

THE PUGIN OF BELGIUM.

BY WINDMILL C. ROBINSON.

Yesterday week I chanced to be in the Church of Sainte Croix outside of Bruges, and, in company of the worthy Cure of the place, was examining and admiring the altars of the church. They are from the designs of the Baron Jean Bethune, the reviver of Christian art in Flanders. I little thought that at that time their author was piously receiving the last rites of Holy Church in his country house at Mareke, on the banks of the sluggish Lys. And, a few hours later, he who had done in Belgium the work that the elder Pugin had striven to accomplish in England, had gone to receive the reward due to those who had dearly loved the glory of God's House. Within a week he had followed to the grave her who, during forty-six years, had been the companion of his joys and of his sorrows on earth. For though placed by birth beyond the needs of life, and by his untiring energy and enthusiastic labors having won renown in art—than which none is pleasanter—Baron Bethune was not exempt from the crosses of life, and in his latter years the greatest grief that can befall a Christian parent visited him. This, we may hope, may, to borrow a favorite saying of pious old Flemish souls, have but added one more pearl—and not the least costly—to the heavenly crown that we may hope he already enjoys.

More than half a century has passed since his true vocation was made clear to Jean Bethune. It is thus narrated in an article of the *Bien Public* of Ghent. "It is fifty years," says the writer, whom we may well suspect to be no other than the distinguished Catholic publicist, M. Verapeyen, "it is fifty years since the illustrious author of the *Histoire de Sainte Elizabeth*, a pilgrim of religion and art, visited the town of Courtray. The name of the young peer of France who had so gloriously pleaded for freedom of education against the Orleansist Liberalism which had promised it the charter of 1830, and traitorously refused it by its laws, was already popular throughout the Catholic world. But he was even more intimately known and beloved in Belgium through his marriage with the daughter of one of the founders of the then youthful Belgian nationality, the Countess Elizabeth de Merode. The father of Jean Bethune, then Burgomaster and member for Courtray, naturally warmly welcomed the youthful politician, and, being prevented by his duties from showing him over the town, confided this pleasant task to his son Jean. The future Christian architect fulfilled this task with that cordial hospitality and courteous simplicity that was peculiarly his own. It was not without a certain pride and patriotism that he pointed out to Montalembert Van Dyck's famous picture, "The Elevation of the Cross," in Our Lady's Church at Courtray. But the illustrious stranger, without denying the beauties of the masterpiece, was seduced rather by the architectural beauties of the church, and horrified by the clumsy attempts made to restore its faded fairness. He poured forth the admiration and indignation he felt with such burning words as the "son of crusaders alone could command. They were to Montalembert's youthful companion a revelation of his vocation. They traced for him a path whence he never swerved.

Of Jean Bethune's works as an artist and as an architect more competent pens than mine will no doubt speak in your columns. For there are some in England who have watched with friendly yet not uncritical eyes his varied works, and there are others who have been his pupils and who will no doubt pay their tribute to their master. Whatever plac-

works may eventually take in the history of art, it is certain that they have already filled a large and honorable space in the art annals of Belgium—the classical land of mediæval Christian art. By pen and pencil he did his best to revive that art in all its branches. Whose are those elaste and delicate oak carvings that adorn so many village sanctuaries of Flanders? Whose the daintly carved stone altars of many a Flemish church? Whose the richly painted windows through which "the dim religious light" streams into their aisles? Whose the costly shames and marvellously embroidered banners that make a modern Belgian procession as splendid as any of the ages of faith ever beheld? Whose the teaching that has made the very streets through which those processions pass rich once more in all the architectural wealth and beauty of days before lath and plaster, faades and cornices disguised the beauties of the streets of the Netherlands? Whose the designs that built at Vive Capelle, in an out-of-the-way nook of Flanders, one of the most complete 15th century churches and dependencies that can be conceived? And to whom was due the grand Abbey of Maredsous, of which we gave so admirable an account some months ago? And to all these questions the name of Jean Bethune is the only answer. "But what the good men do is oft interred with their bones." Not so with Jean Bethune, for in the members of the Guild of Saint Thomas and Saint Luke he has left apostles of his art; and in the flourishing school of Saint Luke many disciples to carry on the crafts he so lovingly taught them. But devoted as he was to his art, other good works had his active sympathy, and at the gatherings of the Societies of St. Vincent de Paul, of St. Peter's Pence, and of the Catholic School Association of Belgium, his venerable figure will be long remembered. Full of years—three score and fourteen—he had gone to his reward, leaving the world all the richer by his example of practical piety and work. May he rest in peace!—*London Tablet*.

