

SNIFFING VANCOUVER.

After a sojourn of nine months at the Antipodes, in search of health from the land of flowers and of summer seas, Principal George Grant, of Kingston, has come back not only renewed in strength, but more of a Canadian, if that might be, than when he sailed full into the hopeful light of the Southern Cross. He was glad to be back among his own again, and when he "sniffed the air of Vancouver"—these are his own words—he felt a rapture of joy, such as that with which Knowle's Tell was thrilled on his Alp, in the day of triumph:

* * * Blow on, ye winds,
This is the land of liberty!

Doctor Grant is one of those men whose views on questions of public or national import we do not go far to seek. Without ever thrusting himself forward, he is never afraid to tell of his abiding faith in the institutions of his country, and his belief in the old constitutional principle that it is best to let well enough alone. He hails from Nova Scotia, and is a good representative of the men of brain from the Lower Provinces, who have made their mark in every part of this young Dominion. His book "From Ocean to Ocean," written after crossing the continent with that other eminent Scotch-Canadian and engineer, Mr. Sandford Fleming, was one of those that formed an epoch in the literature of the Northwest, and gave an impulse of its own to the Canadian Pacific Railway. Devoted to the cause of the higher education in Halifax, Doctor Grant was sought for in a broader field, in the Province of Ontario, and led to accept the headship of Queen's University at Kingston. Here a task of rebuilding, in more ways than one, was set before him and, with characteristic bravery, he undertook it. It was thus that he became widely known to the people of the Upper Provinces, and his influence spread not only into the Northwest, but, he was asked, more than once, to make his voice heard in the Province of Quebec.

Although Principal Grant's chief mission and most congenial work is in the training of youth for the duties of citizens and Christians, his many-sided mind has brought him into contact with the most interesting measures of discussion for the public weal, and in every case he has been found the staunch patriot, the enlightened reader of our future and the foe of all theories of change that would substitute the spirit of unrest for the reign of peace and contentment. Be it said, with due respect, that the constitution of a young country, such as ours, is as an Ark of the Covenant, and blasted be the hand that is raised against it. Whether on the Halifax Citadel, on the breezy prairies at Brandon, or on the briny stretches of Vancouver, let us "sniff" and drink in with full lungs the draughts of Canadian freedom.

IN GHOSTLAND.

Let not the reader stand aghast. The word Ghost is good old English, which all of us understand, and when we speak of Ghostland, we mean to make enquiry about the spirit land, and the intercourse that can and does take place with the souls of the loved ones gone before. A fortnight ago there appeared a paper in No. 26 (Vol. I.) of the ILLUSTRATED, entitled "The Poet's Rapture," being an account of a letter of Lord Tennyson's,

in which he described how his soul went forth from him, and held communion with a spirit known to him and felt, although unseen, and then conclusive passages were quoted from "In Memoriam," to show that these moods were therein also described.

This paper did not pass unnoticed, and many thoughtful readers were so struck thereby, that it set them thinking. Chief among these was Mr. John Reade, M.A., of Montreal, who sent a brilliant amplification of the same psychological phenomenon, drawn from his own vast reading. This paper will be found, with the apt quotations, in the present number of our journal, and the reader will turn to it with eager curiosity.

