

What can one say of the Ice Carnival, except that it was exceedingly hot and very badly managed, and not to be compared in point of beauty to the Silver Fête, one of the prettiest and most successful of the entertainments of last year? Handsome Princess Mary of Teck—it seems hardly credible that this lady's father was a lad about the Court when Fanny Burney's diary was written, that there is but one life between the Princess and the old, mad, blind, despised and dying king of the beginning of this century—accompanied by a diffident, uninteresting daughter, took part in a rapid little ceremony on a dais, and then, making a tour of the place, went purchasing right and left. The better class of stallholders wore no fancy dress; they never do at these entertainments. A very tall person dressed as a Red Indian (a niece, we were told, of Walt Whitman) skirmished into the open, and sold cigarettes at an immense profit, while her companion at the American stall, the lady who wrote a pleasant little book called *Old Boston*, remained in ambush; between them, it is said, they made in the three days near four hundred pounds. The author of *Booth's Baby* sold her own stories for the benefit of the charity. So much I discovered, but what the other stalls held I did not find out, the crowd was so immense. The atmosphere was of the tropics, yet snow laid thick on the gables of the little houses that were supposed to represent the different nations—snow made of cottonwool, icicles of cut-glass. To agree with the surroundings, those ladies who ventured into fancy dress should have worn fur and thick winter garments; but with a curious inconsistency they chose instead (particularly if they were short and fat and middle-aged) thin white gowns, and flowing summer skirts, which, with powdered hair, and girlish sashes and necklaces, and girlish wiles, were, according to their opinion, more suitable to the occasion. It requires to my mind, a combination of gifts to act the part of a *belles marquisse* with any chance of success; that ladies whose physical charms are not numerous should attempt such a rôle in the glare of a March afternoon, surrounded by a critical crowd of all sorts and conditions of men, speaks much for the ladies' courage though little for their discretion. The space was too confined, the crowd too great for the affair to have been a success socially, though commercially, I hear, nothing could have been better. That part of the audience who are not in Society contented themselves by standing immovable and keeping one of their eyes fixed on Miss Yorke, the other on the Duke of Portland, feeling their entrance-money well invested if to their friends afterwards they could accurately describe this happy couple; others again found comfort in chaffing and being chaffed, perfectly oblivious of the surrounding gapers. A few only kept by their stalls and sold their goods decently and in order. An odd sight, and not a very edifying one. I think one gentle *Marguerite* did not make up for many violent *Incrognables*, and terrible, skittish, plump visions in paint and powder put into the shade those few ladies who came clothed and in their right minds.

WALTER POWELL.

SUPPRESSION OF GENIUS IN WOMEN—I.

CHARLOTTE AND EMILY BRONTË.

WE often hear of the danger of suppressed gout, or suppressed scarlet fever, but seldom the danger of suppressed genius; yet if the one kind of suppression may cause death, or permanent injury to the body, the other is just as likely to cause the decay or distortion of the mind. Few and far between are those to whom the mere satisfaction of putting their thoughts and conceptions into words is sufficient reward. Genius craves recognition, apprehension, sympathy, and without such incitements is apt to lose heart and hope, and even to doubt the reality of its own existence. If especially gifted, and strong in the consciousness of his own powers, the baffled aspirant for a recognized place and name in literature may persevere till success is at last achieved, but seldom without some visible scars to attest the wounds he has received in the strife. Carlyle was a strong man, and had the fullest faith in his genius, but his frequent failures to get what he felt to be his just claims acknowledged and his long apprenticeship to disappointment and discouragement irretrievably injured the temper of his mind, and were the source of that occasional savagery and bitterness of speaking which marred his essentially noble and humane character.

No doubt there are a few, even among poets, of that happy, healthy temperament "equal to either fortune." Scott was emphatically one of these. The cheerful good humour with which he saw his vivid and picturesque poems, after gaining what was then unexampled popularity, completely eclipsed by Byron's impassioned and splendid verse, and turned to find expression for his genius in a new and what he considered an inferior sphere of art, shows that he possessed an amount of good sense and magnanimity that must always be exceptional. Then there are prophet-souls like Wordsworth, whose belief in their own inspiration needs no assurance from without, and who will continue to deliver their message whether the world listens or not. Or men like Southey, stoical in principle, ethical in aspiration, writing epics for posterity. But in general the artist-nature is differently constituted; not stoical, or self-sufficing, but sensitive, impassioned, with fibres tremblingly responsive to all the emotions and influences that connect human lives together. The sympathy of his fellow mortals is as necessary to the artist as sunshine to the opening of the rose; neglect or disapproba-

tion checks the expansion of his genius, as cold wind or frost nips and withers the coming blossom. The faculties that assured of their reality and worth by the approval of competent judges, to the sympathy of kindred minds, would have gone on developing their talents in harmony and joy, pine or die, or grow bitter and morbid "like sweet bells jangled, harsh and out of tune."

