



AT THE SIGN OF THE MAPLE

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

THERE will be centenaries à-plenty in the year to come, for Anno Domini 1809 was indeed a Year of Wonder. What a galaxy of celebrations is to hang in next year's firmament! Gladstone, Tennyson, Darwin, Lincoln, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Poe, Mrs. Browning, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Kinglake are ten of the illustrious. In the list we notice but one woman's name—the gentle, gifted Elizabeth Barrett, who became the wife of Robert Browning, and who died far from the England of her birth in the Italian city which had given her new life.

In these days of Browning Clubs, where every member has views of his own concerning *Sordello*, it is interesting to recall that there was a time when the verse of Elizabeth Barrett was more highly regarded than the work of Robert Browning. The poetry of the former is now considered "old-fashioned," but there are lines and poems by the great-hearted little woman which are not to be forgotten. "Cowper's Grave," "The Cry of the Children" and the jewelled "Sonnets from the Portuguese" are not likely to go the way of dusty death. Mrs. Browning's poetry is lacking in restraint; yet this very exuberance of emotion makes such an outbreak as "The Cry of the Children" a passionate appeal to something deeper than critical observation. That poem went far towards rousing English philanthropists to an investigation of factory conditions and if the writer were living to-day she might consider it advisable to repeat the appeal on this side of the Atlantic.

The centenary of this poet's birth will certainly be celebrated in Canada, and it would be fitting the occasion if it were marked by some memorial of a nature to keep in mind the generous and tender qualities of the woman whose love-story is the most fragrant in English literature.

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WOMEN'S CANADIAN CLUBS.

THE Women's Canadian Club, of Montreal, was a year old this month. On December 12th, 1907, the first women's club of this nature in the Dominion was organised in our greatest city, with a membership of three hundred and twenty-five and a waiting list. Lady Drummond presided, and His Excellency the Governor-General gave a most inspiring address. The sister organisation of Winnipeg held its opening meeting on December 14th, just two days later, with an attendance of over two hundred, Mrs. W. Sanford Evans presiding. The speakers on that occasion were Mr. John Kendrick Bangs and Hon. T. Mayne Daly. The membership in both the Montreal and Winnipeg clubs has increased by hundreds since December of last year.

The constitution of the Montreal club states: "The purpose of the Club is to foster patriotism and to encourage a deeper and more serious interest amongst women in the institutions, history and resources of Canada, as well as to bring before them leading questions of the day both at home and abroad, and to endeavour to unite Canadian women in such work as may be within their powers for the welfare and progress of the Dominion."

A second object of the Women's Canadian Clubs is to give women opportunities of hearing eminent men, whose oratorical efforts have heretofore been reserved for the Canadian Clubs at which men assemble. For this purpose a luncheon is held, once a month or so, during the season from October to April, and, following this informal repast, is an address from a speaker especially invited for the occasion. So far, Montreal and Winnipeg are the only clubs which have held to the luncheon-custom, as established by the men's associations. The Toronto club has not yet given its members that form of social and intellectual refreshment. In fact, the first women's association in Toronto to attempt the luncheon, with a subsequent address, was the Chamberlain Chapter, Daughters of the Empire, which enjoyed an after-luncheon address from Colonel Merritt this month.

In Lady Drummond, the Montreal Club has found an ideal President, tactful, gracious and dignified, realising that "patriotism" is to be taken in its widest sense, as relating to the intellectual and artistic development of the country, as well as to the material. Lord Milner was one of the club's honoured guests this autumn and the President

spares no effort to secure for the new and thriving organisation the presence of such speakers as will prove an inspiration.

The women of Canada have been accused of provincialism in mental outlook. This fault may be preferable to the pseudo-intellectuality of which President Roosevelt has complained. However, it is not necessary that the women of this favoured land should be either narrow in their interests or visionary in their intellectual aims. It is quite possible to be interested in the broader questions of To-Morrow without becoming indifferent to the small duties of To-Day. Towards this symmetrical development of Canadian womanhood, such a presiding officer as Lady Drummond contributes a gentle and broadening influence.

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A MATTER OF WORDS.