The Corean Wonders.

The Corean "wonders" consist, first, of a hot mineral spring near Kin Shantao, which is capable of curing sickness and diseases of all sorts. The second wonder is the two wells, one at each end of the peninsula, which have the peculiar characteristic that when one is full the other is empty. The water of the one is intensely bitter, that of the other has a pleasant and sweet taste. The third wonder is a cave, from which there issues an icold wine, with such force that a strong man is not able to stand up against it. A pine forest which cannot be eradicated constitutes the fourth wonder. No matter what injury may be done to the roots the young trees spring up again like the phoenix from its ashes. The most remarkable, however, is the fifth wonder—the famous hovering stone—which stands, or rather appears to stand, in front of a palace erected to its honor. This is a massive rectangular block, free on all sides. Two men standing, one on each end, can draw a card underneath the stone, from side to side, without encountering any obstacle. The sixth wonder is a hot stone, which has been lying from time immemorial upon a hill, and evolving a glowing heat. The seventh Corean wonder is a sweating Buddha. This is guarded in a great temple, in whose court for thirty years on all sides not a single blade of grass grows. No tree, no flower will flourish on the sacred spot, and even wild creatures are careful not to profane it.

The Christian Brothers have opened a school for the Catholic Greek and Maronites, in Nazareth, the Latin Catholics attending the school of the Holy Land.

Our Postal System—Past and Present.

There is no department in the public service in which improvement is so perceptible as in our postal arrangements, from the time it was taken in charge by the government of Canada, on the 6th of April, 1851, on which date the Hon. James Morris became our first Canadian Postmaster General. Previous to that date the postal regulations were under the control of the then Postmaster-General, of England, whose Canadian Deputy was Mr. T. A. Stayner, then residing at Montreal. The present Postmaster of Richmond Hill, Mr. M. Teffy, was appointed on the 3rd of December, 1850, nearly forty-four years ago. At that time there were no postage stamps in use; the postage of each letter was rated according to distances, on the following scale, viz: For a single letter—

60 miles and under,	4d.	or	7½c.
61 " to 100	7d.	or	12c.
101 " to 200	9d.	or	15c.
201 " to 300	11½d.	or	24½c.
301 " to 400 ls.	15d.	or	27½c.
401 " to 500 ls.	4d.	or	31c.
501 " to 600 ls.	6d.	or	30c.
601 " to 700 ls.	8d.	or	33c.
701 " to 800 ls.	10½d.	or	37½c.
801 " to 900 ls.	13d.	or	41c.
901 " to 1000 ls.	15d.	or	45c.
1001 " to 1100 ls.	17d.	or	48c.
1101 " to 1200 ls.	19½d.	or	52½c.
1201 " to 1300 ls.	21d.	or	55c.
1301 " to 1400 ls.	23d.	or	60c.
1401 " to 1500 ls.	25d.	or	64c.
1501 " to 1600 ls.	27d.	or	67c.

NOTE.—One piece of paper (not weighing an ounce) is a single letter. A double letter consists of two pieces of paper (not weighing an ounce) is to be rated with double postage. A treble letter, consisting of three pieces of paper (not weighing an ounce) is to be rated with treble postage. A packet weighing an ounce or more, is to be rated by weight, in the proportion of one letter for every quarter of an ounce.

A letter, whether unpaid or prepaid, addressed to Thornhill, and posted at Richmond Hill, was 4½d.; to Lindsay was 7d.; to Kingston, 9d.; to Montreal, 1s. 1½d.; to Quebec, 1s. 6½d.; to Caspe, 2s. 5d.; to St. John, N.B., 2s. 5d.; to Halifax, N.S., 2s. 9d., and so on, according to distances, as stated before.

The rate per half ounce on letters for the United Kingdom was 1s. 4d. currency, or 27 cents.

