

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Literary Competition.

The Publishers of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED offer the sum of \$130 in four prizes for short stories from Canadian writers—

1st prize.....	\$60
2nd ".....	40
3rd ".....	20
4th ".....	10

On the following conditions :

1st—All stories must be delivered at the office of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED not later than 1st June next.

2nd—Each story to contain not less than 5,000 words, and not to exceed 8,000 words,

3rd—All MS. sent in for this competition to become the property of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED.

4th—Each story must contain a motto on top of first page, and be accompanied by a sealed envelope, inside of which is stated the name and address of the writer. The outside of envelope to bear motto used on story.

5th—MS. to be written in ink, and on one side of paper only.

6th—Stories on Canadian subjects are preferred.

THE SABISTON LITHO. & PUB. CO.,

Publishers "THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED,"

Montreal.

THE WHISPER OF A SPIRIT.

BY ANNIE CRAWFORD.

I had tried to be a faithful wife and mother to my husband and family; but, unlike the happy woman spoken of in sacred story, had never had the joy in my life-time of hearing them rise up and call me blessed.

My husband had been a clever man, I think—at least, far too clever to consult me, or even tell me about any of his affairs. I had tried sometimes to ask his advice in matters which interested me, but he had looked at me and answered me in a way which made me feel truly ashamed of having troubled him with anything so trivial.

During our brief courtship he had once or twice praised my bright eyes and soft brown hair; and oh, how carefully, as the years went by, I had studied to retain my beauty for his dear love. I knew that youthful bloom would fade, as it did, but too swiftly; but when my head was white as driven snow my mirror told me that the cultivation of a pure, devout and patient spirit had placed a signature of grace upon my ageing face which far outshone in comeliness the charm of youthful bloom. Yet had he ever looked at me, during all those years in which we walked the mystic way of life together, with sweet approval and the lingering look of love? I cannot remember that he ever had.

My three sons, accorded to their father that sincere flattery—imitation. But though in harshest terms he chided their unloving lives he failed to see in them the almost inevitable result of his own example.

My only daughter, sweet and winning in her words, was selfish and thoughtless in her ways; so that, while the feebleness of premature age crept over my weary frame and stiffened my once ready limbs, I found her impotent as any to supply the needs of my failing body, or the yearning of my wistful heart.

Ah, well, is it not written: "God shall all our need supply"? When I awake I shall be satisfied; yea, I am satisfied.

"For love is Heaven, and Heaven is love."

One day when the April sunshine shone softly on the wall, having been seized with a great loneliness and longing for human companionship, I besought my beautiful Belle to remain with her poor old mother for a while, though a youthful friend claimed her company in a pre arranged walk. "I would gladly, mother dear, but that I have promised to go with Florrie," she answered, and with a hasty farewell kiss she left me. Poor Belle, that one little selfish act, no worse than many another which had sorely wounded me, shall dwell in her earthly memory with oft repeated pangs.

Overcome with a strange exhaustion, I sank into my armchair, whose firm arms enfolded me as in a loving embrace, and laying my head upon its ample, if unsympathetic shoulder, the sweet old cradle song of my own babyhood and my proud maternity :

"Sleep, my child, lie still and slumber,
Holy angels guard thy bed;
Holy blessings without number,
Gently falling on thy head."

But I sang, not, in imagination, to those tiny beings who had grown up to tyrannize over and disappoint me, but to the aged, weary woman who had so evidently failed to influence aright the precious souls committed to her care. "Lord, I am weary," I pleaded, "take me to Thee."

Hark! Those strains of ineffable sweetness. Surely no earthly music. All my poor, starved soul is filled and thrilled with unutterable satisfaction. The sunlight darkens—the room whirls—my armchair, my body, sink away, and freed from fleshly incumbrance I open the eyes of my soul. My God! What is this? The mystery of mysteries! O joy all joys excelling, I had died!

"Mother, O mother, mother," moaned poor Belle.
"My wife, my darling," said my husband, his poor brow drawn in an agony of pain.

My sons stood by in silence, ashamed to show such grief as would have been an honour to their manhood.

Ah! Side by side with one whom they had, after all, loved dearly, all silently they had trod. Too late, for the consolation of their poor souls, they awoke to longing that their love had found expression in deeds and words of kindness, and I who had missed them so sorely, now needed their tardy ministrations no more; for I, at last, am satisfied.

No, it would be unlawful. The secrets of death are for the dead alone. Soon, for you too, will burst the veil of flesh. "I am the Beginning and the Ending, the Almighty," said the Author of all. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." We stand but on the threshold.

To the ready imagination of the dreamer I have whispered my tale. If her mind and pen so work my desire that men are moved to echo, one to another, the heavenly music of love for which, perchance—

"Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break."
I shall not have lived my desolate life in vain.

A Note on the New Imperialism.

