

quite justifiable interest in the personality of every individual who has influenced thought in his day; and to meet the demand for this special kind of information the press is constantly pouring out a stream of books. So we have, in ever increasing numbers, biographies, memoirs, reminiscences and histories that give prominence to the private life and habits of statesmen and warriors.

The causes of this wide-spread interest are not far to seek. "A great thing," Lord Beaconsfield makes one of his heroes of fiction say, "is a great book; but greater than all is the talk of a great man." It is an epigrammatic way of expressing the direct force with which spoken words, accompanied by all the aids of glance, gesture, intonation and personal influence, appeal to the hearer and carry with them a power of persuasion impossible to the same things said in a book. We are interested in a certain book. One day we meet the author, study his features, listen to his voice. When we read that book again it is with a redoubled interest and an almost instinctive understanding, as if its author had written expressly to us. It is the power of personality, and there is, perhaps, no influence comparable to the influence one human creature may exert over another.

The influence of the man of letters is increased as the circle of his readers widens. There are few people who do not read some form of literature at present. This is the age in which we refine on other men's thoughts, and the accumulated wisdom of the ages must be offered to the mass of readers in a diluted form. Not the rich nor the wise and learned alone are supplied with books. From the illustrated newspaper to the costly folio, from the sensational novel to the last professorial account of the origin of being, there is material for every class of readers. The general taste for reading, the cheapness of books and their numbers have increased incalculably the popular interest in the lives of distinguished literary men.

But perhaps the most potent cause of this hero-worship (or is it the effect?) is to be found in the social distinction which, in America especially, falls to the share of the successful *litterateur*. There has been a great advance in the status of the author since the time when Sam Johnson ate behind a screen in his patron's dining-room because his clothes were too shabby for the dinner-table. No Chatterton of this age finds the ills of the life which he has chosen so unendurable that he takes the last way to end them. There are no Otways and Savages dying in abject poverty without consideration or hope of remembrance. We read of the miseries of Grub Street with much the same remoteness of interest as is accorded the perils and adventures of the Vikings or the ultimate fate of the lost ten tribes of Israel. Those conditions are past, never to be revived. The extension of journalism has given the man of letters an honest way of earning his living more effectual than the offensive patronage of Johnson's time. The humblest quill-driver of to-day, if he is industrious and has an ordinarily facile pen, need not starve; the author of a volume of the crudest and most ephemeral poems has his circle of personal admirers who would be insulted at a comparison of their Osirus with an able workman in any less distinguished craft; while the popular author is a sleek, prosperous personage, getting the "honours" that Thackeray predicted for him, and "dying in the bosom of the genteel." He may seldom grow very rich, but that is the lot of the majority in every profession; and the better class of literary workers, like Emerson and Browning, have sought and found something better than wealth or popular applause. "Our calling," Thackeray said, "is only sneered at because it is not well paid. The world has no other criterion for respectability. . . . Directly the men of letters get rich they will come in for their share of honour too; and a future writer in this miscellany may be getting ten guineas where we get one, and dancing at Buckingham Palace while you and your humble servant, dear Padre Francesco, are glad to smoke our pipes in quiet over the sanded floor of the little D—." But if Thackeray did not dance at Buckingham, there is a much louder ring to his name than to the names of most of the worthies who did; and his confreres on this side of the water get as much of that sort of glory as they care for. With that nation where, as one of its distinguished authors tells us, the leisure class has itself been so lately in the digging line that it objects to having the spade brought into the parlour, literary success means social distinction. The people who received Dickens with enthusiasm and forgave his subsequent caricatures of them, have always had a genuine appreciation of the value of letters, and have been quick to bestow substantial marks of approval on their own men of letters. They delight to honour the man of genius, the retiring scholar, the novelist who charms, the poet who inspires; and every detail in the lives of their intellectual leaders is of interest.

LUKE HOUGH.

VARIETY alone gives joy;
The sweetest meats the soonest cloy.

—Prior.

IMAGINATION, whatever may be said to the contrary, will always hold a place in history, as truth does in romance. Has not romance been penned with history in view?—*Arsène Houssaye*.

I HAVE heard that wherever the name of man is spoken, the doctrine of immortality is announced; it cleaves to his constitution. The mode of it baffles our wit, and no whisper comes to us from the other side.—*Emerson*.

