



TORONTO, February 7, 1891.

The past has been a brilliant week. The Yacht Club Ball, the Conversazione at Trinity College, *The Gondoliers* at the Grand Opera House, each an event of importance in itself, and each an occasion honoured by the presence of the "Uprer Ten," have constituted a very full round of special engagements—rather wearing, it must be admitted, yet full of charm.

The presence of the Vice-regal party at the Yacht Club Ball acted upon the committee to the extent of necessitating the exclusion of some of our citizens, who would otherwise have been there. The "lady type-writer" was shut out; whether the gentleman type-writer shared the same fate I am not informed, but such exclusion looks, to say the least of it, silly. Neither Lord nor Lady Stanley would have been the least disturbed even had the "lady type-writer" been found in the same set with them. The true aristocrat is the most democratic of democrats, and provided manners are mannerly, neither Queen nor Kaiser enquires further.

Three new waltzes by native composers formed part of the programme of the Ball. *Starry Night*, by Mrs. T. T. Blackstock, of Toronto; *Wenonah*, by Mrs. J. C. Smith, of St. Catharines; and *Golden Rod*, by Mrs. Frank MacKelcan, of Hamilton. New waltzes by Gillett, Tobian and Rosas were played, a compliment to distinguished guests not often at command, even of so wealthy and fashionable entertainers as Commodore Boswell and his yachtmen.

All the decorations, even to the supper, partook of the nautical character of the occasion, and everything went off beautifully.

The coldness that marked the production of *The Gondoliers* in New York had no place here, but rather the warmth of welcome accorded the piece on its production in London. Probably Canadian tastes and education are more English than our cousins across the border enjoy, and thus we are better able to note the "points" made, both in music and libretto. For there are "points" in music, and when the well-remembered notes of a familiar song fall upon the ear, in the midst of the brightest comedy, does not the heart respond at once, and the candidate for our suffrages come into favour readily? The music of *The Gondoliers* is very sparkling, and some of the songs are sure to become popular.

At the Academy of Music *Money Mad* has had the week, and in spite of a hackneyed subject has taken well. The company is good, and a bit of realistic stage-setting, that gives a steamer coming up the river, while a swing-bridge—the Clarke street, Chicago, bridge—opens to let it through, forms a great attraction, though by no means the only one.

I have seen that bridge in *Harper's* or *The Century*, and it had a very telling tale attached to it, of an old hulk, a loving but miserly father, a beautiful daughter, a hidden treasure, both of which a designing young man eventually carries off, not without the consent of said father. How he won the consent is the heart of the story.

Robinson's Music Theatre, a somewhat new introduction among our public amusements, and which started out with the Benwell Tragedy and wax figures, *a la* Madame Tussand, received a decided lift into notice by the visit of Lady Stanley and party. The *Music* has a fair collection of curios and gives some decidedly curious exhibitions, but this week no one can say a word against its subject matter, which is a series of lectures or talks by poor Capt. W. D. Andrews, once a champion swimmer on Toronto bay, and the saviour of more than a hundred lives, one third of them women, which would otherwise have been lost by drowning. As a result of his unprepared-for exertions in the water at all times and seasons, Captain Andrews has become blind while yet a comparatively young man, and has

to depend on the proceeds of an excellent little book on swimming and life-saving, which he has compiled since his affliction. Capt. Andrews has the medal of the English Humane Society among others, and shows several of his own devices for life-saving. It seems discreditable to us that there is no fund upon which a hero, such as Andrews, has a claim, and it is time his case was taken up in this direction.

A boy soprano, from Westminster Abbey choir, will visit Toronto next week.

The Conversazione given by the Trinity University Literary Institute rivalled the R. C. Y. C. Ball in beauty and fashion. Fourteen hundred guests were present, and the corridors of the beautiful building, both the old and the new, were crowded almost to suffocation.

As dancing always forms part of the entertainment provided by the Institute for its guests, the Conversazione is a favourite gathering of the younger portion.

The Athenæum Club, organized in 1883, for objects thus stated by its promoters, "recognizing that the young men of our city, engaged during the day in professional and mercantile pursuits, naturally desire to spend a portion of their time in recreation of a healthy character \* \* \* \* free from objectionable associations and drinking and gambling," have decided to build themselves a new home. The site is on Church street, and the building is to be of the Moorish style of architecture. The Moorish, with its wide and covered galleries, its handsome curved portals, and its large court, seems particularly adapted to this climate and our popular amusements, and we shall be proud to see a building erected that will do honour as well to the high character of its aims as to the city. The success of the club is assured; its stockholders are all prominent citizens, and its stock and charter are such as satisfied the Ontario Government to grant it letters patent at the outset.

Messrs. Williamson & Co. are following up their already important list of high-class publications by another valuable native work, "*Canadians in the Imperial Service*," by J. Hampden Burnham, of Osgoode Hall, Barrister.

