

better part of a week, presents a phase of our national life which holds its own important position among our organized, aggressive, and persevering factors. Morn, noon and night the women met, reported, debated, reasoned, appealed and convinced, in a manner which must forever have set at rest the insinuating speculations about their special sphere, and must have finally decided that, in the Province of Quebec at least, the sphere of woman is dictated and limited only by what she can do. If the same test were relentlessly applied to the sphere of man we should probably see a greater upheaval of society than could have been predicted by the most superstitious advocate or opponent of the improvement of the status of woman. So quietly have women opened their eyes; so gradually have they drawn themselves together; so feminately (not effeminately, that is confined to men) have they laid before themselves certain privileges, claimed them, and won; so unostentatiously are they enjoying the privileges and fulfilling all the conditions exacted of these privileges, that we have to bethink ourselves before we can say where we are.

The amount of business brought before the conference, and the spirit in which it was introduced and discussed, were equally credible. Reports, departments, delegates followed each other in a fashion rather surprising, at least on our side of the line. Miss Barber, in giving in her year's report, as Superintendent of the Prison and Rescue Work of the Union, made a statement and an appeal which has been deemed worthy of special publication. From Nova Scotia to British Columbia, 2,500 letters have been sent to prisoners through the Letter Mission. Books and magazines have been supplied to them. The tobacco pledge has been added to that of temperance among boys. An appeal was made for a Provincial Protestant Reformatory Prison, where a system of thorough classification might be carried out. At present young girls must be put into the common gaol with old and hardened criminals. The feature of Miss Barber's report is her Shelter Home, open day and night, and which has received 1,000 outcasts. All these unfortunates, however, are not our own. The half of them come from England, and another fourth from Scotland and Ireland, doubtless, among the "able-bodied" that we are so blindly coaxing and paying to come to our shores. These are the beings who at one and the same time swell the boast of our Dominion Immigration Returns and the accommodation of our hospitals and prisons. Any one who was privileged to listen to Miss Barber's report, her hands and her heart fresh from living contact with the iniquity, disease and misery which is in the world, and which the world, I mean the world's own world, little dreams of, must have been struck with the ghastly presence to Christianizing life which "our several denominations" as we call them, claim.

Our Jewish fellow-citizens have celebrated their New-Year's Day, the 5650th. In the various synagogues imposing ceremonial services were performed, with impressive sermons and the sounding *shofar* calling the people to a timely repentance, and a sense of the flight of time.

The Montreal Presbytery have discussed the advisability of holding evening sessions to encourage a wider interest in the government of the Church.

VILLE MARIE.

LONDON DOCKMEN.

A SONNET.

Not walls of wood, nor iron, nor triple steel,
Old England, are thy strongest, surest guard,
But those vast armies who, for small reward,
Toil weekly underneath Oppression's heel,
Who, though their heavy burdens make them reel
And drop from very weariness and pain,
Turn not on those who rob them of their gain,
But humbly plead in piteous appeal.
O seagirt isle, so long as these endure,
So long in splendour may'st thou rule the waves,
And from their wealth in lordly homes secure
Well may thy nobles see their toiling slaves,
For thou art rich because thou hast such poor,
And thou art poor because thou hast such knaves.

WILLIAM MCGILL.

THE LOVE OF NOTORIETY.

AMONG the vast changes which have passed over the civilized world within the memory of living men, one, comparatively insignificant, has, I think, hitherto escaped observation. It is the disestablishment of fame. From earliest classic days to the verge of our own, the desire of renown, the thirst for fame, was a passion not merely readily confessed, but boastfully claimed as highly commendable in itself, and befitting the character of the purest patriot or the loftiest poet. It were to run over the whole field of literature from Pindar to Pope, to exhibit the ingenuous candor wherewith the anxiety to be celebrated, the longing for the "laurel crown," the desire that his name should be "trumpeted" of the "goddess," was avowed by, or attributed confidently to, every conqueror, statesman, artist, or poet. To remain "to fortune and to fame unknown" was an unbearable grievance in the eyes of the man who gave "Endymion" to the world, and whose soul Shelley thought was

Beckoning from the abodes . . . Like a star
Where the eternal are.

Greeks and Romans believed, with Pliny, that "the happiest of all men is he who lives in the conscious certainty of posthumous fame"; and the renaissance, which

was the ghost of paganism revisiting Europe, re-enthroned the old goddess on high, and manifestly counted her wreath as immeasurably more splendid than the aureole of a saint. The meekest of Christian ecclesiastics, who had preached the Beatitudes all his days, was, if he attained to a bishopric, certain to be commemorated on his monument by an epitaph including some such lines as:

*Cujus in laudibus celebrandus
Nec Fama loquar,*

and in extreme cases to take his final rest under a sprawling marble woman armed with a two-foot-long trumpet.

