

as to charges or management, and a wide door is given to an aggravation of all the exciting sources of complaint which have so disgraced Niagara. The five promoters are pronounced supporters of the Government, and, to say the least, are in strong contrast with those of the other Bill, numbering among them the leading men of the Dominion, irrespective of party lines.

The franchise which the Railway Company seek for has great pecuniary value, both present and prospective, and the peculiarly hurried and secret way in which it has been generalised through the Committee cannot inspire the confidence which should accompany so important a measure. It would be much better for the sake of keeping good faith with our American friends that both Bills should be postponed till next session, pending the result of the Park Bill at Albany, which by the terms of the Act must be decided on or before the 30th of April next.

The spoliation of the scenery is a matter of very great importance. On the Canadian side, from the Suspension Bridge down, it remains still untouched. It is the greatest gorge scenery in America, rich with historic associations which ought to belong to the public, and should ever be kept free from the despoiler. It is evident that without unanimity of object and action between the two countries, its preservation cannot be accomplished. It would be infinitely better to delay all legislative action, than forever fix the destiny of this great neighbourhood, and place its future in the hands of political adherents probably more anxious for greed than they are for any proper appreciation either "of the sublime or the ridiculous"—a contrast, by the bye, which not inaptly applies to the character and aims of the respective Bills.

The reference in the House by Mr. Mowat as to the proposed railway not affecting the destiny of the proposed Park, is not correct. The railway will occupy over a mile and a-half of the Park territory, and take away the most valuable source of revenue, as well as destroy the most primitive park scenery, which thus far has escaped spoliation.

W. O. BUCHANAN.

MARK TWAIN'S ENGLISH.

To the Editor of the Week :

SIR,—Under the heading "Literary Gossip," in THE WEEK of the 12th inst., is a notice of the brass plate in Mark Twain's house on which is engraved the sentence, "The ornament of a house is the friends who frequent it." It surprised me to find such a sentence, even though on brass, in such a quarter! Its grammatical construction may not be deemed absolutely incorrect by some; it evidently was not by Mark Twain; but it is decidedly clumsy and harsh to the ear, even if it does not violate, which I doubt, some express rule of grammar. As the art of constructing sentences properly is one of no mean importance to writers and speakers, I would ask: does not the harshness arise from endeavouring to make one verb do duty for both the singular and plural noun? *The ornament is the friends; the friends is the ornament.* Or, does not the clumsiness arise from making the singular noun occupy a plural position, thus expressing a relationship beyond its capacity to bear? This would not be the case had the sentence been, "The ornaments are the friends," which could be transferred to, "The friends are the ornaments." But Mark Twain doubtless wished to make the word "friends" emphatically set forth "the ornament" of his house. Could he do so with but one verb connecting the singular and plural noun? The subject may interest many of your readers from a grammatical point of view.

Toronto, March 13.

MARK O'BOWN.

THE DUTCH EXPEDITION.

To the Editor of the Week :

SIR,—In your issue of the 12th there is a letter from Mr. Homer Dixon, with the alleged cause of the failure of the expedition of 1809 to Holland. It is incredible that the British Cabinet entrusted the secret of so great an undertaking to a common spy, or that, as Holland abounded in Orange adherents with smuggling facilities so great, it should be ignorant of the approximate number of the French in that country. Napoleon placed so enormous a value upon Antwerp that, had he believed such news, he would at once have strengthened its garrison, which he could have done in eight days after the capture of the spy. All probabilities pointed out North Germany as the object of the expedition, as that would have decided the Louis XIV. will-feebleness of the King of Russia. If Napoleon received the news at all, he must have looked upon it as a weak invention of the enemy to throw him off the real scent. The real cause of the failure was the appointing thoroughly incompetent commanders, both military and naval. Had Wellington or Hill been sent, Europe would have been saved several years earlier than it was. Free nations are apt to think that the most fluent talkers make the greatest statesmen. Such persons often lack the gift of selecting the best men for great positions, as well as ability to take a wide view of matters. The dodgery required to shout and elbow one's way to the front is fatal to true greatness. Yours, etc.,

Toronto, March 13, 1885.

LIBERAL.

UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION.

ALL goodness is essentially one, and therefore essentially Christian. We are not to suppose that Christianity is an exotic plant introduced into a region to which it is strange, and meant to overlay the course of nature with a foreign and external application. It is, on the contrary, the crown of a long development. It had in spirit and aspiration been working in the constitution of human life from the beginning. We are accustomed to trace this in the history of the Hebrew race. But there was a *preparatio evangelica* of a similar kind going on in other nations also; they were, to use St. Paul's words, "seeking the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him." There was an aspiration towards goodness and towards God, which we may trace out in various systems of religion and morality, most of all in the Greek philosophy, and which was a kind of faith in the good things which were to come. When the Brahmin declares God to be the One, the Beginning, the Middle, and the End, the goodness of all that is good; when Buddha teaches that "to abhor and cease from sin, this is the greatest blessing;" when we read in Confucius the evangelical maxim, "What you would that men should do to you, that do to them;" when we find in the Zend Avesta such praise of truthfulness as made that central virtue the basis of moral training to every Persian, and such teaching of the unity of God and of immortality as is believed to have recalled the Jews during the captivity to those primary

