

Our London Letter.

LONDON, April 11, 1891.

The book of the week, nay, the book of the month, is Mr. Samuel Smiles' "A Publisher's Letters and Friends," which Mr. John Murray has just published. The book is a history, well-written as befits its author and subject, cram full of interest and literary anecdote, of the great publishing house of Murray from the year 1768, when it was first started by the great-grandfather of the present head of the firm, right down to the present day. The most interesting part of the two interesting volumes is that which deals with the John Murray who managed the house from 1793 to 1842; for he was the publisher and originator of the *Quarterly Review*, and publisher and intimate friend of Lord Byron, Southey, Gifford, Crabbe, and nearly every famous literary light of the first part of the present century. The letters that passed between Lord Byron and his publisher are particularly interesting reading; so, too, are the chapters devoted to the starting of the *Quarterly* as a rival to the *Edinburgh Review*, which up to then had been all powerful in matters literary. I think I have already spoken of the energy and enterprise of the *Illustrated London News*, which is now far and away the best of the weeklies illustrated, but this week they have surpassed themselves by getting Mr. C. J. Longman, the head of an older and equally influential publishing house to review Dr. Smiles' work.

Everyone has been talking of the census, and the papers have been full of anecdotes, articles and illustrations about it—but why? It was not a formidable undertaking (except to the Registrar-General and his myrmidons), it only took five minutes to fill one's schedule out, and then (if one was not summonsed for filling it out incorrectly) one has only to wait, and wait, many months for the return—which is certainly interesting when it comes. Great Britain, in the manner of her "numbering of the people," stands alone, for all the work is done on a single night, and not, as in other countries, spread over a considerable time. The "enumerators," as they are called, are all volunteers, who are, like most Government servants, sadly underpaid; for a guinea is all they get for their services, which are very tedious, as they both have to leave the schedules and collect them, and they are also responsible for their correct filling up. The obloquy which the enumerator meets with is wonderful—the lower classes generally think him the tax-collector or summons-server, and treat him "as sich." Then, too, he has dreadful trouble with the ladies, who, one and all, object to filling out their ages. This last peculiarity has given rise to endless amusing stories; but perhaps the best is that about the lady who, being politely requested for her filled-out schedule, replies with withering scorn that she has sent it, sealed, to the Registrar-General, for he alone shall see her age.

Londoners—especially jaded ones—are always grateful for a new sensation, whatever it may be, and Mr. Horace Ledger has provided them with one by bringing from Paris, in all its entirety, "L'Enfant Prodigue," which was produced at a matinee at the Prince of Wales' Theatre on March 31, and which achieved so great a success that it will be placed on the evening bill of that theatre next week. "L'Enfant Prodigue" is a reversion to the first forms of dramatic art, for it is pantomime, pure and simple; not the modern pantomime, played at Christmas, in which idiotic fooling and badly rhymed dialogue are combined, but a real pantomime, lasting over two hours, but depending solely on action and facial gesture, not a single word being spoken from start to finish. The artists engaged are the same who played the piece in Paris, so that now Londoners will have an opportunity of studying French acting without all the troublesome accompaniments of attempting to follow the French dialogue. The story told is a very old and simple, although a very dramatic one, each part being played to perfection by an excellent company, of whom Mdlle. Jane May, as the young hero, was the best.

Another book which is well worth reading, and which is being talked about, is Dr. W. G. Grace's "Cricket," which Mr. Arrowsmith has just published. It is a history of cricket and cricket notables from the very first, and no man is better fitted to tell the tale than Mr. Grace, the captain of the Gloucestershire eleven, the dozen of English cricketers, and the best all round man at the game.

In pursuance of his policy of revival of old comedies, Mr. Charles Wyndham produced Sheridan's "School for Scandal" at the Criterion Theatre to a none too enthusiastic audience. On the first night (I am told that it has picked up since) the play seemed to drag rather, the dialogue did not sparkle, and the players did not seem to feel their parts. Mr. Charles Wyndham, of course, was, as always, excellent as Charles Surface. His acting, combined with that of Mrs. Bernard-Beere as Lady Teazle and Mr. William Farren as Sir Peter Teazle, indeed saved the play. The chief disappointment was the Joseph Surface of Mr. Arthur Bowchier—his rendering of this difficult character was looked forward to with eagerness, but the result was not good.

At last Mr. Henry Lee, the new lessee of the Avenue Theatre, has achieved a success which I hope will recompense him for his past failures. Bronson Howard's "Henrietta" is being played by a capital company, numbering Mr. Lewis Waller, Mr. W. H. Vernon and Miss Fanny Brough, and the piece has, in current slang, "caught on." The literary finish has been, I am glad to say, particularly appreciated.

"Belphegor; or, the Mountebank" is to be the next of Mr. Wilson Barrett's revivals at the New Olympic Theatre—a play which will revive memories both of Fechter and of Charles Dillon. It was in "Belphegor," too, that Mrs. Bancroft, then Miss Marie Wilton, first made a mark on the London stage.

Mr. John L. Toole is on his way back from Australia, where his tour has repaired his health and been a great financial and social success, and will appear again shortly in a new play at his little theatre in King William street.