Women endowed with intellectual gifts feel as keenly as men,

How dull it is
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use;

and as they have generally more sensibility and less strength, and are in every way less able to combat obstacles, or overcome discouragements, they naturally suffer more from repressed and unused faculties. Many proofs of such suffering and its baneful influence are to be found in the lives of women who afterwards made themselves a high place in literature. Other women, with perhaps as much genius, have lived all their lives under the bondage of that "unspiritual god and mis-creator, circumstance," till the thwarting and repressing of their highest instincts and powers ended in mental imbecility, incurable bodily disease, or premature death.

Charlotte Brontë told Mrs. Gaskell that her early craving for some means of expressing her ideas almost amounted to physical illness, and doubtless this long unsatisfied desire, and her subjection to a narrow and restricted rule of life and thought, accounts for much of the morbid, self-tormenting vein in her character, which made the circumstances of her sad life still sadder than they might have been. Against the conventional subjection of women she makes a mild protest in "Shirley," and a more passionate one in "Villette," but she never really escaped from it. Her marriage to her father's common-place curate only strengthened its hold on a nature to which repression had long been a sacred law. Emily Brontë, whose genius was more subjective, as well as more vital and intense, than Charlotte's, literally died of suppressed faculties and an imprisoned soul. Not finding those consolations in religion which sustained her sisters, she sought support in an almost Pagan stoicism, and stern submission to fate; but not in silence. She found some relief in her impassioned lyrics, in which she utters the cry of her chained and tortured spirit with true poetic inspiration; and in her one marvellous novel she attempted to clear her mind of the dark, distorted images, the wild fancies and smouldering fire of revolt, which the wretched discord between her genius and its aspirations, and the cramped conditions of her lot, excited in a spirit as intensely enamoured of freedom as ever drew painful breath in bondage. No wonder that *Wuthering Heights* should be a unique book, as it certainly is. Unique in its grim, grotesque humour, in its wild, repulsive tragedy, its passionate nature-worship, and its fitful gleams of almost unearthly beauty, sweetness and pathos, like rifts of sunshine piercing through a lurid and stormy sky. There can hardly be anything stranger in life and literature than the production of three such remarkable novels as *Villette*, *Wuthering Heights* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, written by three sisters, who lived and died in that gray old north country parsonage, with the graves of many generations lying about it, and the lonely moors, "in winter so dreary, in summer so divine," stretching in heath-covered waves behind.

We may read in the *Life* of George Eliot how restless, discontented and unhappy she was while her creative powers lay dormant, and the rust of unused faculties was eating into her soul. In after years, when she had found her proper work, which she held to be that of an æsthetic teacher, inspiring the nobler emotions and enforcing the human sanctities that elevate men's lives, through dramatic impersonations, and when the world's verdict satisfied her that she had not mistaken her vocation, her joy in the new life that had opened to her was touching. As more and more evidence "that she was able to touch the hearts of men, and sprinkle some precious grain as the result of the long years when she was inert and suffering" came to her, her joy and thankfulness increased. "I am a very blessed woman," she writes to a friend, "am I not, to have all this reason for thankfulness that I have lived; that my past life has vindicated its usefulness, and given me cause to rejoice that such an unpromising woman-child has been born into the world." Yet, deep and wide as this woman's intellect was, it needed sympathy and appreciation for its full development. "I am the better," she says, "for every word of encouragement." Encouragement in the fullest measure she had from Lewes, in whose judgment she had unlimited confidence. Without his warm sympathy and critical approbation, her books would never have been written.

LOUISA MURRAY.

