

We can only judge of the improved circumstances surrounding us to-day, of the progress made by our country during the intervening period, by referring to the position we occupied twenty years ago. A panorama of Canada's position at that time would show a few scattered, disorganized, discontented provinces or colonies, with no cohesive force, no principle common to all, except a general sense of loyalty to the throne; with conflicting interests, with no means of intercommunication, except by very slow and difficult stages, without commercial dealings, and with but little interchange of thought or learning, with a small population and a great lack of capital. To add to the troubles of the time, prices of all farm products were falling from the effects of the commercial revulsion consequent upon the cessation of the Crimean and American Wars and the natural results were beginning to be acutely felt throughout the Provinces. Annexation was frequently discussed as a remedy for existing ills, and in fact permeates the Confederation debates from beginning to end; many advocating the federation of the British North American colonies as a preventative to Annexation, others actually opposing it as being likely to lead in that direction.

J. CASTELL HOPKINS.

IN LOVE WITH YOU

YESTERNIGHT! How strange it seems!
Love, I wooed and won thy heart;
Gone, ye doubtings of my dreams,
Love confessed the better part;
When our lips in clinging fast
Kissed the troth of lovers true,
Then I learned 'twas in the past
That I fell in love with you.

Was it in a void of gray
Vapours mad, we danced and whirled,
Ere the confines of a day,
Marked the record of a world?
Pre-existence was sublime,
For each other's hearts we knew
In that vague, prelusive time,
When I fell in love with you.

Was it when the moon of love
Shone serene in tranquil skies,
When the starshine from above
Found its rival in thy eyes;
When, o'er fields of fairest flow'rs,
Brightly plumaged song-birds flew—
Was it in those perfumed hours
That I fell in love with you?

Was it in the summer time,
In the days of long ago,
When the world was all a rhyme,
And our hearts were all aglow,
By a shore forever fair,
Under skies forever blue,
Ah! my darling, was it there
That I fell in love with you?

Tell me not 'tis but a day
Since I knew thee as thou art,
Since my love discerned the way
To the pulses of thy heart;
It was when the world was young,
And the lover's vows were new,
That I wooed with ardent tongue
That I fell in love with you.

'Tis not ours to span the years,
Or to probe the mystic Past,
Peering through reluctant tears
Into joys receding fast;
Yet my heart was thine before,
In some prior life you knew—
For I told you o'er and o'er—
That I was in love with you.

Looking to the great Beyond
We shall gently Fall Asleep,
Leave to mourn us lovers fond,
Hearts that sorrow, eyes that weep;
Clinging fast to your dear hand
With eternity in view,
When we reach the Better Land
Still I'll be in love with you.

Heart of mine, our love was planned
Ere from chaos worlds were won,
Ere at His divine command
From the heavens shone the sun;
Heart of mine, our love shall be
Love forever tender, true,
And through all eternity,
Still I'll be in love with you.

W. C. NICHOL.

As not every instance of similitude can be considered as a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention; and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PARNELL LETTERS.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—The *Globe*, under the courteous heading "The Sagacious Mr. Smith," gives a series of extracts from a paper of mine on the Parnell Letters, which appeared in THE WEEK of April 28th, 1887. The extracts are so selected as to convey the impression that I pronounced the letters genuine. My concluding words, "Judgment is at present premature," have been cautiously omitted.

Yours faithfully, GOLDWIN SMITH.

March 5th.

