

CANADIAN MAGAZINE

OF
Science and the Industrial Arts.

Patent Office Record.

Vol. 12.

AUGUST, 1884.

No. 8.

Communications relating to the Editorial Department should be addressed to the Editor, HENRY T. BOVEY, 31 McTavish Street, Montreal.

The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents.

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THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

It is quite possible that fifty years hence the celebrated article, that appeared two years ago in the *Times* upon the British Association and Canada, will excite as much amusement, as the old quarterly articles upon Keats and Wordsworth afford us at the present day. The increased friendliness between the United States and the mother country joined with the rapidly expanding facilities for locomotion, owing to which a trip from London to New York or even to Montreal is a considerably less formidable undertaking than a journey between London and Edinburgh was to our grandfathers, make it more than probable that the pending meeting of the British Association in Montreal will not be the last visit of that body to our continent. If this should prove to be the case, it would be difficult to overestimate the favourable results of the further approximation of Great Britain to her Transatlantic colonies. It is curious to notice that, in this matter, the high priests of science have followed the lead of their religious brethren, Pan-Anglican and Pan-Presbyterian synods having anticipated the International British scientific gatherings of the future.

All this may be, but then again it may not. It is quite possible that the present move will prove an exception, and that the conservatism of the British philosopher will regard a visit to the colonies of the old country as a work of supererogatory condescension, too costly to be repeated. However this may be, the advent of the British Association will, long be remembered in the city of Montreal, and in Canada generally. We certainly cannot recall a social and scientific event of similar importance in the history of our Dominion, and we hope that all will take advantage of the coming of the wise men from the east to our shores.

To look at things from the lowest point of view, the visit of the Association will be a capital advertisement for Canada as a home for emigrants. The farmer or the labourer will not feel that he is going to a strange land, when he remembers that it has been the spot chosen for the gathering of his scientific teachers. But if from a commercial point of view we entertain just hopes of benefits accruing to our country from the coming visit, much more should we profit from it intellectually. The presence of Rayleigh, Reynolds, Adams, Dawkins, Gladstone, Roscoe, Thompson and Tylor, will doubtless prove a further spur to the genius of our Hunts and our Dawsons.

Nay, not only shall we profit from the *ex cathedra* utterances of our scientific visitors, but we must doubtless expect something similar to the criticism that our southern neighbour has received at the hands of Herbert Spencer and Matthew Arnold. Those who have grown up in an older and different stage of civilization will see much here to admire, but much too to blame and censure. They will remark upon the splendid capabilities of the site of Montreal, situated on the gentle slope of a hill, and they will notice also our imperfect sanitary arrangements, our defective drainage and bad lighting. If they visit the purlieus of our city, they will see much of the squalor of London, without the excuses that must be made for that old and over-crowded city. Criticism such as this we must expect, and we should hail it gladly, remembering that we are not yet perfect, and that the Englishman is naturally disposed to grumble and, as our young emigrants have taught us, to express a wholesome contempt for all that differs from the state of things with which he is familiar at home.

DISCOVERIES IN MADAGASCAR.—Several persons living in the interior of Madagascar have written freely respecting the discovery of gold and precious stones in the interior. One gentleman, writing recently, says: "Gold has been found to exist in considerable quantities, and diamonds also; the diggers are beginning to move in units, but there is danger of a rush." Another says that "the prospects of the country are good, as gold has been found, and precious stones also."