

voted with the Reform party, till the coalition of 1854 broke up the old parties; and then they drifted into an alliance with the Conservatives. Nor is it correct, as Mr. Withrow asserts, that it was to check this oscillating balance of power that the double majority was invented. The double majority was born of the inter-provincial inequality of representation, which had gradually grown up with the growth of population, and its object was to prevent any law affecting either province being passed, in the united Legislature, in opposition to the voice of a majority of its own representatives.

There is no warrant whatever for the statement that if the Rebellion Losses Bill of 1849 had not become law, the French "would have been driven into disaffection and probably into revolt." Nothing was farther from their minds, at that time, than revolt; nor was the Annexation Manifesto published in Montreal about the same time, "a mere outburst of partizan feeling." A more passionless document was never written. Political it was not, in a party sense. Annexation was advocated on purely commercial grounds.

Mr. Withrow forgets to state that the differential duties, the abolition of which he mentions, implied and were intended to imply, a system of equivalents, English manufacturers having a preference in Canada, and the Canadian timber having a preference in England. Canada, relieved of the burthen, lost the compensating privilege. The change meant that the swaddling clothes of a young colony had ceased to be suitable to the stature which Canada had then reached, and that England had discovered that her true policy lay in free trade with all the world. With the fall of the differential duties, which formed a reciprocal obstruction, the last pillar of the old colonial system crumbled away.

Mr. Withrow is not fairly chargeable with wilful perversion. His mistakes arise from inattention, from a habit of taking for granted statements that require corroboration, from following unsafe guides, and transcribing without criticizing. It is when he becomes an apologist, that he is liable to get off the balance. In noticing some charges against Sir Francis Hincks, he throws the blame, if blame there were, on some of his colleagues. He says that if some of Sir Francis' colleagues acquired public property, Sir Francis left public life poor. From this statement the reader would not learn that Sir Francis was one of the purchasers; the truth being that, whether the act were innocent or culpable, he probably acquired more public property than any of his colleagues. C. L.

### WEAK POINTS IN THE ENTERTAINMENTS OF SOCIETY.

THE business of life attended to, men and women seek amusement according to their tastes, and as circumstances allow. Indeed, perhaps in a certain sense the object of all work is to satisfy the craving for pleasure, or to gain the means for that happiness which the human heart is always seeking for. Among the most prosperous class, where the necessities of life have not to be struggled for, there is often almost as unending a struggle for amusement as in the poorer ones for the wherewithal to live, so that we find many people making a "study" of their amusements, frequently with very unsatisfactory results. Some one has said something to the effect that "life would be tolerable if it was not for its amusements," a sentiment calculated, one would imagine, to damp the ardour of pleasure seekers. One would ask is the author of such a *blasé* remark an individual with Dundreary proclivities, or does he merely exaggerate the unexpressed sentiments of a number of the devotees of society?

In Canada we rather pride ourselves that our social gatherings are full of life; and if in the Old World an air of boredom, assumed or real, is much in vogue, it cannot be said to be the fashionable craze in this Dominion; yet there is, except with our young people, a perceptible lack of enjoyment to those attending our private parties. Now, as with the best directed energies it is impossible to retain, for any great length of time, a youthfulness that leaves the most of us all too soon, this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs, particularly as even with the first flush of youth gone, there remains with us immense capabilities for enjoyment. Entertainers, however, find no difficulty in getting their invitations accepted, which seems a contradiction to the statement that there is a lack of enjoyment to the participants of their gaieties, which, if people will grumble about, they still also will go to. If parents go to look after their fledglings, *passée* girls, to try and prove they are not *passée*, others because the So-and-So's have a fine house, are swells, and everyone who is anyone is going, there is a hope, however remote with all, of extracting a little enjoyment out of the evening, a hope very frequently unfulfilled. The fault sometimes lies in the guests, oftener with the hosts, who having provided a great supper

