

## A TRIP TO ENGLAND.—III.

parchment in hand, once more to preach to the barbarians? No, the dream is gone, it is only Sir Richard Cartwright, who does not wear a nimbus yet, opening the Reciprocity debate with a quotation from one of the Government's "own blue books." We are still ourselves, our country is still our own, we are still free to hope that whether the Canadian historian of the future will take special note of the 14th of March, 1888, or not, our splendid pile on Parliament Hill will never be diverted to another use. Or if we be less seriously disposed we can still laugh at the vain imaginings of the crowd, and congratulate ourselves that the decree of the times makes our representatives more practical in their forecasts.

After the long interval of speculation, during which so many probabilities have been offered us as to the ultimate fate of this question, it is with a sense of decided relief and comfortable certainty of knowing what to expect, that one looks down upon our Canadian Commons and sees the issue fully espoused by the Liberal party, and unmistakably cast out by the Conservatives. It is a disappointment to such imaginative persons as have expected the discussion of so vital a question to obliterate party lines for the time; but a gratification to people devoid of that gentle and pleasing optimism, who are in the majority among the frequenters of the galleries. Among these the opinion goes that it is well to give the matter the vitality and propulsive power of a policy, even a policy hampered and tied by party considerations, and to leave the obliteration of the lines aforesaid to the effacing power of the people.

It is a reflection forced upon the listener to this debate that the gentlemen of the defence are relying considerably upon the chance that the principle which will dictate the votes when a division is taken will operate with equal infallibility at the next general election. Otherwise it is not easy to understand why they confine their arguments so exclusively within the limits laid down by political tradition for the repulse of the enemy. Doubtless it is the temptation of security to ward off unfearful attacks with ironical questionings of the motives of the attacking party, but surely the security that warrants the employment of this kind of defence at the present juncture must be very secure. The onlooker wonders whether in the consideration of so vast and important a scheme, in which their interests are so closely and vitally bound up, the Canadian people will take as much interest in these pleasantries as usual. Whatever inconsistencies may have been developed in its evolution there is no doubt that the question of enlarged trade relations with the United States has at last been brought squarely before the people. Whatever uncertainty has attached to its name—and being an infant agitation some degree of vacillation in the parental mind might have been expected on this point—it has been publicly and finally christened Unrestricted Reciprocity. However disputed and indefinite its paternity has been, the onerous responsibilities attaching thereto have been unreservedly undertaken by the Liberal party. This is the situation, but the Conservatives appear to be more deeply concerned about the individual circumstances that led to the situation. From their point of view they have thus far been able to see little but the anterior. The fact that an honourable gentleman opposite has experienced a change in his views upon this question appears to be of deeper interest and greater consequence than the considerations which the honourable gentleman is willing to submit as justifying the experience. It certainly offers a more tempting opportunity for facetiousness, but it is more than doubtful whether the country, looking to this debate for the amplest instruction in its subject, would not prefer less ridicule and more refutation. The Spirit of the Times seems to be with the Liberals, that practical hard-headed Spirit that regards Sir Richard Cartwright's facts and figures with respect, but will have none of the Hon. White's glittering generalities, and looks askance at the poetical patriotism of Mr. Davin, even when his ready wit illuminates and his disarming smile accompanies it. Listening to Mr. Davin when he is disposed to be wittily aggressive, by the way, one wonders if the Chamber really deserves its bear-garden reputation. For never more truly of Gany-mede than of the Member for Assiniboia might it be said that faster than his tongue did make offence his eye did heal it up.

A very unusual combination of French eloquence and Irish enthusiasm might have been observed at a concert given here on Saturday night in honour of St. Patrick by a literary society that bears his name. The strains of "The Harp that Once Through Tara's Hall," had hardly mingled with the ultra-Hibernian sentiments of Mr. Kenny, M.P., and died away when the Hon. Mr. Chapleau arose and threw all his charm of manner, poetry of gesture, and grace of language into a short oration which, though Griffintown may fail wholly to understand it, is still tolerably sure of an echo of applause in that remote electoral district. The honourable gentleman begged his hearers to believe that he was an Irishman suffering under the disadvantage of speaking French. The Gallic quality of his English is only agreeably obvious. You may rule, you may school, the French tongue as you will, but *l'accent du Français* will hang round it still. In the case of the orator of Terrebonne however, this is an additional charm, and only makes one wish that his English hearers were as well able to appreciate him in his native language as his French ones are in a foreign one. Mr. Chapleau "was not a judge," and "did not wish to be a judge" of Irish methods of obtaining justice; but his sympathy was with Ireland, for he too, as he said with inimitable effect belonged to a race that had fought for its birthright, that had suffered for its freedom. Notwithstanding his non-judicial capacity the honourable gentleman made one forcible comment upon the wisdom of "tearing the British Constitution to shreds to make bandages for wounds which all the political doctors of the realm were unable to heal." On the whole the speech approached the unbounded requirements of the occasion more closely than might have been expected, and was received with the enthusiasm that the probable sacrifice of prejudice involved deserved.

