

**THE LATE COL. COFFIN.**

William Foster Coffin was born at Bath, England, in 1808, and accompanied his father, a Major in the army, to Quebec in 1813. Though only five years of age he was sent to Beauport to learn French, and what he knew of that language he acquired from the Curé of that place, and his two amiable sisters. He returned to England in 1815, and for nine years thereafter was at Eton College, where he distinguished himself. Instead of going to Oxford, he returned to Canada in 1830. Soon after his arrival he articulated himself to Mr. Ogden, who was afterwards Attorney-General of Lower Canada. He took his place conspicuously with the Royalists in 1837-38, and was highly considered by the civil and military authorities. He was called to the bar (L. C.) in 1835, appointed Assistant Civil Secretary (L. C.), 1838, and in the following year Police Magistrate. Again appointed Assistant Civil Secretary for police purposes, 1840, and subsequently, in same year, Commissioner for Police for L. C. Appointed 1842, Joint Sheriff of District of Montreal, which office he resigned in 1851, in consequence of a sudden reduction of salary by statute, which made the office insufficient to support two incumbents. Appointed to his late office, 1856. Had been a special Government Commissioner on many occasions: in 1840, to investigate into the state and condition of the Montreal gaoil; in 1841, to enquire into Indian troubles at Caughnawaga; in same year, to enquire into election riots in Toronto; in 1854, to enquire into divers accidents on Great Western Railway; in 1855, to enquire into the affairs of University of Toronto; in same year was associated in Commission of the Peace for Montreal, Ottawa and the County of Carleton, and sent to keep the peace on the Gatineau, then seriously threatened by refractory characters, to the great disquietude of the lumbering interests. Was also one of the Inter-colonial Railway Commissioners, 1868. Was in the Volunteer Militia Force for many years, and raised and commanded the Montreal Field Battery, 1855, for which he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and thanked by the Commander-in-Chief in "General Orders." Was a member of the Royal Institution for the advancement of learning, a Governor of McGill College, and has written a "History of the War of 1812 (Mont., 1864), and "Thoughts on Defence, from a Canadian Point of View (do., 1870.) He also sent some interesting contributions to the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

For twenty-one years he has had the charge and management of the Ordnance Lands of Canada, and he has fulfilled the duty with such scrupulous rectitude and correct judgment as to command the unqualified approbation of all who have had the opportunity of forming an opinion on the subject. On the resignation of Mr. Archibald, the Hon. Joseph Howe, the then Secretary of State, offered the Lieut.-Governorship of the Province of Manitoba to Colonel Coffin. The nomination was met with a good deal of indecent clamour by persons to whom Colonel Coffin was unknown. Nevertheless, the proprietor of the Montreal *Herald*, no shallow critic, and who knew the man he criticised, is reported to have said of him, that he was "the right man in the right place, whose public life had been without blame." All criticism however might have been spared, as the appointment was declined.

Though born in England, Colonel Coffin had an historic connection with Canada, for in a paper, read by him in 1872, he says: "My grandfather, my father and two uncles were all present at Quebec during the siege." The paper is very interesting, but it is too long to quote. The point of it is that Colonel Coffin's grandfather, on the 31st December, 1775, kept the guard at Pres-de-Ville under arms, and, with great coolness, at the critical moment directed Capt. Barnsford to fire. The order was carried out with such precision as to result in the death of General Montgomery and the dispersion of his troops.

With the instincts that always animated Col. Coffin, it was natural enough that he should have been drawn in marriage towards a gentlewoman who, apart from all personal attractions, inherited, like himself, the blood of the Loyalists. He was married at Boston to one of the two daughters of Deputy Commissary General Clarke, who was nearly related to the late Lord Lyndhurst. The other daughter became the wife of the Honourable Charles Ogden, at one time Attorney-General of Lower Canada. Speaking of his marriage, in a printed foot-note to his history of the war of 1812, he touchingly adds, "the second daughter of the Commissary sheds light and happiness on the hand which traces these lines."