RONDEAU.

SWEET music thrills the fragrant air
And dwells in dreamy cadence, where,
Alone I stand, unheeding all,
Save soulful tones that softly fall,
And reach the heart bowed down with care.

Mist-like, the scene before me there,
Departs, and now it is a fair
June day, and in each bird's clear call
Sweet music thrills

A blessedness beyond compare,
A joy, a life unbounded rare,
Possess my soul in breathless thrall—
Far from the crowded, brilliant hall,
Where fields the grace of summer wear,
Sweet music thrills.

Montreal.

HELEN FAIRBAIN.

THE POSITION OF CANADA.

NATION-BUILDING is usually a slow process. The growth of European countries has been the work of centuries; the Constitution of Great Britain itself has been the result of evolution through ages of inter-necine strife or patriotic struggle. The United States as it appears to-day is the consequence of over a hundred years of experiment, experience and even civil war. Canada has, however, been more fortunate. The Colonies as they existed prior to confederation were, it is true, born of a combination of war and privation and nursed in doubt and danger, but the union of 1867 under the broad folds of the national emblem removed serious risk and enabled them to enter upon a period of material development and legislative improvement. The national heritage then presented to, or shortly afterwards acquired by, a people numbering but three millions was indeed a vast and noble possession. With a territory larger than the United States; equalling to-day one-third of the whole British Empire; having the greatest extent of coast-line; the greatest coal measures; the most varied distribution of precious and economic minerals; the greatest number of miles of river and lake navigation; the widest extent of coniferous forest; the most extensive and most valuable salt and fresh water fisheries, and probably the vastest and most fertile districts of arable and pastoral land upon the face of the globe, it is little wonder that the Canadian people felt they had a country, as Lord Dufferin has put it, worth living for and worth dying for.

Leaving the sounding sea with its vast and valuable fisheries upon the coast of the Maritime Provinces, travelling through the historic Province of Quebec, with its antique yet prosperity-giving system of slow and sure cultivation of splendid agricultural resources; then on through the great pivotal Province of Ontario, with its prosperous farms, its great mines of nickel and iron, and its wealthy cities, by the shores or upon the waters of great lakes that may fittingly be called seas; on to the Province of Manitoba and the vast prairies and golden wheat-fields of the great North-West, over ground which contains untold treasures of coal, or upon rivers teeming with every variety of fresh water fish; the Rockies are finally reached, and a brief transition through mountain grandeur lands the Canadian in the beautiful and favoured Province of British Columbia.

Even then we have not touched the fringe of the great Mackenzie Basin, where, in almost complete and primeval obscurity, lie a million square miles of territory, and resources rich enough for the home of a great nation. Across the Canadian half of the North American continent is indeed a revelation of natural richness such as can perhaps be encountered in no other part of the world. And it was to develop this territory, to knit these great Provinces together, to promote trade and intercourse, to make Vancouver the entrepot of British commerce with the Orient, to enable Canadians from the Atlantic to the Pacific to hail a united and progressive Dominion, that over a hundred millions of money was spent upon the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Who dare say to-day that it was money mis-spent? True, criticism has been rampant and opposition powerful, but nothing succeeds like success, and the 20,000,000 or 30,000,000 bushels of grain which have this year been shipped from the fertile North-West to feed the millions of the Mother Country, is alone sufficient compensation for the construction of such a great national and Imperial highway.

The promotion of trade with the East is also a most important consideration, and the fast steamship lines now running between Vancouver and Japan, the coming connection with Australia, and the hoped-for swift steamers between Halifax and Liverpool will enable British commerce to travel over British soil and under the British flag to the furthest confines of Asia. Indeed, no more prophetic words were ever written than those penned by William H. Seward when Secretary of State under President Lincoln:—

"Having its Atlantic seaport at Halifax and its Pacific depot near Vancouver Island, British America would inevitably draw to it the commerce of Europe, Asia and the United States. Thus from a mere colonial dependency it would assume a controlling rank in the world. To her other nations would be tributary; and in vain would the

United States attempt to be her rival, for we could never dispute with her the possession of the Asiatic commerce, nor the power which that commerce confers."

