,—certainly, and yet if he has really grasped the full meaning of truth, his mockery is born either of artifice or of malice. If he sees deep down into the heart of nature and laughs, he is an imbecile or a fiend. No! the jest would die away under the face-to-face glance of a stern reality. The true seer does not mock, he is too absorbed in that which defies mockery. Your persifleur with his "quid vetat," is excellent company, but to take him for a guide, for an apostle to yourself, that indeed were folly not untinged with crime.

So much for the method dismissed thus in serious though hurried fashion, and now we must glance at the ultimate aim of persiflage. We must look for some guiding formula, the ethical result of this elaborated philosophy. Once more we turn to Horace:

*Nil admirari prope res est una, Numici,  
Solaque, quae possit facere et servare  
beatum*

Again the warm greetings of acclamation and assent. This chill negativeness springing from persistent mockery is welcome to very many who are incapable of sincerity even in persiflage. We stand alone, isolated and scornful. We have learned the one supreme lesson of all—Il n'y a point d'homme nécessaire. So they mutter swelling with personal pride.

Nil admirari!—a barren gospel this and only arrived at by means of a half knowledge. Sympathy, not scorn, is the strong motive power of life, and sympathy is the result not of weakness, but of strength. Persiflage is a fashion which may last a long time, but which can never take deep root. For belief is necessary to the heart—why it is so we know not, but so it is.

"Chercher le cote ridicule des choses," exclaims George Sand, "c'est en decouvrir le cote faible et illogique." Granted a thousand times, but it is not the real mystery to discover the nobler and stronger side? Has not persiflage taken to itself the task of making vivid what lies above the surface instead of revealing that which lies beneath?

### REMEMBERED LOVE.

A weariness of sweet familiar words,  
Of oft-repeated, oft-remembered songs,  
Of duties fingered till they seemed as wrongs  
That cut the aching heart like sharpened swords,  
A weariness of tender binding cords  
That passion of subtle love, in love so winds  
About his very own, the while he blinds  
Their eyes to any but his crested lords.  
A weariness that Helen lightly sped,  
For with her magic fingers o'er the keys,  
She woke a sudden stir of memories,  
That, thronging from the place where they had fed,  
Burst like a storm of blossoms roughly shed

From over-arching, long-forgotten trees.  
COLIN A. SCOTT, Ottawa.

By far the best part of a man's culture is self-culture.—Pryde.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### SOME COMMENTS.

To the Editor of The Week:

My Dear Sir,—I did not thank you as I should have done for your kind acknowledgment of my addenda to my Waifs, and your cordial approval of my conclusion. My editorial friend of the Law Journal was rather critical from a theological point of view and seemed to think I had exalted the love of our fellow-men rather too much. I think he was less correct as well as less kind than you: for I said the good Samaritan was a good Christian without knowing it—and so said the Master. My old friend, Judge Black, of the Vice Admiralty Court, used to tell of a Yankee client of his, to whom he once quietly expressed his surprise, that while very straight laced in matters of religion, he was rather the reverse in secular affairs; and who defended himself by saying, that Godward he believed he was upright and perpendicular—but manward, he owned he was sometimes rather slantindicular: a not uncommon idiosyncrasy with some of us.

I see our cousins are beginning to find out the little difficulties attending their two standards of value, and in the April Forum, one gentleman proposes to meet the trouble by having three commissioners in New York, who shall day by day establish the relative value of silver and gold, by which the Government shall be governed in paying all its obligations—as to which there is no other express condition: an honest provision enough, but rather troublesome of application. Our own Government has done well by giving us plenty of our own silver, limiting the amount in any one payment, and I feel rather proud of what I said as to the excellence of our currency over Uncle Sam's. I feel gratified, too, at the turn the great arbitration is taking in the hands of Sir Charles Russell: the points I made in my article in the Law Journal are not very unlike those he has made, with terrible effect, in his demolition of the American case. The mare clausam, and the ownership of wild animals come off less than even second best. But I hope the gentlemen on the other side will keep their temper, hard as it may be, under the circumstances, as Sir Charles puts them. The French President seems inclined to keep order among the English speaking members—between whom as I said, a small unkindness would be a great offence, especially if exhibited before our continental friends.

