

be dealt with here. From it we learn, however, that a numerical disproportion of the sexes, no matter how produced, need not alarm us, as it will be of only temporary duration. Having been produced by the action of external conditions, and being the most suitable arrangement while those conditions exist, when they cease to prevail the disproportion will in its turn diminish until the most favourable ratio is again reached.

Among polygamous races a marked disproportion in favour of male births might be expected, and accordingly a tendency to equalization of the sexes, monogamy being thus practically induced. With regard to purely polygamous nations unfortunately no data are accessible, and as regards the Mormons of the neighbouring Republic, they cannot be regarded as purely polygamous, not being self-sustaining, but maintained by proselytizing. If any inferences are to be drawn from them the very necessity for proselytizing would argue against polygamy being in accordance with the laws of nature. Even among the Turks we find the Harems to a certain extent maintained by the importation of Circassian and other female slaves; but the Eastern nations—among which polygamy is most prevalent—exist under far different environment than do the Mormons, the climate itself rendering the conditions more favourable in making nutrition as a rule more abundant and more easily available, and perhaps polygamy may with them be self-sustaining. Among polygamous animals two conditions are markedly different, whether wild or domesticated, for in both cases the proportion of female births seems to be in excess. The existence in polygamous forms of numerous enemies—for as a rule polygamous forms are vegetable feeders affording food for carnivorous forms—may perhaps afford a clue to this. In fact there is a tendency for domesticated forms to become polygamous.

Further statistics with regard to polygamy must however be awaited before any statements based on natural laws can be affirmed concerning it. In the meantime Dr. Düsing's paper suggests some very important thoughts in connection with it.

J. P. McM.

### MONTREAL LETTER.

APRIL 18th, 1885.

No difference between this city and the cities of Ontario is more marked than that which comes under the head of political interest. Here party-politics are feebly developed in comparison with Toronto, Hamilton or London. In fact, not only in politics but in other public matters, Montreal betrays itself as a city of various uncohesive units. Its political apathy is mirrored in its weak representation at Quebec and Ottawa. The last advent of the Conservatives to power had two special effects which have done much to debilitate the once strong Liberal ranks. Firstly, the Canadian Pacific contractors, Liberals to a man, were reduced to neutrality. The N.P., through the embarkation of a good many more leading Reformers in protected manufactures, resulted in a greatly diminished opposition to triumphant Conservatism. Our press, while not so strong as that of Toronto, is much less violent in tone, and the *Gazette* particularly is marked by a spirit of quiet dignity, worthy of imitation elsewhere.

Montreal is thoroughly commercial in the tone of its society. As in New York, it is the wealthy people who not only lead, but entirely fill, the ranks of fashion. McGill University has not yet done the work of Harvard for Boston. Of artistic, scientific or literary culture there is but little. Still our merchant princes are munificent in all matters of education, the last mentioned object for their aid being a botanic garden which is to occupy a sunny slope of Mount Royal.

It would seem, year by year, that Montreal is gaining as a manufacturing centre, and losing ground in commerce. It lacks back country, while it enjoys an unrivalled position as a port, and has in its French Canadian population an ample supply of cheap labour. Our merchants take a good deal of interest in the re-enactment of reciprocity with the United States, yet their number seems not to include a leader capable of organizing a movement for the measure. It seems to me that Canada is just where the New England States would be if the rest of the Union separated commercially from them. What New England would then suffer is our present loss. The natural market for Quebec hay and other farm produce is in the adjoining States; for Nova Scotian coals in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Reciprocity should certainly admit certain American manufactures. It is folly to attempt manufacturing in Canada in many lines where a vast market is needed for economical working, as evidenced in our print trade. To relieve surplus stocks of cotton, our mill proprietors desire to send their goods to the calico-printers of Manchester in bond. Two ocean freights and repeated handlings no more than off-set in cost the economy and artistic excellence of Manchester as compared with Magog. The enormous national outlays for the Canadian Pacific Railway are beginning to alarm Conservative people here. Few have faith in any such rapid filling-up of the North-West as may make the great highway successful within twenty years. Yet apathy among voters—the absence of an informed and jealous public opinion such as Great Britain possesses—has placed a gigantic mortgage on the country at the instance of a few rash politicians.

Z.