principles of religion; when Plato argues that the test of righteousness is to act justly whether gods and man see it or not, and though crucifixion should be his reward; when Horace speaks in words worthy to stand beside those of Psalm xlii., of the just man standing firm though the world should go to ruin around him; when Marcus Aurelius closes his Soliloquies with the expression of resignation in death, "Go in peace, for he that dismisses thee is at peace with thee;" we must recognize in such teaching, amid whatever faults of life or thought, the presence of the Spirit of God. And so it is now with all sincere moral life which does not as yet own the Christian name. Its virtues are not to be denied, still less to be represented, according to some of the Western (not the Eastern) fathers, as splendid vices, unless, indeed, they are contented and self-sufficient instead of progressive and aspiring. Wherever justice and love are to be found in all their various manifestations, the love of kindred and of country, the generous and courteous demeanour of man to man, valour, love of truth, obedience, self-discipline, purity, wherever there is anything lovely and of good report, there is that which is an adumbration of, an aspiring towards, the image of Christ. We sometimes hear it said that an action or a character is good, but not Christian. What is usually meant by this is that it does not accord with some partial ecclesiastical standard of goodness. If it were really possible that there should be any virtue which is excluded from the Christian ideal, the Christian ideal would cease to be supreme, and would, consequently, cease to be divine. The confession of the divinity of our Lord is the assertion that all the scattered rays of light that shine in the world are gathered up in Him and radiate from Him again. What sometimes appears to be non-Christian virtue is really a stunted, perhaps a perverted, form of Christian virtue. Take away its restrictions, bring it back to its original principle, give it its full development, and it will shine forth as at least an inspiration towards the Christian ideal. It is thus that lives such as those of Saul or of Samson, though exceedingly faulty if judged by a Christian standard, are yet included in the cycle of revelation and find their place among the moral phenomena which represent the half-conscious longings of the darker ages towards the Redeemer who was to come. The same thing may be said of all the imperfect forms of goodness which we find growing up among the heathen, whether in ancient or modern times, or in Europeans who have not accepted the received Christianity. The ideal of life presented by Sakyamouni, or by Mahomet, or, again, by Plato, or by Marcus Aurelius, or, in the later centuries, by Lorenzo de Medici, or by Goethe, must partly be made to combine with our present Christian morality, partly be purified by it, partly be allowed to amplify our idea of what is morally good and Christian. Nay; we may ask whether there is any system of professedly Christian morals which does not need, on account of its imperfections, to undergo a similar process. There are also aspirations which have lost their way, like some of the Utopias of modern revolutionists, but which yet contain an element of truth and self-renouncing love. They all have in them some germ of the spirit of Christ, which touches the springs of all that is good in human nature. From that spirit all sincere moral systems arise; towards the full developments of that they converge; from that they gain their constant renewal, and by it are lifted out of pedantry, or narrowness, or self-sufficiency, into union with the divine and eternal goodness.—*The World as the Subject of Redemption.*

A CITY POPULOUS.

O'er a strange city populous
In a haze-sky floats the moon,
And the shadows hang like vapours
Under the trees of June;
And the dewdrops, radiant, mystic,
Glow like fire-opals tremulous;
Strawn in the silent grasses—
Sown on the untrod mosses
That grow in that city populous.

Within that city populous
Rise towers of purest white,
Feet-claspt with rainy mosses
And ivies trailing bright;
Pale flowers and odorous lilies
Adrowse in the dreamy light
Which, as in legends fabulous,
Sheens in pearl-waves nebulous
O'er that strange city populous.

At the gate of that strange, dim city
Stands a Silence pale; unvisited
Are her red lips, parted, trembling;
And her braids of tawny mist
Seem born of the flying night-clouds,
And dank with the dews of June,
While at her feet the nightshades
Hang dripping beneath the moon.

Strange is it—still and sombre—
This city dim and old;
You would deem it ruined, haunted,
All is so hushed and cold

When at midnight the moon's splendour
Drops down in showers of gold.
Yet often over its length of stone-worn,
marble palaces
Trampleth the tempest-blown rain from
the cliffs of the cold north seas.

Green are its streets and narrow,
In the moonlight cold unpaven,
And its grasses dank, unshaven,
Mixed with rue and yarrow;
And here, by the dim, white arches,
The murmurous, rustling larches
Lift up cold hands to heaven;
Here, too, in the grasses verdurous,
Like a pale pearl, filmy orduous,
The glow-worm lights his lamp
Under the nightshades damp
That grow in that city populous.

Where is that populous city
Where the lilies drift in balm?
Where all night long the shadows
Float in the odorous calm?
O Heart! it is ever near you,
Praying you enter in
And lie with its beautiful Silence,
At rest from toil and sin.
Yet beware! From that siren Silence
And her mystic quiet marvellous
Returneth none who enter
Into that city populous.

CHARLES J. O'MALLEY.

A MASSACHUSETTS newspaper correspondent is very indignant at the quaint likeness of Daniel Webster engraved in this month's *Century*. "To exhibit him under that hat is an outrage," is his criticism.