

criticism and encouragement by the press, the patronage of wealth in the purchase of works of art at home, instead of abroad, and the creation of a national spirit in the United States.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN ENGLAND.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—I had occasion once before to notice the unreliable character of the accounts of the political situation in England transmitted to this side of the water for Irish-American consumption.

We have lately been assured by the American Press that the Government of Lord Salisbury is doomed, that it is almost in its death-throes, and that dissension has broken out and is increasing between the Conservatives and the Liberal Unionists. Strangely enough, we are told at the same time that the Government is about to make a desperate appeal to the country; as though any Government in its senses would appeal to the country when the tide of opinion was visibly running against it and a large body of its supporters were disaffected.

Upon the most trying occasion, the division on the proclamation of the League, the Government has had a majority of seventy-eight, a larger majority than Peel or Palmerston commanded in the plenitude of his power; while it has the hearty support of the House of Lords which was less hearty in its support of Peel, and to Palmerston was adverse. The Parliament in which the Government commands this majority has nearly six years to run. The Crimes Act apparently is about to be resolutely put in force, and if it has the effect of reinstating lawful authority in place of terrorist domination, and of restoring the security of life, property, and industry, the people of Great Britain, who are not yet in love with anarchy, boycotting, and murder, will probably be satisfied with that result, and their satisfaction will lend fresh strength to the Government.

The absence of Mr. John Morley in Switzerland might in itself have sufficed to warn political prophets that the fall of the Government and the triumph of Mr. Gladstone were not immediately at hand.

Within the last few days I have heard from two leading Liberal Unionists in England. Both of them comment with perfect freedom on recent mishaps and the dangerous points of the situation; but it is evident that neither of them has the slightest idea that the fate of the Government or any other great catastrophe is impending.

Instead of a rupture between the Conservative Government and the Liberal Unionists, I have the strongest reason for believing that the fusion so long and as I cannot help thinking so unfortunately delayed, is now actually at hand.

A letter just received from one whose observation I trust confirms my impression as to the bye elections. They have been turned, he says, largely by the return to the party lines of Liberals who are Unionists and at the general election either voted for the Union or abstained, but who now believe on the faith of what has been said by Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Trevelyan, that Mr. Gladstone's Bill is dead and that they may therefore safely give a party vote. My correspondent remarks that every Gladstonian candidate comes forward pledged to resist Mr. Gladstone's original scheme.

Yours faithfully,

GOLDWIN SMITH.

### THE MINERAL WEALTH OF THE LAKE SUPERIOR DISTRICT.

[The following letter addressed by Dr. Selwyn, Chief of the Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada, to Mr. Thomas A. Keefer, of Port Arthur, is reproduced from the Port Arthur *Sentinel*. Such testimony to the great mineral value of the district, from so competent and unexceptionable an authority as Dr. Selwyn, is peculiarly valuable.]

MY DEAR MR. KEEFER,—I have much pleasure before leaving Port Arthur in expressing to you in writing the very great gratification my visit to the Rabbit Mountain and Beaver mining district under your kind and able escort has afforded me.

As you are aware I had visited this district on two previous occasions, the last being in the autumn of 1885, when I was at the Silver Mountain mine. At that time there was not much being done and the veins had not been opened sufficiently to afford an opportunity to ascertain their true character, and I hesitated then to say more than that the vein matter looked exceedingly promising. Now, however, I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction that this region is traversed by a great series of true fissure veins, of most promising appearance, and many of which will almost certainly prove of immense and permanent value.

The features of the veins are especially well illustrated in the workings of the Beaver, the Rabbit Mountain, and the Porcupine mines; but there seems no reason whatever why the numerous parallel veins which occur under precisely similar conditions, but on which at present only small openings have been made, should not develop into mines as rich as those above named, and now being successfully worked. The "New Porcupine," the "Silver Creek," the "Elgin," and the "Little Pig," all present most promising indications, and there are doubtless many more yet to be discovered in the large area in the district as yet almost unexplored and covered with forest and deep soil. In any case, sufficient is now known to warrant the assertion that this region presents all the natural conditions for the development of an immensely valuable and extensive mining industry awaiting only the application of well directed energy and enter-

prise in order to secure results exceeding perhaps the most sanguine anticipations.