It is not every Canadian who knows that "Williams of Kars" was a countryman of his own. There are many such surprises in the book, which is composed of "over one hundred-and-fifty biographical sketches of distinguished Canadians" in the Imperial service (army and navy). The price of the book, \$1.50, places it within the reach of everybody, and its illustrations add to its value.

*The Mail* has just published a really valuable addition to our local literature, on "*Toronto, Old and New*," a Centennial memorial volume, historical, descriptive and pictorial. The historian is Mr. G. Mercer Adam, whose facile and elegant pen has so often instructed and interested us. Rev. Dr. Scadding has written an introduction to the work, and it is beautified by several hundred fine engravings. The *édition de luxe* deserves its title in every particular. There will be but few copies left on sale, subscriptions absorbing nearly the whole issue, but certainly every public and private library ought to contain a copy.

I observe for the first time in our Canadian topographical literature the portrait of a lady. The first lady physician of Canada, Dr. Emily Howard Jennings Stowe, who began practice here twenty years ago, and the pioneer of the advancement of women in Canada, appears among her confrères of the profession. Dr. Stowe is of U. E. L. stock.

A son of the Right Rev. the Bishop of Algoma has come before the public as a poet. I hope to have a few words respecting his verse in another letter.

Political affairs have crowded everything else to the wall; the air is full of election talk. Prof. Goldwin Smith's late address on "Loyalty," before the Young Liberals' Club, has deceived none but those who cannot or will not analyse public speeches, and there are many who say that the Professor's views of loyalty are as expressive of disloyalty as if they were so intended. Loyalty means something far higher than self-interest, let who will gloze it over with phrases.

S. A. CURZON.

## POINTS.

BY ACUS.

To point a moral and adorn a tale!

—Johnson: *Vanity of Human Wishes*.

There seems to be a growing distaste for the capital "I," and a feeling that it is not such a capital letter after all. Indeed, numbers of unassuming people are so much afraid of the "ego," that they might almost be said to be *egophobists*. Probably no letter of the alphabet has bored so many people, or figured in so many falsehoods. How often upon opening a letter, the first thing that strikes one between the eyes (pardon the suggestion of a pun) is an able-bodied capital "I." And the same capital usually waxes more aggressive in inverse ratio to the importance of the individual. Certain lecturers cause the letter to figure largely in aged and pre-historic anecdotes; because they consider it necessary to introduce the *personal element*. But with most of us it is like the "head of Charles I," which used to bother Mr. Dick so much; and will slip in, in spite of us.

Heroism sometimes appears under strange guises. The habit of chewing tobacco, for example, is manifestly very far from admirable; and the noxious weed is about the last thing in the world that one would expect to find figuring prominently in any act of especial virtue. But an old soldier who, like Solon Shingle, had "fit in the Revolutionary War," used to relate with some degree of pride his unselfish conduct in dividing his small remaining supply of chewing tobacco among his comrades, whose store of it had become exhausted. It was not an easy thing to do. And anyone who uses the weed will be in a position to appreciate the situation. Being frequently without food and without rest, but with hard work ahead, the soldiers naturally placed great value upon the soothing drug. They well knew that should their supply of tobacco run out they would experience not only the hardships incidental to their lot as soldiers, but in addition a certain reaction as the result of their former indulgence in the weed. When therefore, for the benefit of others, one deprived himself in the manner indicated, he afforded a curious but not wholly ignoble instance of self-denial.

Two ladies recently acquired some celebrity by remonstrating against what they considered to be ill-treatment of a street-car horse in Quebec, the horse's neck having been severely chafed by a refractory collar. The conduct of these ladies was fully in accord with a growing sentiment that man is not sufficiently considerate in his treatment of his four-footed friend, the horse. The public press of late has contained considerable comment and correspondence on the subject of the check-rein. Of the check-rein it may be said, on the one hand, that a horse that looks well without it does not need it; and, on the other hand, a horse that does not look well without it is not worth trying it on. But as human beings are wont to torture themselves for the sake of style, they are only consistent in doing the same thing to their horses.

As a sort of corollary to the old maxim that division of labour is half the labour done, one might say that *beginning* of labour is, well, a considerable fraction of the labour done. Who is there, for example, that in writing a letter does not undergo moments of dire perplexity as to exactly where and how to begin. Our amusement at the throes of Sam Weller in beginning his letter to Mary, the housemaid, is not indeed wholly unmingled with sympathy; but once he had squared his elbows and fairly got to work he did not make a bad fist of it, all things considered. The public speaker also labours under the same difficulty as to where to begin. And his stereotyped "as accustomed as I am" is about the worst beginning; but it is a beginning, and he desperately plunges into it. Indeed, I have often observed in relation to studies that the beginning of any subject is the most difficult part of it. The dry bones of perplexing inflections, the strangely inverted arrangement of words, and all the evasive technicalities of grammar face at the very outset the student of the sciences who as yet catches no glimpse of the elysian fields beyond. The dry bones of legal terminology face the law student long before he has any idea of legal principles. And I verily believe that there are people who remain in ignorance of certain important subjects, for no other reason than that they are perplexed as to exactly where and how they should begin their investigations.