

Happit heids aneath the plaidie,  
In the howe ayont the linn.

Sae when nicht the earth is cleedin',  
An' the wold is silent a',  
When a Han' the stars is leadin'  
Like a flock the west awa';  
I wad fain a tryst be keepin',  
Free o' yammer an' o' din,  
Wi' a bonnie lassie creepin'  
To the howe ayont the linn.

## A FLOWER.

It cam' wi' a glint o' the scenes langsyne  
Frae the hills that I ca' my ain,  
An' the glens that aye wi' my dreams maim twine,  
In the howes o' my waukrife brain.  
Nae doubt 'twas a feckless thing tae sen',  
But it thrilled my heart forsooth  
Wi' a nameless joy that few can ken,  
That flow'r frae the hame o' my youth.

The "Ballad of the Covenanters" might be also quoted, except that it is a unity of vigorous writing, which does not admit of dissection. More amenable is the beautiful song commencing:—

The lost langsyne! O, the lost langsyne!  
Wi' the daylight sae sweet an' the gloamin' sae fine,  
The heart yirns aye, an' the thocht winna tyne,  
For the years far awa' i' the lost langsyne.

That the musical car and artistic instinct of the author do not depend on dialect, however, is evidenced by, among others—

## THE MINNESINGER.

I stood within the shadows of the Night,  
The weary, lonesome night,  
And Sorrow, with her charioteer of Death,  
Went by with eyes afright.

And ever upward from the darken'd depths  
Of Life's sad, troubled sea  
The cry of stricken hearts came ceaseless from  
Pale lips of agony.

And joyous Hope with ruddy Mirth was there,  
In revel girt with light,  
The glow of Youth, the wail of wild Despair,  
Beneath me in the night.

And lo! in sadness bent a man of years  
Upon a broken lyre,  
Whose golden strings no breath divine had swept,  
Touch'd not with sacred fire.

An humble singer of that lowly band,  
Whose harpings, sweet withal,  
Strength have not as the bard's of finer mould,  
Who thro' the ages call.

And gazing heavenward to the silent stars,  
From earth and earthly things,  
His soul went forth in earnest, pure desire  
On faith's most holy wings:

"Father, I pray that Thou wouldst deign for me,  
Within Thy vineyard grand,  
One little flower, although of low degree,  
To raise with trembling hand.

"One little song-bud born from out the heart,  
Which unto men might be,  
Amidst the turmoil of the world's great mart,  
A still small voice from Thee."

There are a number of other poems in the volume which can be fairly commended to lovers of song.

Montreal.

ALCHEMIST.

## PARIS LETTER.

THOUGH foreign nations profess the most amicable relations between each other, that does not prevent them trying to discover the secrets of new war weapons and explosives that they may invent or manufacture. Tripone and Turpin are now in prison for selling French war material to the English—not English secrets to the French. The two Britishers just condemned to fine and imprisonment for endeavouring to corrupt artisans in the Government rifle factory at St. Etienne were guilty, but the condemned were so clumsy in their work that one is almost tempted to believe them innocence itself. The crime lay in being found out; all honest States that employ spies ought to impress on them the law of Sparta; it was not the theft, but the detection, which was reprehensible.

A well-informed journal asks: what is the use of the Colonies Department making any secrecy about the expedition of 1,200 armed Senegaliens, etc., organized and equipped a long time since by M. de Brazza, to arrive by the Eastern route by Lake Tchad, and so to central Sudan? Of course the English, the Germans, and perhaps, too, the Italians, have some time since preceded de Brazza in the race for annexing Equatorial Africa, and arranging with Emin Pasha to make him their Governor-General, in exchange for his knapsack of treaties with the tribal chiefs. The only curiosity about de Brazza's move Tchadward is his repudiating conquering the natives with cotton handkerchiefs and relying on an armed expedition, as always advocated by his former leader, Stanley.

The victimized shareholders of the Panama Canal Company implore the Chamber to deal with their petition, imploring the State—Jupiter, as ever, to aid them. The petitioners forgot that the State cannot interfere, as in 1888 M. Outrey, the French Minister at Washington, handed to Secretary Evarts the official assurance that "the French Government is in no way concerned in the Panama Canal enterprise, and in no wise proposes to interfere therein, or to give it any support, either directly or indirectly." Without a loan the moribund project cannot be set on its legs, and no loan will be looked at unless backed by the Government.