As regards the ores of the mines above named, and now being worked, their richness is such that it does not require to be demonstrated by assays, but the recent critical examination of the Porcupine mine ore by Mr. Brady may be referred to as particularly satisfactory, because it conclusively shows that the silver is distributed in all parts of the vein. Mr. Brady, I understand, broke samples indiscriminately from seven different places covering the length of the vein, and these separately assayed gave from six ounces to six hundred ounces to the ton, and an average of the whole of one hundred and fifty-five ounces per ton.

The softness of the country rock—a flat bedded, black argillite—and the generally well defined walls of the veins, make the cost of extraction comparatively small, a feature the importance of which is only fully recognised when the "dead ground" or "pinches," incidental to all mineral veins, have to be traversed.

In conclusion permit me to heartily congratulate you on the prominent part you have taken, and the persistent energy you have shown often under much discouragement and many adverse circumstances, in producing the present very satisfactory result, and of which you may justly feel proud. Again thanking you for the kind attention you have shown me,

I remain very sincerely yours,

Port Arthur, Aug. 15, 1887.

ALFRED R. C. SELWYN.

## MONTREAL LETTER.

FIRE has made no small havoc in our poor city during the present summer. At last, however, we may be grateful to it. That building which so long and so impertinently stood out from the adjoining ones, quite spoiling the appearance of Victoria Square, is now a smouldering ruin. Of course the corporation will buy the site of the *Herald* and other offices and we shall have in due time a much more creditable "place." Then, if by good fortune some artistic spirit should inspire the powers that be, they may discover that Her Most Gracious Majesty stands by no means in the best of positions. Indeed, she is "neither here nor there." Why not place this statue in the centre, with a fountain on either side? and, speaking of fountains, is there no rising talent we could employ to make something more picturesque than the present swimming-bath affair? It may seem paradoxical to say that because a thing appears satisfactory, this is no reason for not attempting to make it better, but surely our care should be *what* gives satisfaction. We have no right, I take it, to allow people to remain content with that which we know to be hideous. True, some seven months out of the twelve, it matters very little whether our fountains consist of a huge, ugly basin, and a shabby jet, or delicately wrought dolphins and nymphs—but is it not worth while to make our city more beautiful, even though we are able to enjoy this beauty only five months in the year?

Since we speak of town decoration, what say you to the countless styles exhibited in the new houses that are springing up like mushrooms? Has architecture gone mad? The noble disregard for the eternal fitness of things seems astounding. Mansions which should have acres of ground around them rise confidently a few feet from the street. Then again we find others the eye fairly aches to look upon: the funniest structures imaginable, going in here, and coming out there, you can't exactly tell why, with tortuous staircases, and windows in every conceivable and inconceivable position. Alas, that we are so ambitious as to wish the beauties of *all* the styles concentrated in our homes. When one has contemplated this motley array of buildings, one turns with feelings of relief to the old prints that represent Montreal in the year of our Lord 1830. Houses *were* houses in those days. Consistently ugly, yes, but unpretending, unobtrusive. They remind us of some grave, sensible old dame, a little angular and plain, clad in a seemly black gown, whom we could pass without the slightest shock to our artistic sensibilities, whereas these modern structures savour not a little of the too blooming *bourgeoise*, who is never happy unless she has all her finery on at the same time. But you must not imagine there are no *homes*, charming, ideal nooks, amongst these palaces. Let us only hope the desires and tastes which prompted their building may become more general.

THIS morning we visited the Trafalgar Institute, founded by the late Mr. Donald Ross, whose gift has been supplemented by Sir Donald Smith. It will open in September, and is intended to supply a much needed high-class preparatory school for girls desiring to enter college. A charming establishment it is, with sunny rooms and delightful grounds.

Well, I suppose we may now dispense with any Cythna's tirades on women's rights. "Those hosts of meaner cares which life's strong wings encumber" are all to be overnumbered by an army of appallingly wise thoughts—let us only hope the "meaner cares" won't suffer too much. We look with some scorn upon those institutions which teach girls little more than how to enter a room gracefully and do dainty bits of work, and yet what shall we say of the new *régime* if it present us with that saddest of anomalies—a "fine woman." "If there is anything I cannot stand," said a friend once to me, "it is 'a fine woman.'" You know what I mean—one of those "clever 'uns," who know all things, and see all things, and feel—nothing. Oh! rather let us find women after the pattern of our great grandmothers, for whom, I take it, we hold quite a romantic affection. Is it because they have left nothing behind them but funny old samplers, quaint teapots, and perhaps a portrait where we may see all a woman should be—"sweet-faced" and sympathetic, and gravely coquettish.

Montreal, August 29, 1887.