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The eagerness with which United States papers that claim to be respectable and whose comments on other subjects show them to be intelligent repeat the outrageous falsehoods of the most contemptible of Canadian sheets is surprising. A Quebec paper, of no influence whatever as an organ of opinion, came out some time ago with an article, in which England was said to be as ready to give up Canada as she was to give up Heligoland. In the same article we are told that the annexation sentiment is making great headway in Canada, and that it is sure to come before long. We may be certain that if ever a movement in favour of annexation begins in Canada, the evidence of its existence will not have to be sought in the columns of the *Quebec Telegraph*. As for the hirelings who, for value received or promised, manufacture annexation sentiment according to the demand, their cock-and-bull stories only amuse Canadian readers. Our contemporaries across the line may be assured that a great national movement of the kind in question cannot be set afoot by an obscure clique or by the paid agents of a hostile or traitorous press. As for the McKinley tariff, Canadians would be so small-spirited that Great Britain might well wish to let them go their ways if such a *brutum fulmen* frightened them into surrender. Because a certain proportion of our population may be temporarily inconvenienced by the working of a spiteful measure, does Canada lack manhood enough to bear with the disappointment and capacity and energy enough to turn it to ultimate advantage? It was not so in the days when our dependence on reciprocity was made hopeless through a like unfriendly policy. On the contrary, the withdrawal of the prop was the first real test of the strength of the British provinces, and before five years the Dominion of Canada was an accomplished fact. The cessation of the treaty was a blessing in disguise, and the day may come when the McKinley tariff will be recalled as the starting-point of a new era of our commercial expansion and national prosperity.

The lunatic colony of Gheel, in Belgium, has been so often described that its name and character are doubtless familiar to most of our readers. Now, however, that the treatment of the insane has been the subject of so much discussion in this province, it may not be out of place to indicate its main features. We may say in the first place that Gheel is a town in the Province of Antwerp, containing, apart from the insane, about 5,000 inhabitants. As the system in vogue does not admit of crowding, a number of small hamlets are attached to the town, and in these, as well as in Gheel, the patients are lodged and cared for. The entire community, forming the "City of the Simple," as it has been called, is, therefore, not less than 12,000. From time immemorial the place has afforded refuge to the weak-minded, and a pious tradition of a certain Saint Dymphna traces the origin of the usage back to the sixth century. There is documentary evidence that Gheel was an asylum more than two centuries ago. In 1856 the institution, which had previous-

ly been in charge of the commune, was placed under control of the government, and in 1882 a system of regular inspection was initiated. The patients are, as to social status, of two classes, those who pay and those who cannot pay. The former can have all the comforts of ordinary rustication—and can amuse themselves according to their tastes with music, sketching, reading, being made to feel the surveillance as little as possible. The curable patients are completely separated from the hopeless and under separate physicians. There is also an infirmary for those who require special attention. The great advantage of Gheel to the insane lies, however, in the fact that the householders who are permitted to board them have, in the course of successive generations, become born experts in their vocation and understand the insane much better than ordinary people understand their neighbours. Lunatics have been familiar to them from their childhood, as they were familiar to their fathers and grandfathers, and what puzzles or alarms outsiders is no mystery to them. But apart from that peculiar merit, the boarding-out plan has itself a great deal in its favour, and experiments made elsewhere tend to show that it may, with judicious oversight, be successfully substituted for the barrack system. Several of the new rural asylums of England are laid out in pavilions instead of consisting of one great building. It admits of thorough classification, for one thing; the danger from fire is reduced to a minimum; the physician and attendants are always within call, when needed, and the more home-like appearance of the houses has a salutary effect on the diseased mind, which is repelled by a vast structure of prison-like aspect. The plan has also been tried to some extent in the States and in Ontario.

