

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ONTARIO ART SCHOOL.

To the Editor of The Week :

SIR,—Art education in Toronto is at the present moment threatened by the officious and discouraging machinery of government. The Ontario Art School, after struggling to maintain itself with credit on King Street, was some time ago removed to the Education Department, the Provincial Government undertaking to bear the expense of the school, with, however, the explicit understanding that the Society of Artists should, as heretofore, manage its affairs, engage teachers, and provide art instruction in both the day and the evening classes. Under this arrangement, the school has in the past year carried on its operations in the Normal School building, Dr. S. P. May, the general *locum tenens* of the Education office, being placed as the Government representative on the Board. The result to be looked for, in permitting art to fall into the hands of this well-known member of the "casual advantages" ring, has duly shown itself, the worthy in question having promoted himself to the position of "Superintendent of the School of Art," and into the enjoyment of the perquisites of his self-claimed office. This has produced an upheaval in the school, the Council of Artists naturally rebelling at the management of the institution being taken out of competent hands and assumed by a functionary of the Department whose reputation in connection with the now famous Book Depository is not of the saintliest. The President of the Royal Canadian Academy, who is a member of the School of Art Council, has tendered his resignation, in consequence, it is stated, of the efficiency of the teaching being impaired, and the interest of the school imperilled by the injudicious act of the representative of the Government on the Board. The rest of the faculty, with a single exception, we learn, have joined that gentleman in his protest to the Government. We can well understand that the interests of the Education office functionary, of whom the public have heard so much, are not coincident with those of true art; and we trust that the autocracy which he is strangely allowed still to exercise in the Department may not be long permitted to threaten the usefulness or detract from the success of the Ontario School of Art.

CRITIC.

SPELLING REFORM.

To the Editor of The Week :

SIR,—May I be permitted to say briefly to your contributor "D. W." that so long as I am myself accessible, he has no right to attribute to me views about spelling reform, or anything else, which he does not know to be mine? I said nothing in my address to the Canadian Institute which would justify the production of so much nonsense on the subject as "D. W." has embodied in his short article. If your columns are open to a real discussion of the necessity for spelling reform, I am quite willing to take my part in it; if they are not, then I cannot see what is to be gained in the interest of truth or progress by allowing any one who knows nothing of an important movement to cast ridicule upon it. Meanwhile, I am quite content to take my place among the ridiculed spelling reformers, along with such distinguished philological scholars as Max Mueller, Prof. Whitney, Mr. Sweet, Mr. Ellis, Prof. March, Mr. Skeat, and others too numerous to mention. At the present moment I cannot think of a single distinguished English scholar on either side of the Atlantic who is not in sympathy with the spelling reform movement.

"D. W." rails at old English spelling, without being aware that it is really better than our own just because it is more phonetic. At the same time he admits that modern English spelling is being gradually "reformed" though apparently he is unaware that the "reform" consists in making it more phonetic. Saul is therefore also among the prophets, though he knows it not. In a short time, if he will only give some attention to the matter he will be as good a spelling reformer as any of us, and quite as radical as I am. At present he is frightened by all changes that are not "silent" and "unnoted;" after the spelling reformers have brought usage over to their side, he will, no doubt, feel more at home in good old English word-forms.

Toronto, March 27th.

WM. HOUSTON.

MR. BLAKE AND THE ORANGE QUESTION.

To the Editor of The Week :

SIR,—Your Ottawa correspondent acknowledges the conclusive force of Mr. Blake's argument that the incorporation of the Orange Society by the Dominion Parliament would be an interference with the constitutional rights of the several provinces, and then asks if his "magnificent" defence of Roman Catholics from the Orange imputation of "allegiance not to this country but to a foreign potentate," was a "bid for the support of Roman Catholics?" It seems to me, Sir, that Mr. Blake's defence was as just as it was "magnificent." Was it not the refutation of a calumny in the very teeth of the calumniators? Surely the occasion has furnished ample ground for the "defence" and left no room for the imputation of unworthy motives?

