

during the current year, is a magnificent edifice worthy to stand as a monument of the growth and prosperity of the Empire under the present ruler. Some idea of its dimensions may be gleaned from the fact, that its frontage alone extends rather more than 750 feet, whilst the summit of the centre tower which crowns the fabric, attains a height of no less than 350 feet. The style of architecture adopted is a free rendering of the Renaissance, and all that modern artistic skill and ingenuity could devise has been done to render the Imperial Institute worthy of its title. The objects and purposes to which the interior of this splendid building is to be devoted are concisely set forth in the following extract from its charter—the charter of the “Imperial Institute of the United Kingdom, the Colonies and India, and the Isles of the British Seas:—”

1. The formation and exhibition of collections, representing the raw materials and manufactured products of the Empire, so maintained as to illustrate the development of agricultural, commercial, and industrial progress.

2. The establishment or promotion of commercial museums, sample rooms, and intelligence offices in London and other parts of the Empire.

3. The collection and dissemination of such information relating to trades and industries, to emigration, and to other purposes of the charter as may be of use to the subjects of the Empire.

4. The furtherance of systematic colonization.

To Canada, as the largest of the dependencies, and the one deemed particularly available for the immigration which is required for the proper development of its vast resources, has been allotted the whole of the western gallery, with the additional advantage of a main entrance of its own. By this disposition the Dominion receives rather over 100 yards of a gallery, 20 ft. 6 in. in breadth, and 20 ft. 6 in. in height, for the exhibition of her products and resources. Each separate Province has its own section, in which to show its special features and attractions, and the kinds of products and manufactures for which it is best adapted, and here, in return, the prospective emigrant can find visible proof of the prosperity of the country.

In an article by the Curator of the Canadian section, Mr. Harrison Watson, and his assistant, Mr. Frederick Plumb, which accompanies the Report, we are informed that “Already two or three of the Provinces have made considerable progress with their collections, and it can only be hoped that the others will hasten to forward their contributions, so that on the day of inauguration the whole Dominion, from Atlantic to Pacific, will be able to show uninterrupted evidence of its wealth and enterprise. India, Australia, and the other Colonies, are all making great efforts and it should be the aim and desire of Canadians to eclipse all others. There is a market here for many of our products at present almost unknown; and the success of the Imperial Institute means the further development of our already rapidly increasing export trade.

Whoever fails to turn aside the ills of life by prudent forethought, must submit to fulfil the course of destiny.—Schiller.

The Berlin correspondent of the Standard, tells of a new invention which claims absolutely to do away with smoke from the combustion of coal. The coal is ground into powder and injected into the boiler by means of a current of air, when it immediately becomes ignited from a small fire near the mouth. Other currents supply the air necessary for combustion. The dust burns in one continuous intense flame, and not an atom escapes as smoke.

## OTTAWA LETTER.

To make capital out of the Capital when letter writing is common is something like the proverbial brickmaking without straw. Apart from the House, and the public questions which may be discussed in consequence of its session, there is but little “in the air” of much general interest. No one does or says anything very naughty or very nice, brilliant or stupid. Weather is just—weather, and at present stolid, and though a “burning question” would, as a mere item for improving the temperature, be a God-send, questions are not, at this moment inflammable; our matches are all of the innocent kind that “strike only on the box.” Meantime, let us first speak of the House. Why “House?” There is a comfortable, cosy, home-like, fireside sound about the word which is not fully borne out by realization. It suggests the happy family and the Saturday night tubbing, whereas a menagerie would often be a better image, and as the soiled lingerie is always displayed with the utmost possible openness, the public wash house rises to the mind as a suitable synonym.