GREAT BRITAIN has the largest navy, although Italy has the greatest ships. Great Britain has 14 obsolete iron-clads, 8 non-obsolete coast-guard iron-clad vessels, and 50 sea-going. France has 13 obsolete, 14 coast-guard non-obsolete, and 31 sea-going iron-clads. Italy has 9 obsolete and 12 sea-going iron-clads. Fifty British vessels can steam over 12 knots an hour and less than 20; 31 French can steam over 12 and less than 16 knots; 12 Italian over 13 and less than 16 knots. Of the whole number of sea-going iron-clads having guns that can pierce 20 inches and upward of iron Great Britain has 28.84 per cent.; France, 30.76 per cent.; Italy, 19.23 per cent.; but of the whole number carrying 16 inches and over in complete water-line armour Great Britain has 35.70 per cent.; France, 38.38 per cent.; and Italy, 11.90 per cent.

THE LITTLE RIVER AT HOME.

I've watched it oft—in years gone by—
When boisterous March was Queen;
With howling gale, or long-drawn sigh,
With rain-drop tear, or wood-wild cry,
To the river she'd often lean
And tell it tales of spring-tide life
To come when the cold was gone.
Then the river fretted and tossed in strife
Till freed by rain, and the wind's sharp knife,
It flowed unfettered along.

I've watched it when the flats were green,
With Nature's mantle new;
When leafy limbs the brown hills screen,
When nesting birds glance shy between
With wish to 'scape our view;
When far above the blue sky smiled,
And peeped in the river's face,
Commending, it seemed, the sweet May child,
Whose gifts so dear, so free, so mild,
Were scattered with lavish grace.

I've floated over its glassy sheet,
On a sultry August night.
When the moon with swiftly treading feet
Came forth from her day-long gray retreat,
Flooding the earth with light:
When her face lay down in the deep below—
All calm without start or quiver,
Her white beams fleeing—the shadows go,
Till a silvery sheen like sprinkled snow,
Folds hill and dale and river.

I've dipped my oar in its sluggish stream
In the autumn's gorgeous days,
When the painted maples brightly gleam
And the swaying poplars whispering seem
In the gold October haze.
I've gathered the leaves in their painted pride;
The grasses brown and tall.
I've searched where the pale star-flowers hide,
Then stepped again o'er the weo skiff's side,
With the treasures of early fall.

I've watched it flowing dark and slow,
Mid banks of glistening rime;
Crowning the hill, the maples grow,
Stunted bushes thrive below,
With weeds, and sedge, and slime.
Now o'er its course, with heavy flight,
A fog-cloud twists and wreaths;
While on the hill—a gruesome sight—
The birches stand like marbles white,
To the hosts of fallen leaves.

I've skated over its glassy face,
Where the snow was thinly scattered,
And the shining steel left many a trace
Like a web of intricate filmy lace,
Ruthlessly torn and tattered.
In all its seasons I know it well,
And no matter where I roam,
I'll never tire my love to tell,
For each bank and hollow, each hill and dell,
'Round the little river at home.

FRANCES BURTON CLARE.

THE PROGRESS OF CANADA—IV.

IN the attempt which I have made in this series of brief articles to describe the progress of Canada, many branches of our development have been referred to, but perhaps the most important, though not at first sight, the most prominent, has been left to the last. I refer to our educational system and its marvellous success. The Mother-Country has owed much to her glory and power in the past to the fact that she always kept ahead of the powers of Europe in education and in the consequent elevation of her people. Our educational progress has been very great. We seem indeed to have united in our system the best attributes of those adopted by the most enlightened nations of the world, and to have expended much labour and money with undoubted success to the institution and benefit to the people. A country such as ours is, with regard to population, which can boast, according to Hon. G. W. Ross, of 15,000 public schools and 19,000 teachers, 224 high schools and academies, with about a dozen universities, has, indeed, a proud record in the past and a great future to look forward to.

We have heard of late some discussion regarding the value and importance of our Canadian literature, and doubt has been cast, not only upon our progress in the creation of a national literature, but even upon the very existence of such a branch of our development. I am one of those who believe we have a national literature, one that is rapidly growing, one that is not so much an isolated product of local peculiarities, but one that forms, nevertheless, a distinct branch of the great tree of English thought which is spreading its influence and power into every corner of the world.

Who has not heard of the works of Alpheus Todd and J. G. Bourinot upon the constitutional development of Canada and the Empire? Who has not read the well written and carefully detailed histories and biographical works of John Charles Dent, of Edmund Collins, F. X.