On the 1st of July, 1859, the following reduced rates were established, viz.

All letters, half ounce rate, prepaid 5 cents.

All letters, half ounce rate, unpaid 7 cents.

All letters for United Kingdom 12½ cents.

All letters for the United States 10 cents.

Newspapers &c.—Weekly 4d. or 6½ cents per quarter, Semi weekly 5d. or 13 cents per quarter, Tri weekly 1s. or 20 cents per quarter, Daily, 2s. or 40 cents per quarter, to be paid in advance by either the publisher at the Post Office where the papers are posted, or by the subscriber at the delivering office.

Of course, to follow the many changes in postal arrangements and the very great reduction of the rates, would be superfluous, as our readers are now familiar with the present rates of postage.

When Mr. Teffy was appointed Postmaster at Richmond Hill in 1850, there were no Post Offices at Oak Ridges, Gormley, Cashel, Headford, Victoria Square, Rupertville (now Maple). At that time the mail was carried by stage running between Toronto and Holland Landing; the Northern Railway was not in existence.

The first Postmaster for Little York was the Hon. Wm. Allen; after him came J. S. Howard, afterwards Treasurer of the County of York. Mr. Ballard was assistant P. M. and John Doel was letter carrier. Since that time the staff has increased enormously.

We are indebted to our Postmaster, for the items given above, which can-

not fail to interest our readers, as a record of our progress in forty-four years. Mr. Teffy is one of the oldest (if not the oldest) Postmaster in the Dominion now living.—*Richmond Hill Liberal*.

Debts That Cannot be Paid.

There are some debts that can never be paid.

What shall this boy do to square the accounts with his mother?—the mother who, when she brought him life, went down to the very gate of death herself, not knowing whether she would return or not; the mother who, through all his babyhood, gave up herself to him that she might pour her life into his; the mother who bore with his errors and his imperfections; the mother who loved him back from his wanderings and redeemed him from his sins; the mother who took upon herself the burden of transgressions of which he himself was unconscious, that she might bear them away and he be saved from them? What service shall he render to her? what words of gratitude outpour? what love bestow? Ah, if this boy be a man, he knows that is a debt that can never be paid! Eternity of love will not pay it, for love never pays love's debts; such debts go on eternally, and love goes on eternally, and we pay and love, and love and pay, and still the process lasts.

What shall this husband pay to recompense the wife?—who left her home, her friends, her very name, and took his name up for her own, became his companion, bearing his cares more than he bore them, loving him not only for richer or poorer—that is easy—but for better or worse—that is hard. How shall this husband pay the wife that has been his counselor and his advisor and has filled him with her love and her wisdom? Oh, what can he do but say, this is a debt I cannot pay. I can owe her love eternally; and when I have loved her as long as eternity shall last, still there will be love due to her.

How will you pay the physician that came into your house when your little child lay in the cradle, and you thought every moment the cradle would become a coffin, and who watched and tended and brought to you his wisdom and his care and his love and his skill and his courage? Can you ever be otherwise than debtor to the man who has called back from death your child or your wife and given her back to you?—*The Outlook*.

A Strange Musical Instrument.

A musical instrument, the like of which has never been seen before, is the outcome of many years' hard thinking by a Swedish electrician and musician. There is a frame, and on it are hung a score of tuned bells, a series of steel bars struck by metallic hammers, a row of steel strings of necessary tension, a xylophone, and a fraudulent bagpipe, made out of a bar of steel and an electric current. The operator can sit at the keys a few feet away or a hundred miles—it doesn't matter which so long as the connecting electric wires are fixed up. For a beginner I should recommend the hundred miles' radius. The key-board, which is like that of a piano, but with few keys, is equipped with switches, so that one set of instruments or the whole lot may be operated on at once.

The Catholic temperance societies of the United States have more than 100,000 members.

The great demand for a pleasant, safe and reliable antidote for all affections of the throat and lungs is fully met with in Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. It is a purely Vegetable Compound, and acts promptly and magically in subduing all coughs, colds, bronchitis, inflammation of the lungs, etc. It is so PALATABLE that a child will not refuse it, and is put at a price that will not exclude the poor from its benefit.