

The Canadian Spectator.

VOL. III.—No. 7.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1880.

\$2.00 PER ANNUM.

CONTENTS:

THE TIMES.	SERVICE AND WORK.
TRUTH: A WORD TO POLITICIANS.	A TRIP TO CUBA.—No. III.
THE INSOLVENCY PUZZLE.	POETRY.
SOME THOUGHTS ON ART.	THINGS IN GENERAL.
THE CONCEIT OF TORONTO. No. II.	CORRESPONDENCE.
PRINCIPAL DAWSON AND THE EVOLUTION THEORY.	TRADE, FINANCE, STATISTICS.
MONTREAL SOCIETY.	MUSICAL.
	CHESS.

THE TIMES.

I owe an apology to the gentlemen, past and present, forming the "Board of Arts and Manufactures" in the Province of Quebec. It is herewith tendered. My sin, however, lies not so much in what I said as to the general ability of the gentlemen to decide upon the merits of pictures, but as to the nature of the work they are called upon to do in order to the fulfilment of their office. I was under the impression that they had to do with galleries and pictures and artists, and such like things requiring fine taste and sound judgment. But I was wrong altogether. It stands thus—and I am sure many will be glad to get the information. The Quebec Government gives a grant of \$10,000 per year for the encouragement and promotion of Art industry, in the form of Models, Designing, Decorative and Technical Art, &c. There are thirteen schools in different parts of the Province, most of them night schools. To those schools young men can go for education in any particular branch of Art or Manufactures. The Board of Management is quite properly appointed by the Government. And seeing that the Board has nothing whatever to do with Art, in the sense of painting, for example, but has to do with designs for manufacturing and technical art, business men have always been appointed to the honourable and honorary position.

The appointments to the Board used to be permanent, the Government merely filling up vacancies as they occurred; but M. Joly, eager probably to satisfy his over jubilant followers, was persuaded to regard this as the legitimate spoils of office. So the old members were ousted to a man. It would have been better, more dignified and commendable if M. Chapleau had refused to follow the bad example of his predecessor in office; but a politician is generally human, and M. Chapleau entered upon a policy of reprisals by turning out M. Joly's nominees and replacing the old members of the Board, adding Messrs. Dawson and Quinn. On the whole the business of the Board is well conducted. The next generation but one may see some of the good resulting from it; meantime it only costs us \$10,000 per year, and the gentlemen having charge of the expenditure of that amount and the future of decorative and technical art in their keeping have an honourable post and an occasional most enjoyable jaunt.

I had written thus far in general clearance of my soul when the *Montreal Gazette* gave us a leader on the SPECTATOR, the Editor's peculiar failings and the functions of the Council of Arts and Manufactures. Concerning the latter we are all enlightened, and it is only to be regretted that the *Gazette* did not do this needful work of giving information before. Concerning the former, that is, the SPECTATOR and its Editor, the *Gazette* has also given some important scraps of information. The use of the first personal pronoun "is more than an eccentricity," it appears, "it is the embodiment of the principle which governs his whole life and being." Whether this is intended as a lecture, or a figure of speech, or a metaphysical analysis of my poor personality, I cannot tell. Of course, I have a "being" outside of my "life," if the *Gazette* says so, but I was profoundly ignorant of the

embodied fact, until last Wednesday. The "principle" in the use of "the capital I" is not defined by the *Gazette*, unless it be as the writer suggests, the use of that error into which I have fallen, of supposing myself "Omniscient," All-Knowing, All-Searching, All-Beholding. No—that is an error I certainly have not fallen into. How could I when I have been a constant reader of the *Gazette*? No man would do that who thought himself omniscient.

The report has gone the rounds of a good many English papers that the Princess Louise returned to Canada very reluctantly, on account of the utterly isolated life she is compelled to lead here. They say that outside of her immediate circle of English friends she has no society whatever. And they are probably correct. This is a colony, not a country, and a Court is impossible, even the semblance of it. Professor Fanning, teacher of Court etiquette and fine manners generally, has not been able to make much impression upon the mind of the Canadians, and when they have a show at Ottawa they think more of their cattle and implements for farming than of the kind of dress usual in polite circles when royalty is about. There may be a change for the better during this Session of Parliament, for M.P.'s and Senators are bringing their wives and daughters to the Capital, and the Princess Louise may find a kind of Society which will bring to her, at least, an occasional remembrance of life and pleasure in England.

The appointment of the Hon. D. L. Macpherson to the chair of the Senate and a seat in the Cabinet is a happy one, and is certain to be popular. Mr. Macpherson has been a party man, a supporter of Sir John A. Macdonald for many years, but more than once he has made it plain that he cares first of all, and most of all, for the welfare of the public. He has not sought political life as a game that pays well, but has devoted himself to public interest *con amore*. He has deserved the honour which is conferred upon him, and his presence in the Cabinet will give it increased strength.

It was hardly a surprise when tidings came from Colorado that Mr. B. Devlin was dead. Those who saw him leave Montreal felt that the time had gone by when a change of climate could be expected to effect a cure. And now that he is dead, what can be said of Mr. Devlin? "De mortuis nil nisi bonum," of course; but if I am rightly informed a good deal could be said of him and for him that his friends would care to remember. It always appeared to me and many others that Mr. Devlin never showed the best side of himself to more than a very select circle of friends. His public life was calculated to bring out all that was keen, critical, rasping in his nature. There was about his face a look of wild desolation, as if sorrow had kindled a great fire in his soul which was reducing the man to ashes. He was a man of considerable ability, a clear thinker, a fluent speaker with the power of putting heart into his speech, an adversary whom none could afford to despise; in politics, a man upon whom his party could depend; in private life they say he was loved for his tenderness of heart and constancy of friendship. Requiescat in pace.

Mr. Dowall has introduced a very sensible and much-needed bill for approval to the Ontario Legislature about exemptions from taxation. It proposes to do away with the four hundred dollars exemption in incomes when they exceed a certain amount; to assess real and personal property belonging to incorporated companies; to abolish entirely the present partial exemption of paddocks and lawns; and what is quite, if not more important, to assess church property for the payment of local improvements. The bill is a good one in every