**POPE LEO XIII.**

The Papal Conclave session was a remarkably short one, having lasted only thirty-six hours, the choice having been agreed upon on the third ballot. When Pius IX. was elected in the Quirinal in 1846, the conclave lasted only 48 hours, which was then considered an unusually short period. Contrary, this time, to the usage which ordinarily cuts off the Camarlingo as a Pope-seeker, from the succession, Cardinal Gioachino Pecci now occupies the Chair of St. Peter, under the title of Leo XIII. He was chosen in the forenoon of Wednesday, the 20th inst. The new Pope was born at Carpento, Diocese of Ortaqui, on the 2nd day of March, 1810. He was known and recognized as one who

would honour the Pontiff's throne, both as regards the great moral and spiritual gifts he possesses, and the natural and acquired mental gifts and accomplishments which have been conspicuous for many years of his career. Cardinal Pecci was Archbishop of Perugia, and Chamberlain of the late Pontiff. His position as Chamberlain did not favour his chances of election to the Pontiff's throne, but having occupied it only a short time, he had not had time to create any jealousies or enmities. At one time, before his elevation to the Cardinalate, he was invested with important functions as Papal Nuncio to Leopold of Belgium; it was then the intention of Gregory XVI., had he survived, to confer the hat on Pecci, at the request of a Protestant sovereign. Of high intellect, and of an energetic nature, His Eminence has made not only an excellent bishop, but has displayed such high native qualities in such a manner as to very soon realize the beau ideal of a Cardinal. His administrative qualities were of a rare type. He cleared the infested districts of Benevento of brigandage and smuggling in a manner that would have done credit to a successful soldier or magistrate of any age, and the manner in which he at once began to dispose of the machinations and intrigues of his political and aristocratic opponents stamped him, in the estimation of his fellow-countrymen, as a statesman of high order.

Leo XIII. will be 68 on the 2nd March, yet his personal appearance does not testify to any such advanced age. He is still a very erect, well-preserved, good-looking man, in the enjoyment of excellent health. From a physical point of view he looks as tough as he is known to be firm, even unto obstinacy in intellect and will. Within the last few years he has been more or less a steady inmate of the Palazzo Falconieri in Rome, only occasionally running over by rail to his old home at Perugia, a small town halfway between Florence and Rome. In the latter city his favourite recreation was to ride out in his sombre and closed carriage, drawn by two magnificent jet-black thoroughbreds (all the horses in the service of the Papal Court and its highest officers are invariably jet-black), on the Appian Way, outside the gate of San Giovanni (near the Lateran Church), and when once well out on the old ruined pavement, flanked on either side by tumuli and tumbling towers, he would be seen to get out on foot, and walk up and down for long stretches, with his hands behind him, attended by his camariere, occasionally halting to take a pinch of snuff, or to survey the broad horizon of the Campagna dotted with ruins and broken lines of aqueducts. His popularity is great, both among the Perugians and Romans, owing to his pleasing manners, a friendly, good-natured disposition and many acts of charity. In person he is lean, meagre, and above the medium height, though not what might be termed "tall;" his head is decidedly a distinguished one, his features refined, his eyes especially bright and quick, and his general carriage stately and dignified, apparently forbidding any approach to familiarity—in this quite the reverse of Pio Nono's celebrated *bonhomie*, which seemed to invite approach—and on another point he is unlike Pio Nono in not possessing the same powerful lungs, and consequently the same sympathetic and powerful voice which the latter was proud to articulate in *recitativo*, or otherwise. In point of family Leo XIII. dates back to a very old, aristocratic origin.

**ECHOES FROM LONDON.**

AMONGST the most precious *souvenirs* of his exploration Mr. Stanley brings back an old pocket-knife which belonged to Dr. Livingstone, and which he recovered from a native. It was worth going to fetch.

An order has been issued that young men in Government employ are not to write for the Press, as secrets have been made public, an order which at once became a dead letter almost as soon as the ink was dry in which it was written.

It is quite extraordinary the number of robberies of late of secret papers from Government offices—the India Office, the Foreign Office, and the Admiralty to wit. No clue has been yet discovered to the robbery at the India Office by breaking open the desks at night.

The authorities of Christ's Hospital have made an important concession to the fair sex. Ladies, like every one else who make a donation of 500l., are to be made "donation governors" of that institution. Few would give that sum to be a governess.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made for establishing a new club in London to meet the wants of the Liberal party. Suitable premises in St. James' Square, especially built and decorated for the purpose, have been secured. The club will consist at first of 1,000 members, to be increased from time to time as the committee may determine.

In recognition of the great value of his invention, the Institution of Civil Engineers have awarded to Mr. Henry Bessemer, inventor of the Bessemer process of steel manufacture, the first Howard Quinquennial Prize. The terms on which the prize was established are that it should be given to the inventor of a new and valuable process relating to the uses and properties of iron.

WHILE "the Professor" of "Lothair" finds everything so dreary intellectually in England that he has to betake himself to the New World, Mr. Story, the eminent American sculptor, thinks so highly of England that he has sent one of his sons to Oxford for education. Mr. Story, after many years of absence from his native country, has been revisiting it; but he has not found it so attractive as to make him desirous of living in it. He has returned to Rome.