THE STAR-CHAMBER.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—In a late number THE WEEK had an extract from Dr. Jessopp's article in the *Nineteenth Century*, in which he draws attention to the vast multitude of Jewish records laid up in the Star-Chamber. He warns us that "the name has not the remotest connection with astronomy," a not unnecessary warning, since Stormonth's Dictionary says, "So called from the roof of the chamber having been ornamented with figures of stars." Dr. Jessopp "dares not venture upon an explanation of the exact meaning or derivation of the word; nor as to the correct spelling of it (he says) am I qualified to express an opinion." Under the circumstances I may perhaps venture to supply the lacking information. The name comes from the Hebrew word, *shatar*, which means *administration or rule*, civil or military, as a secondary sense. Then in its Chaldean form, as may be seen in Buxtorf's *Lexicon Talmudicon*, *sh'tar* is used first for *dominion, authority*, and then for a *written bond or contract*, a usage readily explained by Solomon's proverb, "the borrower is servant to the lender," who exercises authority over him. Buxtorf has numerous illustrations of this usage; and Westminster, it seems, has thousands of *sh'tars*, the bonds of Englishmen once held by usurious Jews. Yours, J. C.

Port Perry, March 4, 1889.

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

MANNERISM IN WRITING.

MANNERISMS in writing are of two kinds—those which are due to strong individuality in the writer and those which result from feebleness of thought. The first kind often possesses a peculiar charm. The great English writer, George Borrow, author of *Lavengro*, is an instance of it. To describe his mannerisms would be difficult: they consist largely of a habit of repeatedly introducing, within a short space, repetitions of certain words or phrases. There is also a certain terseness and brevity in the fashion of the sentences, and a naïve tone—a mixture of artlessness and shrewdness. "I felt languid and almost hopeless. The thought, however, of my situation soon roused me. I must make an effort to improve the posture of my affairs. There was no time to be lost: so I sprang out of bed, breakfasted on bread and water, and then sat down doggedly to write the *Life of Joseph Sell*. . . . I persevered, and before evening I had written ten pages. I partook of some bread and water, and before I went to bed that night I had completed fifteen pages of my life of *Joseph Sell*. The next day I resumed my task; I found my power of writing considerably increased; my pen hurried rapidly over the paper; my brain was in a wonderfully teeming state. . . . By about midnight I had added thirty fresh pages to my *Life and Adventures of Joseph Sell*. The third day arose; it was dark and dreary out of doors, and I passed it drearily enough within. My brain appeared to have lost much of its former glow and my pen much of its power. I, however, toiled on, but at midnight had only added seven pages to my history of *Joseph Sell*. This is an extract from the wonderful chapters describing the production of a novel, and serves to give an idea of a frequent phase of the writer's style. No one but George Borrow ever wrote in that way. How simple it is, how moving, how unforgettable! How different are the mannerisms of Thackeray! He was the greatest of English novelists, and his style, for elasticity, variety, manliness, melody and clearness, is perhaps not surpassed by any writer. But his mannerisms are apart from his style; they are the outcome of a curious moralizing attitude of mind into which he was pretty sure to fall when no particular action of interest was in hand. "Ah my friends! *Vanitas vanitatum!* Which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire, or, having it, is satisfied? Come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out." This is the burden—sad, humorous, pathetic, cynical, gentle—again and again repeated throughout his volumes, the "confidential attitude" of which some of our own sublime novelists complain. But lovers of Thackeray love him the better for it. It is as the familiar expression of a dear friend's countenance in repose, when the lines and modelling that time and life have wrought upon it are seen undisguised. We find then the nature and temperament of the man. Dickens' mannerisms are of a less pleasing description. They are those of a nervous, sensational, vivid temperament, and are often employed merely to conceal the shallowness of the argument. These must suffice for examples of the higher kind of mannerisms. The lower kind are only too frequent. They may be again subdivided into the particular and the general. They are used by

small men to patch and round out their more or less ragged and empty productions. They consist partly of a superfluity of qualifying words and phrases—adjectives, adverbs, and modifying or intensifying sentences—and of locutions and slang expressions belonging to the stock in trade of the newspaper penny-a-liner. Our contemporary novelists are especially reprehensible in this direction. They wish to be forcible, and instead of seeking force in strong ideas, they try to get it by dint of a mouthing utterance of trifling ideas; or if by chance they do happen upon a strong situation they either spoil it by over elaboration and ornament of statement, or else they exanimate it by an affected coldness and indifference of language. The cure for all such rubbish is life; every word must contain a living and indispensable meaning; nothing must be mechanical; the body and limbs of the argument should be as nearly naked as possible, and their movements large, precise, and full of purpose. A real giant needs no fripperies and furbelows, and a giant made out of fripperies and furbelows is not even the equal of a genuine dwarf.—*America*.

