

and straightforwardness to the Russian advance. It is now clear that England is aware of the full treaties executed between Russia and France and China. It is said that she has informed the Pekin Government until they bind themselves not to hand over Port Arthur to Russia and to hark back on the cession of the Burmah Shan States—belonging to England—to France, the British fleet will not quit the vicinity of Nankin, nor its advanced mosquitoes, the harbour of Foochow. As to Japan, she and England are regarded as now mutual necessities for their influence in the East. Till Japan be paid the loan raised by Russia's banker to pay off the extra evacuation indemnity on the first of next month, the danger will not thicken. Then Siam must henceforth be seriously counted with. She is not dead, but sleepeth.

Rocheport's "Memoirs," Souvenirs would be the more correct name, are appearing in the ground floor department of an evening newspaper of which he is the chief shareholder. As yet they are agreeable, rather than sensational. He could not help being a Marquis since he was born to inherit that empty title, accompanied with the blackest poverty. His grandfather saw the Revolution advancing—for he entertained, although a royalist, popular opinions and sold his vast estates in Berry—part of which, in time, became the property of George Sand, at Nahant, where she sleeps in her garden beneath the spot where she wrote many of her works—for the sum of ten million francs. The purchase money was paid in assignats, and the wheel-barrowful of paper dwindled in value to some 50,000 frs.; even the tumble "down" did not stop there, as neither butcher nor baker would accept that kind of greenback. They wanted hard money, and bimetalism did not exist. Rocheport had to share in the ancestral ruin; his youth-time was not idle; his mother utilized him as dry nurse for her other three children, for it is only since the Revolution that two was fixed by spouses as the regulation number of doxies for every well regulated family. His grandmother, being a royalist, was in due time thrown into prison to await her appearance before the Revolutionary Tribunal—that six hours halt before ascending the scaffold. She was eighteen months living among the condemned, but nursed her baby in her arms all the same, though daily, or rather hourly, expecting death, the more likely because she had committed no crime. Now it was that infant saved her life; it was very pretty, became a pet with the gaolers, was made to kiss all the unfortunates who were called for the guillotine so that the mother's name somehow never appeared on Fouquier-Linville's order of the day.

His grandmother had for cell neighbour the ex-mistress of Louis XV—the well-known Madame du Barry, whose dissolute career was well known. Louis XVI continued her pension of 10,000 frs. a year, a rather odd item on a civil list. But His Majesty and Marie Antoinette had the royal strumpet constantly at their little dinners and suppers. However, the de Mercy "Correspondence" has revealed to us that Marie Thérèse had counselled her daughter to pay every attention to the courtesan. The real cause of her arrest was her incessant demands for arrears of pension—and what a pension!—when the Committee of Public Safety had not even an assignat in the treasury. She was, by birth, a gutter girl, and rose to be the virtual ruler of France, and the professional beauty that Europe extolled. When she was dragged to prison she made a quasi-royal entry, thanks to her bestowing some diamonds among the gaolers. She regarded her arrest as a practical joke, and sent letters after letters, left unanswered, with presents of diamonds, to the members of the Revolutionary Committee to order her release. She also promised, were she liberated, to show where she had concealed her mass of diamonds in the woods of St. Cloud, not far from the house where Pasteur died, and the mansion where the Duke of Connaught and his family are passing, hermit-like, their vacation. One day her name was bawled out for Citizeness Du Barry to come and appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal; she made her few things into a parcel, saying, jauntingly, she felt certain she would be released; and she was. At nine in the morning she was tried, by four in the afternoon her head rolled in the guillotine bucket. The *tricotenses* attested she was, after Camille Desmoulins, the "best screamer" ever witnessed on the scaffold. Du Barry was aged 50 when she entered the prison, and the Marquise de Rocheport said her character was gross and vulgar, her conversation idiotic. She was as stout as Mrs. Pezziwig, or an oyster woman, and that her bust rest-

ed on a pair of elephantine legs. His maternal grandmother was an eyewitness of the execution of Marie Antoinette. There was nothing at all, it appears, heroic about her death, and round the scaffold there was a great crowd. All is legend because written by royalists. When Marie Antoinette arrived at the foot of the scaffold she was doubled in two; she was carried on the platform an inert mass, and was dead, in a sense, when she was pushed under the knife.

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### Montreal Affairs.

THE coming to the Grand Trunk at the close of the present year of Mr. Charles M. Hays, of the Wabash system, is an event of first-class importance; for the Grand Trunk, though somewhat overshadowed during the last decade by the sensational growth of the Canadian Pacific, is yet an immense factor in our national life. Sir Charles Rivers Wilson's presidency has thus far been fruitful in changes; not changes made for the mere sake of demonstrating that a new hand was at the helm, but well considered ones, intended to remove weaknesses that now exist. The Grand Trunk has always been a well-run road so far as its mechanical side is concerned; but it has somehow or other always failed to hold its own with its American and Canadian rivals in securing business and holding it. Various explanations of this are made: one that the Board of Directors, with Sir Henry Tyler at their head, sought to exercise a more direct influence on the running of the road than was wise in view of their distance from the scene of operation; another that the G.T.R. officials with their predilections for their English methods of conducting railways were not quite suited to face the conditions on this continent which keep changing with kaleidoscopic suddenness. Perhaps there was some truth in both of these theories, for Sir Charles Wilson has, in his new arrangement, sought to remove the ground for both criticisms. He has secured as general manager one of the shrewdest railway men in the Western States where they make a specialty of raising great railroaders; and he has been given almost absolute power within carefully defined but wide limits. The general policy of the road will be settled by the proprietors; but apart from this Mr. Hays will have complete control. It is predicted by some who know Mr. Hays' abilities that he will do wonders; and everybody hopes that he will. But he will not accomplish miracles; and nothing but a miracle will ever make the ordinary G.T.R. stock a dividend-paying one. Sir Charles Wilson is said to be planning a scheme to reduce the capital to a point which will represent about the actual value of the road at present; and if this be done the Grand Trunk may, under more favourable auspices, pay reasonable interest on such a sum. If Mr. Hays achieves this he will be doing enough to make himself a national benefactor; for the failure of the Grand Trunk to make any return to its shareholders has not been without its effects on the investment of British money in Canada. It is an interesting fact that Mr. Hays and Sir William Van Horne are very old friends; they are both graduates of the same railway school; and no doubt when they lock horns as they are certain to do, it will be an interesting struggle to watch.

The resignation by Mr. Robert S. White of his seat in Parliament as Cardwell's representative created something of a sensation here, where Mr. White of course counts his friends by hundreds—by thousands rather. In view of Mr. White's promise to make full explanations to his constituents it would not be fair to speculate on the causes of his retirement; but that they will prove creditable to him no one who knows him will doubt. Whether his action will lead the Government to withdraw its promise to appoint him Collector of Customs at this port, which was made in the first place by Sir John Thompson and repeated by Sir Mackenzie Bowell, time will show; but if it does Canadian journalism will profit thereby. Mr. White as a political controversial writer is hardly equalled on the Canadian press; and his articles are characterized by a dignity, fairness, and courtesy which, while not so uncommon as a decade ago, yet rare enough in writing of this nature. It is no secret in journalistic circles here that, in anticipation of early appointment to office, Mr. White has during the past year or so been less active with his pen than of yore; but if his resignation means his intention to devote himself entirely