Mr. Blake did not stop with an exposition of the constitutional objection to the incorporation of the Orange Society, nor with the vindication of Catholic loyalty from Orange aspersions. He stripped the mask from the grim visage of Orangeism, and proved from the lips of its chosen leaders that its ultra-Protestantism was a pretence for the furtherance of its political aims; and while "his hand was in" he dealt an equally well-deserved blow at those of the Quebec Tories who, under the guise of

devotion to the Church, have for years striven to crush their political opponents. These two factions—both pre-eminently Tory in fact, both pre-eminently religious in practice, the one Catholic, the other Protestant, at least in name—form the bone and sinew of the Conservative party, and Mr. Blake would have displayed such a lack of appreciation of the humorous as would have belied his nationality had he failed to metaphorically "bump their heads together" and expose the hollowness of their professions both of patriotism and religion. That he did not fail in this should have satisfied your correspondent that he was "bidding" for no other support than that which sound principles should everywhere and always command.

In your issue of the 20th inst., "A Bystander" says:—"On the very day on which the Orange Bill was rejected, the Liberal leader paid servile homage to the power at whose hands he hopes to receive office," etc. In what did the "servile homage" consist? Surely not in quoting from official documents testimony to prove that the pretensions of the extreme section of the *Bleus* were as ill founded as those of the Orange section of the Tories? Yet there is no other evidence of "homage," nor any evidence at all of the "servile homage," to the "power" indicated, from the beginning to the end of Mr. Blake's speech; and on what evidence does "Bystander" assert that the Liberal leader "hopes to receive office" at the hands of this "power?" None whatever is offered.

Mr. Blake predicted in his speech that he would be misrepresented by the Orange Tory leaders, and that the Catholic Tories would regard him all the more distastefully because he had shown how "false and unnatural" was their conjunction. But what of the "conjunction" with Orangeism of "Bystander," and other writers in THE WEEK, in depreciation of Mr. Blake?

Toronto, March 31st, 1884.

Yours truly,

ALEX. ROBERTSON.

A BRACE OF FORTUNES.

"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

I.

You'll be airily wed
Just to kisses and bread,
For you'll marry a 'Fred,'
And you'll live with your love in an attic;
But you never need part
With the song in your heart,
And the song will be sweet and ecstatic.
There's no more to be said,
For you'll marry a 'Fred.'

II.

You'll have silks to put on
When *your* husband is won,
For you'll marry a "John."
That kind of grave steady good fellow
Whose money unlocks
You an opera box,
And a carriage with linings of yellow.
You are sure to "get on"
For you'll marry a "John."

FREDERICK A. DIXON.

MARCH.

Oh, dawning month of Spring! in thee are met
Quick showers, glad sunshine, and the rushing wind;
And ere thou goest they who seek will find,
Neath unleaved trees the dim wood-violet;
And on the sunny side of many a slope
The delicate pasque-flower's purple cup will ope
And blue birds sing; for the earth's wintry debt
To time will soon be cancelled to the hour;
The pale anemone from the passing shower
Will toss its fresh leaves like a fairy plume,
For the gay forehead of the spring-time meet;
The slowly budding groves will lose their gloom,
As shaking Winter from thy hastening feet,
Thou beckonest to the Summer soon to come.

AMELIA Y. COLE.

THE ADVENTURES OF A WIDOW.

By EDGAR FAWCETT, author of "A Gentleman of Leisure," "A Hopeless Case," "An Ambitious Woman," "Tinkling Cymbals," etc.

IX.

By nine o'clock on Thursday evening all her guests had arrived. They comfortably filled her two smart and brilliant drawing-rooms, but quite failed to produce the crowded effect noticeable in Mrs. Dares's less ample quarters.

Pauline saw with pleasure that the fine pictures, bronzes and bric-a-brac, which she had brought from Europe, were most admiringly noticed. Small groups were constantly being formed before this canvas or that cabinet table and pedestal. She had kept for some time quite close to Mrs. Dares, having a practical sense of the little lady's valuable social assistance on an occasion like the present, apart from all personal feelings of liking.