The average salary of a national school-master in France is eighty centimes daily, while the cost of a convict is eighty-two centimes per day.

Good news for Dryasdusts: The French Foreign Office has thrown open its archives for the benefit of historical research up to the period of the Revolution of July, 1830. The unworked mines will include the Congress of Vienna and the despatches of the most notable diplomats of the period. Only serious workers will be accorded the liberty to root among the musty and dusty records, but the Government does not surrender its right of veto against the publication of documents that might wound contemporary sensibilities.

A gentleman has informed me how the Circumlocution office works in France; he is a resident in Paris for a quarter of a century, and duly on the roll of ratepayers, where he figures under a name that his fathers and god-mothers never gave him, and as practising a profession to which he is a stranger, and, though not being in itself anything to be ashamed of, yet would not be a passport to the *gratin* of Upper Ten circles. Now, for twenty-four years he has requested the authorities to address him by his right name and profession—but the errors are maintained. He is an Englishman, married to an American lady, and is of opinion that the united influences of the ambassadors of Britain and the States would be powerless to correct the error. If chance puts him in the way of Baron Morenheim he will try the omnipotence of the Muscovite.

Worth, the well-known Parisian man-milliner, though English, like Redfern, has, close to the Suresnes railway station and under the guns of Mt. Valérien, his private residence. The building is a collection of chimneys, minarets, dove cots, odd campaniles and eccentric turrets, all in red brick. The house was attacked a few nights ago by burglars, who entered by a lilliputian dungeon, to help themselves to the costly bibelots, collectively worth two millions of francs. The thieves, after exchanging half-a-dozen shots with the servants, retired.

Apart from the New Year's Day mutual admiration speeches in the functionary world, France may drive the sacred nail firmly home in the Capitol, to mark the events of 1891. She has had peace within her walls and a fair measure of prosperity within her palaces. All pretenders, whose aims have been to upset the present constitution, have collapsed, including even the Naundorffs. There is nothing serious in the squabble over the question of Church and State; the union will last for many a long day; the clergy will not pin their interests to any political party, nor will the peasantry vote the abolition of their *cures*. No one wants any fighting of any kind. So long as M. Constans is Home Minister, there will be no mob violence, and the Labour question will be next to solved when the State pension for aged workmen shall have been voted.

Less frothy views prevail about the Franco-Russian "union of hearts;" many of its great expectations are being boiled down. The bottom facts of the Egyptian question are piercing French pride and prejudice. It is being discovered that it is to Europe, not to France, that England is accountable for her proceedings; that neither the Egyptians themselves nor their creditors desire the British evacuation, and that John Bull's expenditure in blood and money has a value. The best guess at truth the French on this matter indulge in is, that the English mean to stay in Egypt. No one seems inclined to throw an old slipper after the new Tariff Bill. Even protectionist-King Meline has not subscribed for a single tar-barrel in honour of his triumph, nor contributed anything towards a testimonial to himself. Events must speak, and the revenue returns tell, how the new commercial legislation will work. It is on the shoulders of Foreign Minister Ribot that will rest the heavy burden of minimizing the ultra protectionism of the legislature, and thus enable France, in the "struggle for the fittest," to face the fiscal federation of Central Europe.

The pawn offices in France are a good paying State monopoly. Since the commencement of the month those of Paris have been authorized to lend cash on public stocks and certain industrial scrip to the amount of sixty to eighty per cent. of exchange value. No fees will be charged; the loan can run for six months, but not more than 500 frs. of *valeurs* will be accepted. However, as "my aunt"—the name for "my uncle" in France, but no relative of the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street—has nearly 120 branch offices in the city, a hard-up stock holder could raise 60,000 frs. in a day; that might keep him afloat till the next day, when he could recommence. In case of a declaration of war, and the funds dropped to fifty, as in 1870, the situation of *ma tante* would be serious. It seems that we are returning to the period when the pawn office was established in France and for the use of the rich. The poor protested against that "privilege" and won. The pawn office borrows money for its working capital, and its shares rank as the safest of investments. The institution is the most secure depot for plate and jewellery, and is availed of in that end. What Anastay or Michot would think of murdering an old lady for her wealth if she was observed quitting a pawn shop? The new pledge departure will have a moralizing effect; it will obviate petty capitalists resorting to shady money changers to negotiate a temporary advance to find perhaps the next morning that the mushroom Rothschild has levanted to Brussels with your scrip as his sole impedimenta.