DURING the late debate, the honourable and learned member for Oxford likened Sir Robert Peel to the Apostle Paul, and he playfully alluded to Sir Robert having sat at the feet of the Gamaliel of Birmingham. A daily London paper printed for the word "*Gamaliel*!" "*Gamberville*," and so unwittingly dubbed the "Tribune of the people" a fighting cock. The mistake is certainly very amusing, but the definition is not altogether out of place.

AN experiment was lately suggested, by a military gentleman, as to the means of dispersing the fogs of London, Paris, &c., by firing cannon, so as to create a wind sufficiently powerful to dispel the fog. As to the efficiency of the breeze so created we may well doubt, when we are informed that on a late occasion the members of the House of Commons could scarcely see, whilst vehemently pouring forth their eloquence, the persons around them, so dense was the fog which pervaded the House!

THE near approach of a most startling change in locomotion is announced, namely, the introduction of a noiseless steam-carriage, which its driver can stop in a moment, and which seems likely to combine in itself all the merits and conveniences of railway travelling. At a private exhibition, in the neighbourhood of Woolwich, last week, several eminent engineers and other persons of scientific attainments expressed their approval of the new carriage, and foretold for it a sure and speedy success.

ONE of the funniest mistakes ever made by the reporters was committed at Oxford, when they were reporting Mr. Gladstone's speech. The blunder has caused shouts of laughter on the banks of the Isis. According to the reporters, the ex-Premier said, "We have all heard of the Humanities, and we know that they were also called by the less pleasant name of the Furies." Of course, what he did say was, "We have all heard of the Eumenides, and we know that they were also called by the less pleasant name of the Furies." There is another curious blunder in the report of Mr. P. Smyth's eloquent speech in the late debate. He is described in the *Times* as saying—"Is the Indian Empire a structure so frail, a glittering pagoda without a pillow to support it?" Of course, the member for Westmeath did not say "pillow," but "pillar."

**ECHOES FROM PARIS.**

THE memoirs of the Countess Dash, the *nom de plume* of la Marquise de Saint-Mars, will shortly see the light, and are expected with much curiosity for piquante reasons.

A COMMISSION has been nominated to study the records of the *filles* given in past ages at Versailles, with the view of repeating such of them as are practicable during the Exhibition.

THE hotel keepers in Paris have had a meeting, at which it was pointed out that the Vienna Exhibition would have been a success but for the exorbitant charge made for board and lodging. The landlords of the French capital have resolved therefore to make but a slight increase in the present tariff, and that principally where the visitors get their food abroad.

THE Hôtel Drouot will be the scene, very early in the season, we hear, of two sales of great interest and importance; the first being that of the collection of M. Arosa—an assemblage of pictures chiefly, we believe, of the French school, and inclusive of the works by artists both of the eighteenth and of the present century—and the second being the sale of the remarkable little collection of the Count André de Bloudoff.

A SERIES of panoramic views of Paris is being prepared at great cost by the municipality for the coming Exhibition. These views, we learn from the *Chronique*, are taken at a height of 500 metres, the first perspective being that of the Champs-Élysées, in which every house is faithfully represented. Another shows the terrace of the Tuilleries and the course of the Seine, and others various parts of the city. Each design is five metres square, and the work has occupied a dozen clever topographical designers for about two months.

A SCHEME has just been submitted to the French Post Office, and is said to have met with its approval, for the reduction of all postage stamps to three models and colours, each divided by perforation into four parts, so as to give twelve different rates of postage, according to the number of fractions actually used. At present there are no less than eleven different French stamps. The models adopted are these:—4 centimes, thus enabling the public to obtain stamps

of 1, 2, 3 and 4 centimes; 20 centimes, with parts of 5; and 1 franc, with parts of 25 centimes.

**VALUE OF SCARCE COINS.**

Of all the decimal United States coins, the most valuable is the silver dollar of 1804, which is excessively rare. Specimens are worth from \$500 to \$1,000 each, according to the nearness with which they approach perfection. The coinage of this year was very limited, and there were no more dollars coined till 1836. "Proofs" of the last named year are worth \$10, and good examples \$5. There was nothing done in dollars in 1837, and the issues of 1838 and 1839 are rare enough to raise the quotations of good specimens to \$40 each. From that date forward to 1873, when the trade dollar came in, there is no break in the line of dollars; but from 1850 to 1856, inclusive, they are quoted as "rare" or "scarce," those of 1851 and 1852 being worth \$35 to \$40 each. Previous to 1804 the value of a "good" specimen varies from \$1.75 for 1799, to \$5 for 1798 and \$4 for 1801, save that for the first date of all (1794), which is very rare, brings \$50. Some of the early dates are made peculiarly valuable by reason of variation in the number and style of stars, etc., there being three varieties of 1793 and five of 1795.