After the reading, the thought will of itself come up that these instances are drawn from modern experience, and, as naturally, the scholar will remember that the whole subject is as old as literature. Then the wonder will be that we make so much ado about it. What do we read oftener than of visions in the sky, and of bodily shows of the Deity in the woods, and on the hills, or in the barrens, in the Old Testament? And the miracles of the New? And the wonders of the Acts? There is a halo of romance about the legends of the Thebais, peopled with ghosts come back to warn or comfort in reply to prayers. And mark—the word legend is not here used in the sense of fable. Barring the embellishments of poetic recital, the stories of the anchorites belong to honest history. Coming further down, we have St. Jerome, in the Syrian desert of Chalcis, visited not by angels, with white wings, and bearing baskets of lilies, but by imps, in hoof and tail and pitchfork, come to tempt him; and lascivious nymphs hovering around to lure him back to the festive days of the Imperial Court. Then there was St. Augustine and the little angel on the sea beach of Carthage, teaching, with his tiny shell, one of the sublimest lessons in Christian philosophy; Theresa and her rhapsodies; Agnes, on the sands of the Colosseum; Loyola and the cross; Xavier and the open heavens, on the shores of Sancian, and so on, all through the "Ages of Faith," as described by Kenelm Digby in his monumental work, under that title. Read Shakespeare in "Hamlet" and "Lear" and you will understand how the honest and matter-of-fact feeling in spiritualism was rife in his time, almost as much as in the days of Chaucer. Read Byron also in "Manfred." But the most striking instance of all is that of St. Simeon Stylites, of the fifth century, modernized by Tennyson. The poet, however, gives too harrowing a picture, quite other than that left in full by Theodoretus, Archbishop of Tyre, one of the gravest and most trustworthy historians of the early church, and who visited Simeon, on his pillar. This shaft was, first, 6 cubits high, then 12, then 32, then 36, and thereon the solitary stood, day and night, in rain and sunshine, for seven and thirty years, dying at the green old age of sixty-nine at last. Theodoretus says that he suffered from his cramped position, which he changed from standing to kneeling and bending his body forward; he was fed by his disciples and the faithful or curious who stood around his pillar and listened to his teachings. But the best part of his time was spent in contemplation, under the starry skies, or when the sun shone and the storm roared, and these communications with the Spiritual world kept him company, and sustained his

energies. Tennyson's description of his last vision is tempered with the proper reverence:

The end! the end!
Surely the end! What's here? a shape, a shade,
A flash of light. Is that the angel there
That holds a crown? Come, blessed brother, come.
I know thy glittering face, I waited long;
My brows are ready.

Then there is a moment of doubt that he may lose the guerdon, and he utters a loud prayer and is comforted with a second sight:

* * * 'Tis there again; the crown! the crown!
So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,
And from it melt the dews of Paradise;
Sweet! sweet! Spikenard and balm and frankincense,
Ah! let me not be fooled, sweet saints. I trust
That I am whole, and clean, and meet for Heaven.

* * * * *
Deliver me the blessed sacrament;
For by the warning of the Holy Ghost
I prophesy that I shall die to-night,
A quarter before twelve.

And then, to show that he was happy at the last, he prayed for his followers who had come in at the death:

* * * * * But thou, Lord,
Aid all this foolish people; let them take
Example, pattern; lead them to the light!

Tennyson never gave a more beautiful finishing touch than in those closing lines, doubtless feeling, when he wrote them, with so many others, like Hamlet, that

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

FINE ARTS IN MONTREAL.

M. Benjamin Constant, the eminent artist, was in Montreal for several days of last and this week. He was born in Paris in 1845, studied under Cabanel, and resided for several years in Spain and Morocco. In 1875 he obtained a medal in the Salon, and at the Exposition Universelle, in 1878; the next year he became a knight in the Legion of Honour, and in 1884 an officer, and finally a member of the Société d'Aquarellistes Français—a closed society of water colourists, whose members are also members of the Salon. There are at present four examples of his work in Montreal, the most important of which is the "Hérodiade," in possession of Hon. Senator Drummond. Another was in the recent loan collection at the Art Gallery, "An Eastern Beauty." Mr. Drummond also owns "Le Lendemain d'une Victoire à l'Alhambra," and Sir Donald Smith has "Le Soir sur les Terrasses." M. Constant came to America some weeks ago and arrived in Montreal accompanied by M. E. W. Glaenger, a delegate from the French Government in connection with the section of Fine Arts of the Exposition Universelle of 1889. M. Constant is a man of fine presence and figure and looks the real artist; he speaks very little English and is thoroughly bound up in his art. His immediate business here was to examine L'Hérodiade; the varnish has become soiled to such an extent that the picture is in danger of being spoiled. To remedy it is a work of some time, and the work is being carried to Europe for that purpose. If done in time it will be exhibited at the Exposition. M. Constant was the guest at a dinner of Senator Drummond, and met a number of leading Montreal citizens.