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OXFORD and Cambridge belong at once to the past and to the present. These university cities, with their numerous colleges, are peculiar to England. In Canada and the United States each college is a university. But the universities of Oxford and Cambridge are federations of colleges. The university is the federal authority, holds the examinations, grants all the degrees and honours, and through its staff of professors carries on the higher teaching; though the duties of an Oxford or Cambridge professor are held to consist as much in the advancement of learning or science as in teaching, with which he is not overburdened. It is governed by a university council and a legislature. But each college is a corporation in itself, having, so to speak, its own state rights, holding and administering its own estates, governed by its own Head and Fellows, exercising discipline over its own students within its walls, and conducting the ordinary teaching through its staff of tutors. The immediate and the closer tie of the student is to his college, while the higher tie is to the university. Originally, Oxford and Cambridge were like the German universities at the present day, the students not being collected in colleges, but boarding in private houses or in hostels. In the thirteenth century, when there was a great awakening of intellectual life in Europe, students flocked in to the English as well as to the other universities. There being then few books, knowledge was to be attained only by hearing the professors, who taught wherever they could find a hall or a stand, while the eager crowd of students drank the words of wisdom and power from their lips. Those were the days in which Roger Bacon first kindled at Oxford the lamp of science, and, as a matter of course, fell under the Church's ban as a professor of the black art. Research, since the days of the school philosophy, has become more rational and more fruitful; but never perhaps has it been so full of hope and romance as it was in the thirteenth century. Oxford, which afterwards became the citadel of Tory reaction, was then in the van of progress, political and religious as well as scientific. With all this generous activity of mind there were among the youthful population of the academical city much disorder, turbulence, and vice; there were affrays between nationalities far bloodier than the duels of German student clubs. Seeing this, and at the same time desiring to promote learning, Bishop Walter de Merton, the Chancellor of Henry III., devised an institution in which secular studies might be confined with something of the strictness of monastic discipline, and with daily religious worship. Merton College, his foundation, is the first regular college, and the dark little quadrangle, called, nobody knows why, "Mob Quad," is the cradle of collegiate life. The new institution met the needs of the time, it prospered and was imitated. College after college grew up both at Oxford and Cambridge. The taste for founding them waxed as that for founding monasteries waned. Pre-eminent among them at Oxford were New College, founded by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, and Chancellor of Edward III., to which a school for boys at Winchester was attached as a seed-plot; Magdalen College, the loveliest of all homes of learning, founded by William of Waynflete, another Bishop of Winchester, and Chancellor of Henry VI., in the stormy days of the Wars of the Roses; Christ Church, the splendid conception of Wolsey, and magnificent still, though shorn of half its projected grandeur by its founder's fall; and at Cambridge, Trinity, with its ample courts and the pictures of Newton, Bentley, and Bacon in its noble hall. The type of all is a quadrangle of semi-monastic character, a common dining-hall, and a domestic chapel. Gradually the colleges absorbed the free university, and at last all students were constrained by law to be members of colleges. In the Catholic Middle Ages intellectual institutions were clerical, and this requirement surviving, with a mass of other mediæval and semi-monastic regulations embodied in the Statutes of Founders, the epoch to which they belonged, paralyzed the colleges after the Reformation and made them and the universities which they had absorbed little more than seminaries of the clerical profession. Oxford especially sank into an organ of the Jacobite clergy and their party. The consequence was a century and a half of literary and scientific torpor, redeemed by few great names, of which Cambridge, where practically clericalism prevailed least, had the most illustrious. With the renewal of progress in the present century came reform, or rather emancipation, and Oxford and Cambridge are now once more at the head of intellectual England, though they never can be again what they were in the thirteenth century, when the only source of knowledge was the oral teaching of the professor. Perhaps they will always be centres of learning more than of experimental science, which takes the world for its field.

A great change has lately come not only over the literary, but over the social life of the colleges. The mediæval fraternities of students being clerical, were celibate, nor did the structure and arrangements of the college admit family life. From the retention of the statutable celibacy, while mediæval asceticism was discarded, grew the social life of the college Common Room. That life was pleasant enough while the Fellow was young; but its luxury palled at last, and as years crept on it became dreary, and was gladly exchanged for a college benefice, on which the Fellow could marry. The retention of celibacy indeed had another and a curious effect on specially clerical and religious natures: combined with the mediæval character of the buildings and associations it had a tendency to revive the monk, and thus Oxford Colleges produced Newman and the leaders of the Anglo-Catholic reaction, as two centuries before they had been the nursing mothers of the ecclesiastical reaction under Laud. But now the rule of celibacy has been relaxed, and a circle of married professors and tutors has come into existence, which, combining intellectuality with the simplicity of living enforced by moderate incomes, forms a society about