On May 31 the American Skating Rink at Olympia is to be closed after a very successful season, and then the huge building will be given over to Mr. Augustus Harris, who, I believe, is going to give us a spectacle on an even more magnificent scale than "Nero," with which Mr. P. T. Barnum surprised London in 1889. We shall not, however, be altogether without a skating rink, for a company, with the indefatigable Mr. John Hollingshead as chairman, has just been formed to open a large hall in London in which a substitute, possessing all the qualities of real ice, will form the floor, which will be just as slippery as real ice, and on which ordinary steel skates will be used.

GRANT RICHARDS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Political Creeds.

To the Editor of the DOMINION ILLUSTRATED:

SIR,—It is not quite easy to discover why Mr. J. Castell Hopkins is so deeply concerned in my political views, or what important public purpose is subserved by his raking up old speeches and writings of mine. Let it be understood that in my references to Mr. Sladen's remarks, I laid no special claim to "Canadianism;" this is Mr. Sladen's gratuitous assumption. If I understand accurately Mr. Hopkins' ideas of "Canadianism," I should be very sorry to be cumbered by any such article. But lest my silence might be construed into acquiescence in his imputations, I have no objection to giving my "creed" to the public, so far as it is possible for a thinking person to do so at a period when all is change and transition and when most important events are likely to occur in our history within a short period.

If by "Canadianism" is meant a deep and all-pervading love for this country and a desire to advance its best interests by every means possible, then I am a Canadian; for I know of nothing that lies nearer to my heart than the weal of Canada. But if by "Canadianism" is meant a resolve to toady to any particular interest or to defy the laws of nature by attempting to build up an artificial and profitless trade between two communities that have nothing in common commercially, then you cannot conceive anything less Canadian than I am. If "Canadianism" implies that my fellow-citizens are not at liberty to grow wealthy by selling their products to the United States at a profit rather than to Ontario at a loss, then put me down as the anti-thesis of everything Canadian. If by "Canadianism" I am debarred from seeking any destiny for my country that will be most generally for her permanent well-being, and bound to advocate a destiny which I consider unwise and

injurious, to meet the requirements of lick-spittle sentimentalism, then I am a sad specimen of a Canadian.

I am firmly convinced that not only would the largest measure of reciprocity between Canada and the United States be most advantageous to this country, but that events will conspire to make it an inevitable necessity; and, believing this, I am ready to support it, even if it involves discrimination against Great Britain, France, Egypt or the Sandwich Islands. In a word, I put the good of the Canadian people above everything, and hold it to be the first duty of a Canadian public man to make the welfare of his own country the first and supreme consideration. To say that it is patriotism to make Ontarians trade with Nova Scotians, or Nova Scotians trade with Ontarians, both at a loss, when each can trade with profit and advantage with a foreign community is, to my mind, so ludicrous that it has only to be stated to be contemned. To say that any obligation is imposed upon the Canadian people to make preference in the way of trade with the British Islands on purely sentimental grounds is something against which my purely rebels.

When I have visited the United States I have stated openly and candidly that I believed that the natural trade relations of all sections of Canada were with corresponding sections of the United States, and that it was entirely in our interests to have the most intimate commercial relations. Any one who does not believe in this doctrine is at liberty to dissent, and I never sought to impose upon Mr. Hopkins or Mr. Sladen any obligation to agree with my views on reciprocity. What I do object to is that I engaged in any "plots." Whatever I have done or said has been done and said openly, and with the sole aim of advancing the interests of the Canadian people.

I have never advocated political union with the United States, and I am conscious in my heart of never having desired such a solution of the problem of the future. Nevertheless, I have always taken the ground that it was perfectly legitimate and proper for any man who believes in this solution to advocate it. Any Canadian has just as good a right to believe in political union with the United States and advocate it on the platform and in the press as imperial federation. There is no law in Canada against advocating political union with the United States, provided it is done in an open and manly way. No man has a right to plot against his own country with the representative of another country; but that is entirely different from a frank and untrammelled discussion of the several alternatives open to the Canadian people and which, sooner or later, have got to be considered seriously and settled finally. Let there be an end of an attempt to dragoon people into a false loyalty by gagging free discussion. Mr. Goldwin Smith, as I understand, believes that the best interests of the race would be subserved by a union of the English-speaking people of this continent. Rev. Dr. Grant believes that an imperial federation would be the best solution. Both of these distinguished men are within their right in advocating their respective views. Both stand exactly on the same moral plane. Both views are equally consistent with the highest patriotism. Yours,

J. W. LONGLEY.

HALIFAX, April 16, 1891.

Credit Where Credit is Due.

To the Editor of the DOMINION ILLUSTRATED:

SIR,—The name of Dr. Amand Jeannotot, of Paris, France, has become well known by a great "discovery." It consists of a formula of oils for the cure of consumption, to be used in a vaporizer and inhaler. The Toronto papers had a column devoted to Dr. Jeannotot and his method of treatment. It so happens that the same method was discovered and introduced six months before Dr. Jeannotot by Dr. C. L. Coulter, medical health officer and G.T.R. surgeon of the Lindsay district, Ontario. Whether Dr. Jeannotot came to the same conclusions as Dr. Coulter by independent means is uncertain. But that all the honour should be given to Dr. Coulter, who was the first to discover and introduce it, is beyond a doubt. We are very averse to seeing a foreign doctor calmly take the laurel which properly belongs to one of our own citizens.

I am, your obedient servant,

F. A. MURRAY.