

## Notes in My Library.

THE WOMEN'S DAYS—A SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN PROGRESS—DANGEROUS  
 OUTLOOK FOR MEN—PRETTY TYPE-WRITERS—BICYCLING AND ITS  
 COSTUMES—THE WOMEN'S JOURNALS—DIFFUSENESS IN LITERA-  
 TURE—NEED FOR LITERARY CORSETS—A FEDERATION OF LEARN-  
 ING—THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA AND THE POETS—THE  
 PROPOSED MEMORIAL TO FRANCIS PARKMAN—HIS GARDEN OF  
 ROSES: A REMINISCENCE—THE LOUISBOURG CELEBRATION IN  
 JUNE—A POEM OF LAST CENTURY.

THESE are assuredly the Women's Days. If things continue as they are now going, the new century, which is so near at hand, will see a decidedly remarkable social revolution, which will hurl the men from their present position of arrogant self-assertion in many conditions of human life. Every day my old conservative notion of women in the economy of existence are subject to rude jars. I am now reconciled to pretty typewriters and clerks in offices, as among the pleasant conditions of daily business life. I am quite prepared to admit that young women can bring brightness even into the reporters' gallery, and diffuse some of their natural sprightliness into the columns of a Canadian daily newspaper. But as I look out of my library window on a well macademized street—I mean for Ottawa—I am perplexing my mind whether I admire a pretty young woman on a bicycle. But leaving this question still in doubt, and reserving my opinion on the costumes proper for bicycling attitudes, I turn to my well-littered table, where among a collection of books and manuscripts awaiting a leisure moment I see a formidable pile of newspapers, which, from the press of parliamentary preoccupation, has been laid aside, and now demands some little attention from one who is probably better able to judge of the merits of women on paper than on the wheel. The *Women's Globe* and the *Women's Journal* represent the latest effort of the sex in these days when they are seeking new worlds to conquer. Here at least is a field of literature where we may expect a good deal from a sex full of spirituality and keen perception. True enough! Yet I am not quite satisfied with the results as a whole. I am not prepared to say the women did their best. I could select some particular articles as illustrating the genius of which women are capable in literary work, but it seems to me, after a careful review of all they have done, they have been obviously burdened with the thought of all that was expected from them, and somehow transferred their burden to their readers. Experience is a great deal in newspaper or literary work of any class. Newspaper writing and editing are specialties not to be learned in the ladies' school or college. The work, I repeat, is excellent in many ways. Several of the articles, or essays rather, would have been a feature of a Saturday's paper, if printed alone among the miscellaneous matter that the scissors have embodied in the newspaper, but for one occasion there was an *embarras de richesses*. Diffuseness is not a literary virtue. Condensation is much needed in these days of too much writing. It is wonderful how much a writer who wishes to be widely read can gain by rewriting an essay several times and coming to the point more frequently. If one dared to suggest such a thing, an admirer of women's capacity for excellence in literary pursuits would hint that perhaps it would be better for some of the authors hereafter to put on their literary corsets.

It is the object of the Royal Society of Canada to identify itself as far as possible with all the men and women engaged in literary or scientific labours in the Dominion. Though its membership is limited to one hundred persons who have "written memoirs of merit or performed services to literature or science," its transactions are open to everyone who has good, original work to offer. In the volume of eight hundred pages which is now ready, some of the most important contributions are written by authors who are not fellows of the Society. For instance, the first native bishop of the Roman Catholics in Newfoundland, the Right Reverend M. F. Howley, D.D., has, in the English literary section, a scholarly paper on Cartier's voyages in the Gulf, which he has made particularly interesting and intelligible by a number of maps and illustrations of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and coasts of Cape Breton and Newfoundland. But one of the most important features of this National Society is its action as a federation of scientific and literary

scholarship. The Society itself, as a whole, comprises representatives from all sections of the Dominion, from Victoria to New Glasgow, and in this way forms a national parliament of learning. Then, there come to its yearly meetings delegates from all those historical and scientific societies which are so many centres of scientific and literary research in every province of the Dominion. As a consequence, all these associations engaged in the same work throughout Canada are able to report to one centre the results of their annual work. Their delegates have the inestimable advantage of conferring with men who have won a high reputation at home and abroad in their respective departments of study, and of taking away with them new food for thought. The Royal Society prints in its transactions all the reports which are annually submitted by the associated literary and scientific bodies which send delegates to its meetings. These transactions now go to every library and society of standing in the world, and consequently afford a complete epitome of all the work of importance that is being done by the scientific, historical and literary societies of the Dominion. So highly is this useful work of the Royal Society appreciated abroad, that its transactions are now in frequent demand. They have made Canada known among scientific and literary men who had been wont to look upon her people as exclusively engaged in material pursuits and paying little attention to subjects of thought and culture.

The meeting of the Royal Society, on the fifteenth of May, will present a novel feature of which the literary men and women of Canada will hear with much interest. It has been the practice for three or four years past to combine popular lectures with the reading of the more technical and abstruse papers in the four sections of literature and science into which the whole Society is divided. For instance, last year there was a very valuable address given on the subject of forestry, and at the forthcoming meeting there will be one on electricity by Prof. Cox. The object is to give an opportunity to that large body of the public who are not versed in science to be informed on subjects of immediately practical and current interest. At this meeting it is proposed to go a step further and have a poets' evening. The poets of Canada, whether in or out of the Society, have been invited to come to Ottawa and take part in a literary symposium. Every poet who can attend will present an original contribution, and those who cannot be present will have a poem read by another. Miss Machar (Fidelis), Miss Ethelwyn Wetherald, Archibald Lampman, William Wilfrid Campbell, Duncan Campbell Scott, Frederick George Scott, Bliss Carmen, Charles Roberts, John Reade, S. Frances Harrison (Seranus), E. Pauline Johnson, Archbishop O'Brien, N. F. Davin, and J. D. Edgar, will be either present in person or in poems. The president of the section of English literature, Professor Clark, of Trinity University, will preside and deliver a short address by way of preface to a most interesting event in the annals of our youthful literature. Next year it is intended to have a similar assemblage of prose writers.

Thirty years ago, I took up Francis Parkman's "Pioneers of France in the New World," and found, to my astonishment, what elements of romance and absorbing interest exist in the history of Canada under the old regime. It required his master-hand to present, on the printed page, the features of that drama in which France played so important a part when she and England were rivals in America. Since he devoted his life to Canadian history, his works have been the constant companions of the writer, as they have been of thousands of men and women in America, who have found in his writings the evidence of that deep research, patient industry, and insight into character and motives, without which the pages of history would be dull and valueless. Canadians owe him a debt of gratitude. Few of us in Canada ever met him. He was a close student whose wretched health from year to year, and deep attention to his labours, prevented him from mixing much in the world of society, even had he been a man naturally fond of popular applause and newspaper notice. His works will always live as monuments of the high ideal that a true literary man can keep before him. He was more fortunate than many others who have set out in life with bright aspirations and hopes to achieve a great work, for he completed his task before he laid down his pen forever. Now we are called upon by his