and thrown open their beautiful rooms feel that they have done their duty, and leave their guests to find their own amusement. Now-a-days every one with means and taste expends both, in getting together objects of art, a friendly rivalry existing as to who has the choicest pictures or bric-a-brac, while the one who at some party can provide a surprise in the way of a new floral decoration scores the triumph. But though we may have a keen eye for beautiful objects, some of us have occasionally wished something else had been provided for our entertainment. Dancing parties are given more frequently than any others, and to those who at one time desire to pay off all social debts, are decidedly the most successful. Provide dancers with music, and a good floor, and they will find no other entertainment half so delightful. The customary engagement cards, with all their facilities for retaining good dancers, securing pleasant *tête-à-têtes*, and getting rid of undesirable partners, leave little to be wished for, but to those who cannot "trip it on the light fantastic toe," to *chaperons* and wall-flowers, "looking-on" becomes decidedly wearisome. As to the *chaperons*, well, no one expects them to enjoy themselves, or receive any attention except it is to be led into the supper-room first; the wall-flowers are sometimes a source of anxiety, for they "are young," or supposed to be, and ought to enjoy themselves. The gentlemen who support the walls and door-ways are generally considered able to look after themselves, but to all who do not dance there is a terrible want of something to do; the men grow moody, and look it, the ladies who feel the eyes of the world are upon them, wretched—a wretchedness they endeavour to hide under smiles and fluttering fans. As it is a general supposition that no two persons of the same sex can enjoy conversing together at a party, most women prefer to be seen in company with a man, be he never so uninteresting, to that of their pleasantest feminine friend, as the absence of an escort at the side of a lady gives the general impression that she is being neglected—an impression the average woman would do anything to avoid. One other great reason that the middle-aged and those not in the ranks of the young do not enjoy our assemblies is the manner in which the old and young separate at our gatherings, and a growing want of courtesy on the part of the latter to their elders. What young lady will be bothered talking to a gentleman with grey hair, or where is the young man who would think it worth while to make himself agreeable for half an hour to the matron to whom he is perhaps indebted for much hospitality? How little care do our youthful society-goers take to hide that they think "Mr. A. an old fogey," and Mrs. B. "on the shady side of forty." Now Mr. A. may consider yonder Miss "an insignificant chit of a girl," while Mrs. B. regards the young man merely as "a friend of the girls," yet their indifferent attention, the intangible slight, may annoy each of them, and be a reminder that youth has left them: a fact they might otherwise forget for a happy hour or two. Then again, how speedily do the married join the ranks of the "uninteresting." A pretty, young, married woman may enjoy herself for a season or so, but a man finds his prestige vanishes with his young lady acquaintances as soon as he has placed the golden circlet on the finger of one of them, and usually comes to the conclusion that "dances are a bore," and were it not for his wife's wishes would probably give them up altogether, for woman does not get tired of parties anything like as soon as man: it is her one way of seeing the world, and she naturally clings to it, and the love of seeing and displaying elegant toilets is a thing of joy to her forever. But if dancing-parties are dull to a few, musical ones are so to the majority. Although music is voted as one of the most fascinating of the arts, and is yearly being cultivated to a greater extent among us, no parties are so universally voted failures as "musicals," and as some people object to dancing, even if possessed of all the means for entertaining, there seems to be no chance of their giving any large entertainments but those that do not entertain. The reasons for these failures are various. It is not customary and scarcely practicable in our Canadian cities to obtain (except bands) the services of professional musicians, while amateur performances do not always repay the listeners. At a large party it is impossible to give everyone a seat, and walking about is generally the only occupation for the majority who, unless some one is "singing," are generally seemingly oblivious to any music that may be going on. In this "walking-about," one of the chief draw-backs to the amusement of the evening occurs. For instance, an acquaintance meets a lady, asks her to take a walk, or to go and look at the conservatory; she consents, and they get on charmingly for a quarter of an hour or so; then, having exhausted the flowers and conversation on subjects of mutual interest, one or other or both think it would be pleasant to talk to some one else, but neither like to say so; so they probably wander around (if the crush permits) for another quarter of an hour, each wondering how on earth they are going to get rid of the other, and when at last the suggestion is made, unless great tact is used, the suggestor finds he or she has wounded the *amour propre* of the