THE GUARDIANS OF ANCIENT ROME.

THERE were in ancient Rome 7,500 constables, and as the streets were unlighted at night, and as beggars and brigands were even more sturdy and energetic than they have ever been in the Rome of later years, as the elder brother of the London Mohawk, the drunken patrician, was very unscrupulous, and as every Roman citizen evaded every police regulation with the greatest ingenuity, 7,500 were none too many. Moreover, the streets were so narrow that, although nobody but the Vestals, members of the imperial family and a few others were allowed to drive through them, quarrels and disturbances were incessant, even in the hours of daylight, and a Roman Gilbert, had there been such a creature, would have found a delighted hearer in the person of every constable. But their woes were unsung; and so were those of the firemen, although the latter seem to have had enough to do; for, in spite of being "fire-proof," ancient Rome was remarkable for stupendous conflagrations. Some were wilfully caused, as when Nero burned the city in order to rebuild it on a better plan, but accidental fires occurred frequently, and 7,000 firemen were necessary to aid the police. Recently discovered inscriptions have revealed all the details of their organization, but the only detail in it which would be of great service nowadays is that providing for the use of the cat o' nine tails on any janitor who permitted an accidental fire to break out on the premises of which he had charge. It was a fireman who last had the lost Sibylline books, saving them from the conflagration which in 363 destroyed the temple of Apollo in the palace of the Cæsars, and which have never since been seen.—*Rudolpho Lauciana*.

ROMAN BATHS AT TREVES.

WHAT was probably the most splendid ornament of the Augusta [Treves] in her imperial days was the *thermæ*, or public baths, situated on the Moselle, near the bridge, and which have only recently been excavated. The enormous scale on which these baths were planned will be apparent to any one who has visited Rome, when we say that they are but slightly smaller than those of Diocletian or Caracalla. At present little more than the foundations, with the basins, canals, and heating apparatus, is preserved; but in the Middle Ages the *thermæ* formed the castle of "the lords of the Bridge," and as late as the seventeenth century they still were noble ruins, as is apparent from many old engravings, most of which call the structure the triumphal arch of Gratian. Early in the seventeenth century the Jesuits pulled it down and built their college with the materials. Yet even in its present state one may gather some conception of its ancient splendour. Every species of decoration known to the age was here employed; marbles from all over the Roman world, mosaics, painting, and sculpture were lavishly used; a specimen statue from it is the exquisite Amazon torso now in the museum. The *thermæ* included not only every variety of air and water baths and swimming basins, hot and cold, but also places for exercise, shady gardens, lecture-rooms, and libraries, everything in short for the comfort and amusement of the idle crowd. Here lurked ambitious poets with their compositions, "more to be dreaded," says Martial, who ought to know, "than a tigress robbed of her cubs," and victimized the unwary loungers awaiting their turn. In this great public club-house many spent most of their time, save when the amphitheatre or the circus called them away to more exciting scenes. It is a good side of Roman luxury and extravagance that such magnificence, probably greater than anything that our modern world can show, was open to the poorest, either entirely free, or for a merely nominal payment.—*Scribner's Magazine*.

THE BOOKS OF 1888.

THE books recorded by us during the past year numbered 4,631, being 194 more than were entered in our "Weekly Record" during 1887, and 45 less than the books of 1886, the heaviest year in book production in our experience. In spite of the figures, 1888 was not an exceptionally active year with our older and larger publishers. As a general thing they were conservative. Their ventures represent the best our writers have to give, but they were slower and more cautious in publishing than two years back. The surprising number of small publishers who sprang up all over the country lent to 1888 the appearance of being