I like your last number—you are getting less of a newspaper and more of a review and critical journal, and a good one—all right—sic itur ad astra—or at any rate your movement is upward, and onward. *Esto perpetua*. "Excelsior" is as good a motto for Canadians as for Americans. Some of your contributors have immense power—triple expansion and non-condensing engines, are they! I like your present form, too, it is much easier to handle and to read than the immense sheets of which some other papers are proud. Yours truly,

Ottawa.

G. W. WICKSTEED.

### FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN HIGH SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of The Week:

Sir,—While we are deeply imbued with the spirit of University Extension, and other schemes for the widening of popular culture, let us not overlook the claims of the greatest power among us—the public school teacher. Those who are looking forward with eagerness to the day when the careless or inaccurate use of English among Canadians, shall be a thing of the past, look more for help in the movement to the public school teacher, than to any other source. As the teacher is careless or lax in his speech, so are the inhabitants of the surrounding district. No one has so wide-spread or far reaching an influence for good or evil upon the speech of Canadians as he has. Since, then, it is to

the public school teacher we must look for the regeneration of the popular tongue, it will not be out of the way for us here to consider his fitness to bear so great a responsibility.

Speaking some time ago with an eminent educationist, who has much intercourse with teachers throughout the province, he remarked that so few of the teachers of Ontario could be considered fit models for their pupils in the pure and precise use of English. This seems to be a crucial test. It will be in vain for us to look to the public school teacher for aid in eradicating the loose and corrupt use of English in Canada if such teacher is not unimpeachable in that respect.

And now we turn to seek the cause of this defect among public school teachers, and we find it in the inadequate time given to the study of English in our high schools. That the English course is far too limited is evident to all; that its extension would have a very great and desirable effect on the speech of Canadians, goes without saying. But the question arises: how would it be possible to extend one branch of our already over-stocked high school course, without seriously neglecting the others, all of which have strong and crying claims to the attention of the future teacher. Let us consider a moment. Are the claims of every subject on the curriculum for teachers' certificates so very urgent? We know that history has a strong and debatable right to its position; science also. And we know that so long as the study of a deductive science is recognized to be essential to the proper development of brain-power, mathematics shall hold its own against all comers.

But has the reader ever thought what necessity there is for foreign languages on that curriculum? Foreign languages have for many years held a pre-eminent place in the studies for teachers' certificates, a place which decidedly over-shadowed that of some other subjects whose claims were much more apparent, a fact for which I can in no other way account, than by supposing that in high schools, the same as in some Young Ladies' Academies, the study of French or German has served to give a flavor of elegance and accomplishment to what would otherwise appear a very unsound and altogether superficial education.

Two years ago the amount of time allotted to the study of a foreign language, in the forms where pupils were prepared for third and second class certificates, far exceeded the time devoted to English. At the present day English is given an equal place with French or German; some schools, I understand, are now giving it the greater amount of attention. But the case remains: a great proportion of the time-table of studies in high schools and Collegiate Institutions is taken up with a foreign language. One cannot help thinking the time spent in learning rules of construction and composition, of French for instance, would be better devoted to the study of the style and conceptions of the best of our English writers? Assuredly a thorough knowledge of the form and literature of a foreign tongue is essential to a perfect education; so also is essential a wide knowledge of the principal arts and sciences. But that the education of a public school teacher acquired during a so limited stay at a high school, cannot be a perfect one is obvious.

The misuse and mispronunciation of words so common among public school teachers, can never be remedied or avoided by the study of a foreign grammar,—only by the imitation of good English models.

How many of the students who leave our high schools to become public school teachers ever make use of their knowledge of French or German, ever through it become acquainted with the French or German poets, dramatists, or philosophers? I have no doubt some of them subsequently become acquainted with French and German literature,—in some cases well acquainted. But how do they thus become acquainted? Is it not through translations? And one might even venture to say, had they never studied either French or German in their high-school course, by their deeper study of the English classics