

At Street Corners.

THE prizes offered by the Canadian Association of Bankers for the best essays, written by bank-clerks, on the recent decline in commercial values, is, I understand, exciting considerable interest among those to whom the competition is open. The fact that several of the banks have offered to add to any prizes that may be won by a member of their staffs has no doubt added to the keenness of the contest. Where there were twenty competitors last year, I understand there are now a hundred. The essays are to be in by the 15th inst., and as they will be sent in under a pen-name with a sealed envelope containing the real patronymic of the writer, the judgment on them may be supposed to be impartial.

The sublime appearance of the interior of the Imperial Bank, corner of Wellington St. and Leader Lane, is the talk of more than one street corner. I regret that the immaculate, artistic, and costly-looking brass-work that now encloses the clerks of that establishment was not made in Canada, but it is splendidly put out of hand, and does credit to the Chicago craftsmen who turned it out. As for the cashier and manager, they are within a perfect *sanctum sanctorum*. Much divinity doth usually hedge these dignitaries, but, at the Imperial, you are now conscious of an added grandeur.

As an example of prohibition on a small scale, the Toronto Island has been neither more nor less of a failure than places under the Scott Act or the Maine Liquor Law. One result has been that very bad whiskey has been surreptitiously sold there. But of course the police supervision of the Island have always been exceedingly defective.

One of our best municipal representatives is Mr. Alderman Scott. He is well-informed and intelligent, and he possesses the advantages of a good bearing and the determination to adhere to any point he takes up. As he is a man of judgment and capacity, and possesses a good deal of business experience, it is within his power to do much good for Toronto if he will stick to the aldermanic work to which he has put his hand. Alderman O. B. Sheppard, the manager of the Grand Opera House, is another of our city rulers who is achieving an improved grip and manner. The Mayor has plenty of manner but lacks grip.

I hear that the partiality of nationalism was shown by the comments that were made on the Durward Lely concert the other night. The Scotch people who attended were delighted; those of other nationalities were just a little bored. This is only what I hear—I was not there myself.

Talking of Scotch people, I hear that Mr. Alexander Fraser, M.A., of the *Mail and Empire* has just put through the press a history of his clan which is said to be a *chef-d'œuvre* of clannishness, and a very creditable piece of work. Rumour has it that the wet towel he wore round his head while writing it was kept damp by water from the Fraser river, with which also all the babies of the clan are christened.

I saw a notice in the newspapers the other day of the marriage of Mrs. Annie Rothwell, whose name is well-known as that of an interesting and capable writer. The daughter of one of Canada's grand old men, the late Daniel Fowler, one of our foremost artists and a man of large capacity, she inherits more than a touch of genius. While I help to throw the rice—if it be not too late—I may express a hope that matrimony will neither blunt her pen nor dry up her ink.

That was rather a dangerous experiment that the servants of a lady in Jarvis Street tried the other day on their mistress. It appears that they wanted to have a quiet jollification with some friends in the kitchen and hit upon the idea of administering a sleeping draught to the lady, who fell into a deep and prolonged sleep so that the guilty girls

had at last to summon the family doctor and tell him what they had done. Who says that the days of "servant-galism" are past?

I am told that one of the pleasantest trips possible at this time of the year is to go to Hamilton by boat, and from Hamilton to Grimsby by the new electric railway. The scene of blossoming beauty is said to be "immense," even by persons who do not gush. I believe in these short trips—that do not interfere much with business—and freshen one up for the daily round in a surprising manner.

The Popular Science Monthly is a magazine which has often afforded me recreative and instructive reading, and although sometimes it is pervaded by a sort of worship of science—as though science was the be-all and end-all of human life, whereas it is only subsidiary to it, for all the greatest things were done before what may be called the age of science—it is a periodical that I am sorry to see imposed upon as it was in its March issue in which an article appears by "C. W. Dickinson" on "Copper, Steel and Bank Note Engraving." Page after page of this contribution is taken from P. G. Hamerton's article on "Engraving" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, without any allusion being made to their origin. The only credit that can be given to the enterprising writer of the magazine article is that he knows enough to steal judiciously.

A woman confided to me the other day that the new fashioned gowns, which are voluminous both in skirts and sleeves, are very heavy, because they have to have stiffening material to line them with, and give them the proper "set." I don't know whether she expected me to condole with women under this affliction, but if she did she certainly was disappointed. If they will be ruled by fashion they must pay fashion's taxes.

DIAGENES.

The Latest News From Paris.

(By Our Special Correspondent.)

THE FRENCH journals give a good deal of attention to the Pope's letter to the English people inviting them to come over to his fold and shepherdship. But it is more as a matter of curiosity they study the well meaning letter than in the expectation that it will effect any results in point of conversions of faith. In this sense the act of the Holy Father is viewed as a day-dream. Pius IX, observed of Puseyism that it resembled "the ringing of church bells, it called people to the church, but did not enter." Except, perhaps, Stead, who will certainly horn-blow the Holy Father as a convert to his Parliament of Religions, the union of all creeds on the basis of the Catholic creed is still outside the sphere of the practical, but the disunited Christians will not the less continue to

"Fight like Devils for reconciliation,
And hate one another for the love of God."

There is one part of the letter of Leon XIII. that could be accepted by John Knox, Calvin and Luther were they to-day in the flesh—associated Christian socialism to attain moral unity. That is the neutral ground whereon His Holiness can exercise great influence and where the most rabid Protestant will wish him God speed. Only the socialists seem to have lost all belief in the efficacy of prayer, as a lever for the increase of daily wages and shorter work hours. Even capitalists fail to recognize the influence of prayer to convert them into profits sharing with their employes.

The Academy of Medical Sciences has been occupied with the question of tobacco smoking. M. Kohas draws attention to one phase of its deleterious action, the production of "Vertigo," and more common with smokers in England, Algeria and Tunisia than in other countries. It is also an ailment peculiar to the operatives in the tobacco factories of the States. It is simply an intoxication and may continue for days, weeks and even years. Another doctor observed that in Newfoundland, Spain and Bretagne vertigo was unknown; but the tobacco was less strong and never "wetted" with alcohol, that is, with rum. Dr. Decroix observed that vertigo was quite common in Constantinople, where smoking was general and drinking only nominal. "Smoke not at all," says the Anti-tobacco Society, which has just held its