Nothing brought home to the consciousness of men of our generation the fact that the love of fame was gone out of date, so thoroughly as the simplicity of the last of the true Greek-souled artists, John Gibson, who was wont to the end of his days to confess it in the most startling manner, and *tout bonnement* left his whole fortune of £32,000 to perpetuate his "fame" by the erection of a gallery of his works, under the auspices of the Royal Academy. We may look in vain in 1890 for any sculptor, poet, politician, or soldier who will avow that he works or writes or fights for fame. There may be some who, consciously or unconsciously, exert themselves under the stimulus of such a motive; but not one who will confess it, in view of the hurricane of ridicule and "chaff" which the admission would call forth. It is the correct thing to assume that we labour from pure patriotism or philanthropy, or from disinterested devotion to science or art, or even, quite candidly, for the sake of filthy lucre. There is no danger of exciting ridicule by professing any of these motives, high or low. But to admit that we thirst for fame, and act with a view to winning it, would be to make ourselves the laughing-stock of our contemporaries.

Such a change in the common estimate of a once universally-applauded passion is, of itself, noteworthy. It becomes still more singular when we find, growing up in the vacant place, a bastard-brother sentiment, the love of notoriety, and observe that though no man yet openly avows harbouring this last in his breast, multitudes are credited with it both by friends and foes, and not thought much the worse of in consequence. To confess to the ambition for fame would be to fall into mock-heroics and bathos and become the mark of satire. To betray the love of notoriety may be slightly vulgar, but readily passes muster as a rather amiable weakness by no means ridiculous, but, on the contrary, possessing many advantages, political and commercial.

According to Johnson's definition, "notoriousness" is a word "commonly used of things known to their disadvantage." Fame is, of course (unless modified by some depreciatory adjective), understood to refer to things known to their advantage, deeds worthy of praise, "splendid transactions," of which the superlative degree is "glorious." Here we arrive at the remarkable conclusion, that men have ceased to avow their desire to be renowned for "things known to their advantage," but are not ashamed of being supposed to desire to be renowned for things known to their disadvantage! Notoriety, in short, is fame, *minus* that element of honour and approval of the public conscience which rendered the thirst for it commendable. Men in our own day, like gluttons, care for the quantity of their celebrity, not, like gourmets, for its quality. Carried to its proper *reductio ad absurdum*, we see this state of feeling exemplified by the young readers of "penny dreadfuls," who sigh for the renown of a Dick Turpin, and are indifferent to the prizes of their village school. It may not be wasted time to make a little study of this modern love of notoriety, which is pervading so many hearts in Europe, and still more (it is commonly believed) in America, and which bids fair to become an important factor in human concerns in all future generations. What are the essential springs of the sentiment, and what are its claims to contempt or sympathy?

In truth, there are (legitimately) in every human soul two opposing forces: the centripetal, which draws us to our kind, and the centrifugal, which causes us to isolate ourselves. We are impelled by an inward necessity to seek a social existence, and so create human society, and at the same time to vindicate the great fact of personality, and so secure individuality. Even the humblest man cannot, without breaking the law of his being, allow his personality to be swamped or merged in that of another or of any corporate body, or sink from a man into a number. The prison authorities who, for their own convenience, or perhaps with the humane intention of effacing black records, have reduced convicts from "George" or "John" or "Jane," to "Number Fifty-three" or "Six Hundred and Forty" or "One Thousand and Ninety-five," have all unwittingly created a new source of disturbance and revolt, a source which unhappily works most persistently in the higher-natured criminals, of whom each in his dim way feels that he *must* assert his individuality, *must* be noticed for something, as a man, and not be counted over as a number. This "something" is, of course, where so little freedom exists, more frequently rebellious disorder than good conduct.

My attention was first awakened to this fact of psychology when I attempted for some years to aid my venerated friend, Mary Carpenter, in her labours of love at Red Lodge Reformatory for Criminal Girls. Our poor little charges, who had all been committed to the reformatory for theft or some other offence, were of course dressed in uniform, and treated with the greatest possible equality of justice and tenderness. But every one of them, down to the most miserable, saddened little creature, required to be individually noticed, praised, blamed, looked at, and

addressed by name. Any neglect to follow this rule invariably led to self-assertion and naughtiness, culminating sometimes in apparently motiveless fury. Outside of prisons, the same necessity for the vindication of the *ego* exists, though it naturally assumes less offensive forms. Where the full tribute to fit is paid by affectionate and appreciative friends, it never needs to emerge into activity. It is easy to be humble when all around us love and praise us. The difficulty is to avoid angry self-assertion when our neighbours ignore alike our good and evil qualities, or treat us as nullities.