Russia has been coming to the front of late in the matter of scientific and other congresses. We learn now that an international exhibition of typography is being organized at St. Petersburg. It is to be on a comprehensive scale, the exhibits being designed to illustrate the development of the art in every country from the first introduction of the printing-press to the latest improvements effected by machinery. A few years ago a monument was erected at Moscow to Ivan Feodoroff, who was the earliest of Russian printers. It was not till 1553 that the first press was set up in the ancient capital of the Czars—1564 being the date of the first book printed in the Empire. It seems almost incredible that, even at that late date, nearly a century after printing had been established in England, the jealousy of the copyists was so intense that Feodoroff and his companions were forced to leave the country. Some of the ruder of the clergy sided with the malcontents on the ground that it was a degradation to the sacred books to be multiplied artificially—an objection still made by the Arabs to the reproduction of the Koran. It was not till 1581 that the first Slavonic Bible was printed. Up to the year 1600 sixteen books had been issued at Moscow. Until the close of the 17th century Russia's literature was mainly confined to old chronicles, martyrologies, and fragmentary works on history. The Russian *renaissance* (if such a term be applicable to a country so clearly out of the range of ancient culture), which began in the first half of the 18th century, was largely due to France, whose masterpieces formed the models of the northern poets and prose-writers. The present century has been distinguished by men like Pushkin, Lermontoff, Gogol, Turgenieff, Solovieff, Belinski, and other writers—poets, historians, novelists and critics—while in science Russia has made remarkable progress. The approaching congress will, doubtless, shed needed and welcome light on the whole range of Slavonic literature and philology.

Though it is of French duels that we hear most frequently, it seems that the sanguinary code flourishes in Italy even more than in France. One of those analytic statements in which certain students of sociology delight has brought out very clearly the extent to which duelling prevails and

the circumstances under which duels are fought in the realm of King Humbert. During the last ten years the total number of these encounters was 2,759. Of these 2,489 were fought with sabres—that is, about 90 per cent. of the whole. Three per cent. of the combatants chose swords as their weapons. The engagements in which pistols were used numbered 680, or about 6 per cent. While, as a rule, the gentlemen who thus sought or gave satisfaction suffered little injury or inconvenience, we find that in fifty cases the results were fatal to one of the antagonists. The number of wounds received is computed at 3,601, but in general they were of a slight nature, and, with the exceptions mentioned, none of them caused the death of the victims. An interesting result of Signor Gelli's inquiries is the record of provoking causes. In suits and acts of violence were the causes assigned in 8 per cent. of the cases. Private or family discussions were responsible for about 7 per cent. Newspaper controversies carried the day, however—about 36 per cent. of the entire enumeration being attributed to that cause. About 27 per cent. are set down to various causes, including disagreements consequent on religious discussions, gambling disputes, and altercations about ladies. As might be expected from what has already been said and from what we read of other countries, journalists are next to military men the most notorious duellists. Out of a hundred it is calculated that 30 will be soldiers and 29 newspaper men. The complete disappearance of duelling from the United Kingdom is one of the most noteworthy, social and moral phenomena of our time. The day is gone forever when ministers of the Crown and judges of the higher courts deemed it necessary, for the defence of their honour, to make targets of their bodies. On the continent also the usage is, doubtless, doomed, though it dies rather slowly.

Among the telegraphic news that appeared in last week's morning papers, we were somewhat startled to find a special despatch devoted to certain extraordinary developments of the oceanic system of the planet Mars. The observer was no less illustrious an astronomer than M. Camille Flammarion, and the phenomena to which he calls attention have not now been noticed for the first time. In one of his most remarkable works, *Les Terres du Ciel*, a double-page coloured map shows the distribution of the planet's land and water, while a series of views illustrates the aspects of its surface at different periods of observation. These variations in its appearance used to be attributed to the dense clouds that float sometimes over one region, sometimes over another. Some of the changes noted cannot, however, be accounted for in that way. It looks as though immense ridges of sand had been forced up in the midst of some of the Martian oceans, dividing them into two parts. One of them, however, which has been compared to the Black Sea, presented a uniform aspect until June last, when Signor Schiaparelli discovered what looked like a yellow band dividing it unequally. Similar phenomena have been observed in other parts of Mars by other astronomers. The geography of the planet is very different from that of the earth—there being rather more land than water, while the latter is so distributed as to form a number of Mediterranean or great inland seas. Some of these bodies of water (which have been named after famous astronomers—the two largest being known as the Kepler and Newton oceans, others as the Seas of Beer, of Maedler, of Huggins, etc.—the continents being similarly distinguished by the names of Copernicus, Herschel, Galileo, etc.) are connected by long straits or channels. An English astronomer has observed, in some of these latter phenomena similar to those to which M. Schiaparelli has called attention as existing in the Lockyer Sea. By and by, perhaps, we shall know more about what is going on in Mars. M. Flammarion, who is indisposed to limit animated nature to this earth of ours, thinks that Mars may be peopled by a race of beings taller than men and furnished with wings. The late Prof. Proctor, on the other hand, maintained that, though Mars is the planet