Dumas fils states that during his career he had but three collaborators; that is, he recast and retouched dramas by Messrs. E. de Girardin, Neuski and Durantin. On the

night of the first representations these gentlemen repudiated their altered plays. Next day when the public declared the pieces to be successful, they repudiated the help given by Dumas!

The New Year ushered in a new type of criminal—the woman burglar. Mademoiselle Sykes was caught with loot as she was quitting an apartment into which she had forced an entrance—but not in the name of the law. While being led down stairs by the house porter, she drew a jimmy from her pocket, and, striking him on the head, felled him; she had four other little crowbars on her person with a few dozens of false keys, and similar *et ceteras* in addition to purloined jewellery. The street door being locked in time, the young lady was "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confin'd." She belonged to no co-operation society of thieves, but operated solely, as Mr. Fagin would say, on account of number one.

Effects of the new Tariff Bill: horse steaks have risen two sous per lb., and a "further advance in prices" may be expected. Screws to the rescue. Z.

## THE RAMBLER.

THE problem of the Gentleman Emigrant is one which has ever been the peculiar affliction of Canada. It seems, however, that of late very many individuals of this class are preferring Virginia and the hospitable South generally to the more glacial retirement of Muskoka or Manitoulin. The "distinguished Briton" racket can be even better worked in the South—still indolent, credulous and easily impressed—than here among us, where a certain northerly shrewdness is beginning to be shown. Of course there is and always will be a demand for the English workingman, proud of his work, content in his caste, self-respecting to a degree and ambitious within a given circle, but the welcome somewhat gingerly afforded the Gentleman Emigrant is cold in comparison. The causes are not far to seek. Again and again it is pointed out that the average country-bred Englishman is absolutely ignorant of agricultural matters and unfitted for such physical toil as awaits him. But in the "Old Dominion" there is for one thing a milder climate; the roads may be bad, but there is at least little snow to clean away. What drawbacks there are seem of that half-picturesque, half barbaric nature which suits very well with the Englishman's notions of novelty and adventure. But if the Gentleman Emigrant appears to prefer Virginia to Ontario—and really we can get on very well without him—the scholar and graduate of world-renowned institutions still beams among us, and like the Tar in the Tartar, "he wants a situation, and he wants it very badly." If you ask him why he came out, he will tell you that the Old Country is overcrowded. The number of such men steadily increases. They can write conventionally on any subject; originally—on none. When they do procure "situations" they somehow fail to retain them. They are a snare and stumbling block, a source of exasperation and despair to all who come into contact with them. By the way, who has read Frances Courtenay Baylor's remarkably fresh and clever sketch entitled "The Innocent," in a recent number of the *New England Magazine*? It is an exceedingly graphic bit of characterization, doubtless suggested by a true incident.

Recent events abroad suggest that the grounding in knowledge of Indian affairs necessary to the appointment of governors and administrators, and once insisted upon by eminent writers, has hardly gone as far as it should have gone. "Russian progress in Central Asia should be as familiar to young civilians as Orme, Mill or even Todhunter." A fixed Imperial policy is no doubt the chief duty of England to-day. She must know how far she means to go and then act sternly up to it—which most likely she will do, unassisted by "weak, piping" colonial advice.

Perhaps the interior troubles in India, however, are more alarming than the Russian encroachment. I wonder very much whether statesmen at home have ever gravely analyzed the problems submitted—with an airy touch and a light though bitter laugh—by Kipling! It seems to me, at least, that he unveils that peculiar futility in detail, that blindness to certain apparently trivial circumstance, which characterizes much of English rule. The English are practical, thorough, honest and conscientious, but they have a fatal fondness for precedent and for letting things remain as they are or as they always have been. To the onlooker, it appeared as if the publication of those stinging, ringing sketches, with their social and political exposures, would cause a complete *bouleversement* and cleaning out of Departmental premises. But the novelist is at best a clown. To the majority he exists only to amuse.

The Liberal Club's Canadian Literature evening was a great success. The strangers present—familiar through their names—were accorded a frank and hearty reception. The room was crowded, even uncomfortably so, but everyone departed well pleased and perhaps a trifle surprised—the selections were all so interesting and so ably recited and read. It was pleasant to know that among the crowd of younger writers the name of Charles Sangster was not forgotten, as was shown by a communication from him, in which he referred to his inability to be present. Taken altogether the evening was a pronounced and novel success.