The House, then, is in a moral frame of mind. Mr. Amyot wants to compel every body who has no “reasonable excuse” to exercise his franchise and vote at the polls, under penalty of a ten dollar fine. Mr. Charlton persists in his efforts to keep people at home on Sunday, and Mr. Weldon has introduced a Bill for the disfranchising for the term of eight years of electors found to have taken bribes for their votes, and for the appointment of commissioners to make inquiry upon oath into cases where a petition signed by twenty-five or more electors of any district alleges that bribery has occurred. As indicating the pallid existence of that rare growth, a standard of high morality in matters political amongst even a small section of the people of Canada, this Bill is at any rate a curiosity. With those, however, who know how these things are worked, and who have faith in the ingenuity with which self-interest, which is of course the basis of all political action, can protect its own concerns there will be no alarm.

The proposal of the Ministerial Bill for allowing life assurances to a limited extent, \$2,000, to members of the civil service, is a good move and one as much in the interests of the country at large, as of the employees. It makes provision for the benefit of survivors a matter of compulsion, and will remove to a considerable extent, the claims on the country's sympathy which widows and orphans of deceased civil servants now put forward, resulting often in an undesirable increase of the staff of departments. It will probably not be found to effect to any injurious extent the operations of the ordinary Life Assurance Companies; indeed, as tending to establish firmly the principle that such a provision is a matter of duty, it may be found beneficial to their interests.

A curiously subtle Bill is that of M. Choquette, the object of which is to make admission to the civil service dependent on ability to speak, read and write both the English and French languages. Seeing that with almost all classes of Frenchmen bred in this country the knowledge of English comes by force of circumstances, to be as much a matter of course, from their childhood up, as is the knowledge of

their own tongue; whereas, in the case of the English or Canadian bred, there is not the same compelling force, leading them to the acquisition of French, the result of examinations conducted on the lines of the proposed Bill must be that the average Frenchman will pass in triumphantly and with no difficulty, while the average English Canadian will find himself hopelessly barred.

The stockings of our pretty maids are in a fair way to become, if not the pronounced Boston blue, at any rate, of a very alluring cerulean tint. Amongst the passing fancies of our fashionable belles is a craze for acrostics, for which Lord Kilcourse, A.D.C., is responsible. He deserves, if he does not receive it, a prize medal as a popular educator. To fathom the dark mysteries of his clever compositions there is such a poring over of dictionaries, an unearthing of quotations, and a searching of histories as will, if it lasts, make Ottawa an educational hot-bed. I have already found one young lady who has discovered that it was Shakespeare and not Milton who wrote Love's Labour Lost, and though she is not quite clear at present of what precise loss the blind poet sung, she has it clearly laid down in her mind that he did contribute something to the advertising columns of his daily paper in that connection. After all, why be clearer?—“Les blanches epaules, et les bras blancs, n'ont pas besoin de savoir le grammaire.”

Ice hockey is a cult in Ottawa, and competing teams play under the stimulus of thousands of keen eyes and the roars of enthusiastic crowds. Every deed of pluck, agility, or tact, meets with full appreciation, and the highest, prettiest, wisest and witliest of the city are devoted to the game. Recently our local crack team, the “Ottawas,” whose laurels now form a most respectable bush, gained a tremendous victory over the Crystals of Montreal, taking no less than 11 out of the 12 goals. The Crystals have a reputation but, for some reason, could make no headway. With the manliness of all true athletes, they gave honest credit to the victors at the close of the game and, caps in air, joined in the cheers which filled the building. Again the Ottawas defeated by four to one, an excellent team from Winnipeg, whose individual play made them most worthy foes, but who failed in the combined action which brings victory. Since the Session opened, Ottawa has as usual been at its gayest. Receptions, dances, afternoon teas, and musical parties have followed in quick succession, and though nothing wildly exciting has come off, yet our visitors have not been without distractions.

The calamity in the shape of serious sickness of two of her sons in England has made it necessary for Lady Stanley to cancel all her entertainment engagements which included some musical evenings and a big ball. There is, of course, nothing but sympathy for the trouble which has clouded the closing months of their Excellencies' residence here. It can only be trusted that youth and good constitution may be effective even where medical skill is helpless, and that this most happy and loveable family may be able to leave us in all the sunshine of their past years.

A problem which will probably bring more serious difficulties to succeeding years