THE novelists of the first quarter of the Nineteenth Century had a way of referring to their heroines as "females," sometimes "lovely young females." This odious word, as applied to feminine humanity, has almost disappeared from



Lady Drummond,
President of Women's Canadian Club, Montreal.

polite speech. Occasionally, even in the present, one hears of a "female college" or a "female prayer-meeting," but it brings a thrill of surprise to read in the January issue of a Canadian monthly: "Female explorers are by no means unknown." There follows an entertaining account of the travels of Miss Agnes Deans Cameron. The word, "lady," has been so sadly misused that no doubt the editor thought he would be justified in going to the other extreme and classing the woman who wanders with wild animals he has known.

The words, "authoress," "editress," "poetess" have been practically abandoned. A similar fate will probably overtake "violiniste" and "pianiste." The term, "actress," persists, perhaps because so many of the histrionic sex have chosen that profession, "Woman actor" would take too much time, while "actorine" is used in derision for the cult of the chorus.

Authorities appear to have agreed that "woman" is the more dignified term, to use in all business and professional relationships. However, even in social life, the word "lady" has suffered from its users. Anyone who has lived in Chatham or Windsor and has heard the negro charwoman discourse on "col-

oured ladies" and "the gentleman who calls for the ashes" is not enamoured of the expressions. "Gentlewoman" has not yet lost its flavour and expresses certain qualities of sweetness and dignity which we are too likely to consider out-of-date.

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MISTAKEN LEADERS.

THERE are two modern women whose names appear to inspire dislike if not terror, in the manly heart. One of these daring dames is Mrs. Carrie Nation who smashes bars, the other is Miss Emma Goldman, who would smash everything if she had her own sweet way. The former has gone to the British Isles on a temperance tour and has found the City of Glasgow somewhat hostile to her charming personality. Kansas is more or less accustomed to freakish reformers and when the frisky Caroline chose to spend the afternoon in wrecking the gas fixtures and breaking the decanters in the bar-room, the Kansas neighbours treated the outbreak with indulgence. However, Glasgow is another matter. The people of that city will not be interfered with, either in matters of alcohol or religion and Mrs. Nation has not been treated with that hospitality which ought to gladden the Christmas season. The cause of temperance, which has been advancing rapidly in England and Scotland, will be neither harmed nor benefited by Mrs. Nation's campaign.

Miss Emma Goldman, the anarchist leader, was recently arrested at Seattle for unguarded utterances against all governments but, when last heard from, was threatening to lecture at Vancouver on anarchy and its aims. This lecturer is on her way to Australia to deliver a series of inflammatory addresses and will hardly conduce to the peace of the Orient by the time she reaches India.

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THE WOMAN WHO SPENDS.

A WOMAN writer in the London (Eng.) *Daily Mail* has been criticising the women from the United States on the score of their extravagance. A few of the writer's comments are: "There is no woman in the world who, when she starts out shopping, is capable of spending so much money as the American woman. She goes out to buy a veil and returns with a trousseau. Does she need a pair of gloves? She returns home with nine pairs of boots and slippers and seventy-five dollar hat."

This is a rather exaggerated statement as to the spending ability of the fair tourist from Chicago or New York. The British critic goes on to assert that this extravagance is partly owing to the circumstance that the United States householder does not give his wife an allowance. Consequently, she makes no apportionment for expenses and leaves household accounts to adjust themselves, while she spends most of the available dollars on clothing and personal adornment. The fair United Stateser comes next to the Frenchwoman in the matter of gowns and shoes and the result of the expenditure goes far towards justifying the reckless squandering which so horrifies the British housewife.

If there could only be a happy medium attained in the matter, there would, perhaps, be more happiness, both in British and American households. If the United States woman would pay more serious attention to the accounts of butcher, baker and grocer, her husband might look less worried, and have a less sallow complexion. On the other hand, if the British matron would spend a few pounds on really respectable shoes and gloves, she would present a more cheering spectacle.

CANADIENNE.

THE CLOSING YEAR.

By F. W. BOURDILON.

Faster than petals fall on windy days
From ruined roses,
Hope after hope falls fluttering, and decays
Ere the year closes.

For little hopes, that open but to die,
And little pleasures
Divide the long sad year that labours by
Into short measures.

Yet, let them go! our day-lived hopes are not
The life we cherish;
Love lives, till disappointments are forgot,
And sorrows perish.

On withered boughs, where still the old leaf clings,
New leaves come never;
And in the heart, where hope hangs faded, springs
No new endeavour.