Viewed from this standpoint we may find, I think, even in the vulgar love of notoriety, a development, coarse and excessive indeed, but still a genuine development, of legitimate self-assertion. Or we may even go further, and say that it is also an abnormal development of the more than legitimate, the righteous and beautiful, desire for the sympathy of our kind. The public speaker who for the first time masters his voice and words, and feels the thrill of a common emotion passing electrically between himself and his audience, experiences an enrichment, an enlargement of his personal life, which is a revelation of the resources of human sympathy, hidden forever in those dumb lives which find no outlet either in tongue or pen. It may, perhaps, to some natures supply something of the same kind of extended and multiplied personality, to win notoriety, and to know their names and acts to be on many lips.

But, on the threshold of notoriety, for whatsoever reason it may be sought or coveted (of course, it is often simply a matter of trade profits, and worth so many pounds or dollars), we are bound to recognize the existence of those opposing tastes as regards publicity and privacy, which, as they may be partitioned, inevitably render notoriety *pur et simple* a pleasure or a pain. To the man who inherits the old-world sentiments (or prejudices, whichever we may call them) in favour of privacy, it is impossible that notoriety, even of the most favourable kind, should not bring with it a sense of violation of the *bien-séances*, of being "rubbed the wrong way," of derogation of dignity, almost such as is felt by the poor inmate of an Eastern *zenana* when brought unveiled into the street. On the other hand, a man or woman brought up with the familiar sense of publicity, for instance, a person connected with the stage, generally accepts any amount of notoriety without roughening a hair.

The difference extends to nations. On no subject do English and American tastes differ more widely than on the pains and pleasures of publicity. The average Englishman, from the highest to the lowest, entertains a profound conviction that privacy is an invaluable privilege for which it is quite worth while to barter, as regards his abode and grounds, light, air, and beauty; and as regards his domestic circle, all the intellectual pleasures of varied society. If he be owner of a fine estate, he builds a high wall or a lofty paling, often excluding lovely and extended views, round his park; and if he be a shop-keeper, he prefers to spend a summer evening in a stuffy back parlour behind impenetrable blinds, rather than to sit, as a Frenchman or German does every evening, at a table before a *café* in the airiest and liveliest street. Even the British drudge who earns her scant livelihood as a charwoman, will boast that when she goes "home" to her poor lodging-room, she "always keeps herself to herself," and ignores with conscious pride the occupant of the adjacent garret. Until the rise of the pestilent "society papers" in London, no public journal described the homes, the furniture, the dress, or the habits of eminent men and women, except perhaps in the case of a grandiose *Morning Post* report of a particularly splendid ball or state dinner, or the court milliners' list of dresses at the Queen's drawing-room. Even to this day, when all manner of breaches have been made in the wall of the Englishman's "castle," he remains attached to the idea of a broad distinction between public and private life, and resents any infringement of the line where he still flatters himself he can divide himself, as a private individual, from himself as a statesman, author, or artist. The Queen and her great poet laureate, at the summit of all "fame," are perhaps in the whole nation the two who would feel most indignant at any invasion of their still-reserved privacy.

Having never enjoyed the privilege of a visit to the United States, I am not in a position to describe accurately the current sentiment of Americans on this subject, but such experience as I and many friends have had, and the whole tone of American literature and journalism so far as is known to me, indicate that the invasion of a man's privacy, so far from being held to constitute an affront, is rather felt in America to involve a compliment. An American expects to receive smiling thanks from his friend for publishing a paragraph about him for which an Englishman would fear he might be "cut." The American practice of combining the duties of a leader-writer to a great newspaper with that of purveyor of news (a union of duties unheard of in English journalism), must be partly answerable for the horrid fashion of everlasting personal gossip which the London society newspapers have unhappily introduced into England. Some time ago, an American gentleman, who could scarcely have been a common reporter, asked me in a private letter to tell him who were the ladies and gentlemen who had subscribed to swell a fund which he was collecting for a special purpose. In a letter (which I supposed would be equally private) I gave the desired information, and then, to my unbounded astonishment, received a note from the inquirer, saying he meant to publish my interesting reply in a certain American newspaper. Knowing how much the persons con-