To-day the C.P.R. is menacing the prosperity of American railroads, upon which were spent twice the capital and around which hovers the prestige of many years' business and experience. But competition is useless. The great natural highway of the continent is upon Canadian soil, and minor roads must necessarily become tributary to its progress.

Precedent to the building of the Canadian Pacific was the Confederation of the Provinces. Commencing with Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, under the guiding hand and inspiration of that patriotic and far-seeing statesman, Sir John Macdonald, it was but a few years before the Dominion covered the ground from ocean to ocean, and from the great lakes to the Arctic regions. Since 1867 the scattered Provinces have become a nation: the hesitating people, spread over far-distant territories, have begun to understand the sentiment of unity, while a magnetic personality, combined with the aspirations of a patriot, have enabled the late great Canadian leader to start a rising nation upon the high-road to greatness. More he could not do, and the future depends upon the will of a people who are now being sorely subjected to alien interference and internal doubt and difficulty. Of the material prosperity thus secured within the Dominion, there can be little real doubt, and the following table will exhibit Canadian development in the most marked manner:—

	1868.	1890.
Deposits chartered banks	\$32,808,104	\$137,187,515
Deposits savings banks	4,360,392	54,285,985
Letters and post cards sent	18,100,000	113,580,000
Miles of railway	2,522	13,256
Receipts from freight	12,211,158	29,921,788
Fire insurance in Canada	188,359,809	684,538,378
Total imports and exports	131,027,532	218,607,390
Export animals and products	6,893,167	25,106,995
Export cheese	617,354	9,372,212

The progress of our trade has been equally great. In value it rose from \$131,027,532 in 1868 to \$172,405,454 in 1879, when protection was introduced, and thence increased to \$218,384,934 last year. The exports, which, in a new country, are beyond all doubt the most important branch of its commerce, increased in the following measure:—

Total exports 1868-72	\$283,410,368
" " 1873-77	363,511,828
" " 1878-82	381,402,883
" " 1883-87	405,384,877

The succeeding five years, if averaged, will amount to a total of at least \$460,000,000.

The economic history of Canada is of great interest and has perhaps been the cause of more misrepresentation than that of any other country in the world. In 1855 the then Provinces of Canada entered into a reciprocity treaty with the United States by which the natural products of each country were exchanged free of duty; any products made free to the Republic being also admitted free from the Mother Country, excepting in one or two cases where an accidental preference was given, but immediately remedied. The treaty lasted until 1866, when it was abrogated by the United States and never since renewed, although many attempts have been made by the Dominion Government to obtain a modification of its principles suited to the present time. Owing to an unusual state of affairs abroad, great prosperity ensued to the Canadian farmer from the arrangement while it remained in force. The Crimean war was not yet over when it commenced; wheat was higher in price than ever before or since, and, as the Yankee would say, a "general boom" pervaded the land. Then followed the local expenditure upon the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway, and the Sepoy rebellion in India, while the year 1861 saw the inauguration of the terrible civil war which rent the Republic in twain, took millions from the field and plough, and made the Canadian farmer completely master of the situation.

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that recollections of the reciprocity treaty should still have a glamour to the eyes of the farmers in the Dominion.

Confederation followed the sudden abrogation of the treaty, and the fiscal policy of the Government was a tariff averaging 17½ per cent., levied chiefly for revenue purposes. This was all right while the United States was recovering from the effects of the war, but when about 1873 and during the time that the Liberals held power, the Americans began to pour cheap goods over the seventeen per cent. tariff and practically obtained control of our markets, whilst we were debarred from theirs by duties running from thirty to forty per cent., the effects soon became evident in a depression very much greater than any prevalent in other countries. It was not, therefore, wonderful that Sir John Macdonald and the Conservative party should have carried the elections of 1878 upon the "National Policy" or proposed system of moderate protection, which it was intended should be adjusted to the changing circumstances of the hour. Since that date protection has been the platform of the people, and undoubtedly it has, combined with the unifying effects of Sir John's general policy, done much to build up the Dominion, create inter-provincial trade and expand external commerce. An analysis of the trade under these respective policies may be of interest.

EXPORTS OF THE BRITISH NORTH-AMERICAN PROVINCES.		
Reciprocity Period 1855-66		\$623,922,813
Revenue tariff 1867-78		841,614,764
Protective " 1879-90		1,089,469,841