### "ONE BY ONE THEY GO."\*

MRS. SUSANNA MOODIE, the youngest of the Strickland sisters, has gone from our midst. So well known in Toronto, and so much esteemed for her literary talents, as well as for her personal worth, many Canadians will join with her sorrowing relatives in regret for the loss of one of whom it may be said, "Take her for all in all, we ne'er shall look upon her like again." As a young child she early gave evidence of much original talent—one might say of genius—which showed itself in her love of verse and in all that was beautiful. She began writing at an age when children are yet learning the rudiments of education. The lonely country house in which her young days were passed, with its old-fashioned garden, plantations and labyrinth of wooded lanes, its vicinity to the sea-coast, and the absence of young companions, no doubt fostered literary tastes in the Strickland sisters, which were fed by solitude, free access to a large library of books, by the legendary tales and old family chronicles listened to with eager interest at the fireside of the old Hall, and the stormy events of the early part of the century. All these aided in giving a particular tone to the young romantic minds of the inmates of the Suffolk mansion.

It is said circumstances make the man; no doubt in a great measure this is true, and it might be that it was so in the case of this remarkable family. It was this combination of influences brought to bear upon natural talent that produced authoresses in the Stricklands, each following the bent of her peculiar taste. Thus the historical element in the elder sisters produced the series of "Moral Biographies"; in Susanna works of poetry and fiction; "Roughing it in the Bush," and other books well-known were also written after she became a sojourner for the last fifty years in Canada; but she had written many minor works in England long before she, with her husband, migrated to this country in 1832. Out of the six sisters five were known to the literary world. Their brother, the late Colonel S. Strickland, also wrote that pleasant volume, "Two Years in Canada," one of the most cheerful as well as useful books that has yet been given as a guide and help to the Canadian immigrant.

In this brief notice of Mrs. Moodie it is not necessary to retrace the events of her Canadian life. Some loving hand among those who live to mourn her loss may possibly gather the unwritten fragments together at a future date.

M.

MR. WHITE was a man of many parts, but he will be best known to posterity as a Shakespearian critic, and by his edition of the great dramatist. His best works are "Shakespeare's Scholar," published in 1854, and "Words and their Uses," first issued in 1865. He was an enthusiastic musician, a good performer on the violin, and at times published entertaining musical papers in the form of personal recollections. He was all his life a pamphleteer. His "Gospel of Peace," "The House that Tweed Built," "Appeal" (against the decision of the bishops in the now forgotten Onderdonk case), and many others had wide circulations. He was descended from John White of Puritan stock, his father being a South Street merchant. He graduated in the University of New York in 1839, studied medicine and law, was called to the bar in 1841, but never followed the profession, preferring to pursue literature. He was at one time connected with the *Courier and Enquirer* and the *World*. For a time—from 1861 to 1878—Mr. White was head of the Marine Bureau. The immediate cause of his death was gastritis, from which disease he has suffered all winter.

R.

[The above was unavoidably crowded out of our last issue.—Ed.]

### HERE AND THERE.

THE *Montreal Herald*, having metaphorically buried its head in the sand, is very angry with other journals who have not followed that sagacious example. Unfortunately for our contemporary, rage has blinded it to the decencies of journalism, and the other day its editorial columns were disfigured with a gratuitous attack upon THE WEEK which we hope ere now has been bitterly regretted. The ultimate cause of this unfortunate incident was nominally the statement that an amount of reluctance to being sent to the North-West was shown by some eastern contingents. This was looked upon by some writers as to some extent confirming rumours of dissatisfaction with Confederation in the case of Nova Scotia and sympathy with Riel in that of Quebec. Well, what is the use of trying to suppress, or affecting not to notice, facts which are not only certain but prominent? If the Press is to tell people falsehoods, who is to tell them the truth? Was it not French sympathy that saved Riel before, and enabled him to escape and give us all the present trouble? Were the accounts of dissatisfaction and even desertion amongst the Quebec battalions altogether apocryphal? Is the reported disgraceful behaviour of Colonel Ouimet's command entirely an invention of the enemy? And does not the meeting supporting rebellion held on Saturday last in Montreal, under the auspices of the Club National, confirm the fear expressed by THE WEEK that Riel had many French sympathizers? If it is the policy of the *Herald* to conceal these or other facts for party purposes, it is none the less the duty of all independent journals to indicate their actual significance. This THE WEEK proposes continually to do.

\* Susanna Strickland (Mrs. Moodie), sixth daughter of Thomas Strickland, of Reydon Hall, Suffolk, was born at Stowe House, Bungay, Suffolk, December the 6th, 1803; died in Toronto, at the residence of her son-in-law, J. J. Vickers, Esq., April the 8th, 1885.

Richard Grant White was born in New York, May 23rd, 1832, and died in his native city, April 8th, 1885.