A thoughtful article under the above heading, by Charles Grey Robertson, which appears in the March number of *Time*, is worthy of the attention of your readers—of those of them at least who take any interest in the rapid development of political and social thought which is now taking place.

The author begins his enquiry by asking, pertinently, what is to be the result, and what the outcome, of the present disintegration of parties in this country. The old partisan watchwords, Liberal and Tory, are rapidly becoming obsolete and meaningless.

"A general answer to these questions is suggested by the nature of the change which has destroyed the old order of politics. And if on both sides something has been done to shape it in a particular sense, it is by those who have been mindful of this truism. The disintegration of the old parties began with the shifting of the national centre of gravity of power, represented by the extension of the suffrage to almost the lowest limit; and the formation of the new must proceed under the influence of the same great change. Both of them obviously must address themselves to the new masters of the State. On the one side, Socialism,—the appeal to the voters to use their new powers to secure their interest by the machinery of Government, thus correcting the iniquity of history real or supposed—has not been slow to declare itself. It is far otherwise with the second of our coming parties; for it a name and a cry, a leader even and a cause in the popular sense are still to find. So commonly has this been admitted that former attempts, as I have said, have not been wanting to supply these deficiencies. No such artificial incubation of a new party can possibly be successful. On the other hand, it would appear that in the natural way something has been done to form such a party, which may perhaps become

worthy of the imperial style. It is this effort, this political birth which may be described as *new Imperialism*, by which I would indicate a new grouping of men, an intellectual movement, a revivifying of principle, now actually in progress, finding expression in contemporary literature, and plainly proclaiming the formation of a great party."

There seems little reason to doubt that this is a fair and singularly accurate account of the widespread movement, which is affecting not only this country but, more rapidly and in a more marked degree, the great self governing colonies. In the United Kingdom it is as yet, perhaps, difficult to estimate the strength of the influences at work in one direction and the other—whether the mass of the newly enfranchised millions will throw themselves into the arms of socialistic doctrinaires, or whether they will give their weight and votes to the new spirit of unity and Empire, which is now making itself heard in so many quarters, and which is daily gaining ground. In the Australian colonies the tendency hitherto has been in the former direction,—in Canada recent events seem to indicate that the latter (the Imperial spirit) is likely to retain its historic hold and force.

In going on to describe this new Imperialism, Mr. Robertson says: "It exists to protect the interests not of one class, but of all. It has no doctrine of slavish submission to preach; far from that, it is first and last an appeal to the pride of race and pride of life. Therein it contrasts antithetically with Socialism. Emphatically a call to action, it has the inevitable character of energy, strenuousness and practicability. The Imperialist desiring like the Socialist to direct and control the new forces at work, displays like him a certain indifference to purely theoretical considerations. Both Socialism and New Imperialism press on to achievement, and appear somewhat scornful of mere logical symmetry. It is one, but not the only tendency strongly felt by every man who is of his time."

Later, in describing the objects and methods of these two great parties of the near future, the writer says:—"The Imperialist has at least this advantage: he does not ask of men to face the terrors of the unknown. He, too, would spur them to action, but always in obedience to the voice of experience. His love of strenuousness is governed by his respect for *history*. It is indeed the *historical* spirit which on his side gives its whole colour to the movement. The Imperialist's hopes are based on his knowledge of the national character, his appeal is to its historical conscience. He believes in its rough manliness, its sturdy independence, its tough spirit of endurance; he admires its stark common sense. 'By doing thus and thus,' he is constantly saying, 'your fathers became wealthy and strong: if you would be like them, go with might and main, go and do likewise.' Everwhere he is for setting men free to work, for arousing them to do all that is in them to accomplish. Yet he would have them put their trust in no legal redistribution of property and of gardens, but in their own right hands. It is the same historical spirit which informs the new Imperialism in its treatment of the practical problems of the day. It approves the steady and impartial administration of the law and the maintenance of order, for on that the English people have always insisted, even in revolution; the multiplying of fleets and reorganization of the army, for English sailors and soldiers have built up the Empire; the advancement and protection of commerce, for this has been the chief concern of English statesmen for three centuries. Naturally, the Imperialist is for founding new colonies and holding fast to the old. In brief, he is for large and patriotic measures, boldly conceived and prudently executed. Thus Imperialism, like Socialism, is for action, but (unlike it) always on the lines which have led to success and prosperity in the past."

It is not necessary to follow the writer of this noteworthy little article further in his analysis of the effects which this motive power is producing, or likely to produce, in the social and artistic worlds. It is sufficient that he has voiced a sentiment which many have felt growing within and around them, and has foreshadowed for this country the vital issues between political parties which Canada has already begun practically to experience. The progress of events, which daily increases in rapidity, seems very likely to justify the writer's expectations, and is certainly worthy of careful study and attention by every one whose object is not merely to drift with the prevailing current of their day and generation, but, in some however small degree, to influence or direct its course.

London, Eng.

RANKINE DAWSON.