Of the silver half-dollars those of 1796 and 1797 are the most valuable, choice examples of those dates being worth from \$15 to \$20. Good ones of other years previous to 1806 will bring from \$2 to \$4. One of this class of 1815 is quoted at \$2.50, and then they are of little rarity until 1836, when a specimen with reeded edge and a head of 1837 is valued at \$3 or \$4. The other issue of this year is worth \$1. The next dates of note are 1850, 1851 and 1852, valued \$1.50, \$2.55 and \$3 respectively. More recent dates are only valuable to collectors when in perfect condition, "proofs of later issues only being desired," and they range in worth from \$1.25 to \$8.

Quarter-dollars are likewise a speculative issue, and, therefore, favorites with dealers, particularly the dates 1823 and 1827, which are excessively rare, and command from \$45 to \$75 each. The 1853 issue without arrows is also much sought after, fair specimens bringing from \$5 to \$8. The only other dates worth over a dollar for "good examples" are: 1821, \$1.50; 1822, \$2; 1819, \$1.75; 1815, \$2; 1807, \$2; 1806, \$2; 1805, \$1.50; 1804, \$4; and 1796, \$4.

Silver dimes are still more valuable as a class than the quarters, their smaller size and more general circulation having made good specimens rather scarce in all the earlier dates. From 1828 back to 1796 they range in worth from \$4 to \$7, except in five instances. The high rates are: 1824, \$3.50; 1822, \$5; 1811, \$2.50; 1809, \$3; 1807, \$2; 1803, \$3; 1802, \$6; 1801, \$5; 1800, \$7; 1798, \$5; 1797, \$5 and 1796, \$4. An 1840 with a dropped figure of Liberty like 1041, is worth \$1, as is a good issue of 1846.

Of all the minor coins, however, an 1802 half-dime is the chief in cost, the price ranging from \$75 to \$200, according to quality. A good specimen of many other dates is, nevertheless, a handy thing to have, as will be noted by the following quotations: 1794, \$5; 1796, \$6; 1797, \$2; 1800, \$1.25; 1801, \$6; 1803, \$4; 1804, \$4; 1840 (with drapery), \$1; 1846, \$1.75. From that date until 1873, when the coinage closed, no annual worth attaches to this class. A first-class specimen of the last named date is worth 50 cents, however.

For the three cent silver pieces there is but little speculative sale, as their period only reaches from 1851 to 1870, including both those years. By far the most valuable of all of them is the 1855, a perfect specimen of which is worth \$2. From 1863 to 1869, an uncirculated one is worth 50 cents. All the other dates are of small value.

AN INDIGNANT VAGRANT.—Down at the south end of Market Square somebody threw the skin of an orange on the flagstone just three seconds before a citizen's foot was planted on the spot. He keeled on starboard, rolled back to port, and then settled away and went down in about seven fathoms of miscellaneous water. As he was getting up, a man who had been eating a raw turnip stepped out and asked:

"Are you a vagrant?"  
"Vagrant! Why, sir, I'll knock your infernal nose off!" shouted the victim.  
"Can't help that," continued the turnip-eater, "I saw you when you started to fall, you were clawing this way and that. You could have been convicted of vagrancy then."  
"What's that? You lie, sir, and—"  
"And I can't help that. You had no visible means of support, and that's vagrancy, or I'm a Hessian!"

The victim of the fall kept his mouth open for half a minute, wanting to say something, but his jaws finally closed, and he backed out of the crowd.

**LITERARY.**

It is rumoured that the late Sir William Stirling-Maxwell has left an account of the more noteworthy incidents of his own time, including new facts relating to the episode of Lord Melbourne and Mrs. Norton.

THE *Love Letters* written by John Keats to Fanny Brawne, during the years 1819-20, are to be printed from the original manuscripts. The volume is edited by Mr. H. Buxton Forman, who furnishes a copious introduction and elucidatory notes; and it is illustrated by an etching, by Mr. W. B. Scott, from Mr. J. G. Keats's last portrait of Keats, a silhouette of Fanny Brawne, and a fac-simile of one of the letters.