

prosperity of the community, it gives a vested interest in the State to the masses, it increases the purchasing power of the people, and diffuses more equally the accumulation of capital. The subject is an exhaustive one, and will bear criticism from all standpoints, but onward and upward should be the motto of the people of our common country.

C. A. BOULTON.

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### MEMORIES OF BAYREUTH.

WAGNER'S Theatre at Bayreuth is altogether unique in contour and construction, built chiefly of red brick and timber. It presents an imposing appearance on approaching Bayreuth by rail from this quaint, old city of Nürnberg, which, with its fortified walls and deep, broad moats, was the birthplace of Wagner's opera, "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg." Mad King Ludwig, whose worst craze was the building of castles and costly edifices, must have felt Wagner's controlling hand when he built the theatre for him, it being the perfection of inexpensive neatness, combined with roomy comfort; easy of ingress and egress, and when the audience is seated there is ample space in front of each row, in the Fürsten-Loge or Parquet, for accommodating 1,344 persons on broad, movable, cane-seated opera chairs. The floor is fan-shaped and is raised to such a degree that each seat is equally good, both for hearing and seeing. The roof is flat, with fan-shaped ribs running from the centre of the proscenium, intended, no doubt, to guide the sound-waves into the far corners of the auditorium. Two-thirds of the building are taken up by the stage and appurtenances. The stage is lighted by electricity, supplied from an out-building in the rear; the scenery is hoisted up and down, chiefly, and is as near perfection in mechanical appliances and facility in changing as can well be imagined; the curtain is woven from fine silk, with gold ornamentation. The audience being assembled by a fanfare of trumpets, the lights are turned down at the first sound of the orchestra, which consisted of 110 instrumentalists, thirty-two being violins, all completely hidden from the audience, down in front and partly under the stage; the conductor of "Tannhauser," Herr Mottl, the young Karlsruhe Kapellmeister, being of course in full view of the stage. This is a capital arrangement, if only that it prevents the line of sight to the stage being interfered with. The combination performance of chorus and orchestra was certainly the most finished I have ever witnessed inside the walls of a theatre. "Parsifal," Wagner's crowning work, conducted by Herr Levi, was indeed a revelation in both detail of execution, scenic wonders and general excellence in performance. Van Wyck, the grand Dutch tenor, fits the character to perfection, his superb voice, fine manly bearing and highly cultured style of singing, together with an intense fervour in acting, make his triumph over all complete. Frau Materna, well known in America, brought all her dramatic force and vocal art to bear upon the terribly trying rôle of Kundry. The other solo parts were evenly sustained by artists selected for their worth and Wagnerian efficiency. "Amfortus" was sung by Herr Reichmann, and a grand representation it was. "Tannhauser" was presented in all its original completeness, the "Venusberg," first act, being fully developed, making the stage a scene of constant life-like movement, the opera being given for the first time, since its early composition, in its full scope and moral effect. Herr Zeller was somewhat disappointing as "Tannhauser," his voice being too light, and not sufficiently broad and declamatory for German opera. Fraulein Wiborg, a young singer selected by Madame Wagner, cannot compare with our own Albani as Elizabeth for cantabile and phrasing. Germany's two most celebrated baritones, Reichmann and Scheidemantel, alternated in the part of Wolfram, the latter's interpretation of Wolfram's description of the consuming sorrow of Elizabeth and her hungering for Tannhauser's return being especially impressive. Frau Sucher's performance as Venus was truly magnificent. The unmatched scenery all through the opera has a fitting finish in the winding funeral cortege of Elizabeth, headed by knights and torch-bearers, while the newly-arrived pilgrims from Rome surround them—the younger ones on a rock above, holding the staff of rose blossoms, representing the redemption of Tannhauser, and as the curtain falls the light of dawn suffuses the scene, illustrating the calm feeling of pardon which succeeded the anguish of despairing hope. The audiences assembled filled every seat at five dollars a head, and many at three and four hundred per cent. premium. It was the most orderly, decorous and discriminating congregation of musical pilgrims possible to conceive, scarcely a sound of applause being heard until the close of the last act, when the curtain had to be raised several times, discovering the stage picture in precisely the same attitudes as at the first drop of the curtain, no incongruous changes being permitted to mar the recollections and impressions created by the music-wright and the historian. The representations, lasting but for a month, are, it is said, to be repeated next year, when "Parsifal," "Tannhauser" and "Die Meistersinger" are proposed for representation. Bayreuth was once the resort of Grandees, and has several fine residences and an old theatre so peculiar of interior that I overheard a fair American exclaim: "Oh, I say, isn't this like our church in Bostong?" Vanderbilt and many Americans visited Bayreuth this year, but the operas were, I was informed, mainly supported by English and Germans.

W. EDGAR BUCK.

### RONDEAU.

HASTE Victor Death! I long for thee to-night  
Now while life's fires are burning clear and bright,  
For being last thou surely must be best.  
Come to me power benign, give tranquil rest,  
And temper life's hot noon with thy bland light.

The battle roars around me, cares affright  
My very life in God, fierce hates incite  
To black fruition. Calm me life—distress'd,  
Haste Victor Death!

The warrior yields to thee his toughest fight,  
The poet spurns earth's bays, knowing his might  
To build a swelling Epic—long suppress'd  
By alien cares—the saint unloved, unblest  
Hungers for God, and I would mount in flight,  
Haste Victor Death!

JAMES C. HODGINS.

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### THE REORGANIZATION OF THE CABINET

MR. ABBOTT, aided, of course, by the leader of the Government in the House of Commons, is engaged at present on a delicate and arduous task—the reorganization of the Ministry. We see at times in the newspapers a piece of news to the effect that there has been a meeting of the Cabinet, but that the reorganization was not before it. If the question was one of *repairing* the Cabinet—filling up the two vacant offices—nothing could be more proper than that the Prime Minister should confer with his colleagues as to the propriety of taking in certain persons on whom his judgment was likely to fix. But to consult with his colleagues in full session on the reorganization of the Ministry would partake of Turkish statesmanship, and the polite correspondence between a Sultan and a Pasha, in which a bow-string is the billet-doux. He has the resignations of all his Ministers in his hands, and of some of them we may say with certainty no man in the Dominion would be as sorry as himself if they insisted on his accepting theirs. When the Conservative party came back to power in 1878 a strong Ministry was formed, and Sir John Macdonald at its head was in the full vigour of his powers. English-speaking peoples have a love for old politicians, which some nations, the Greeks for instance, would have found incomprehensible. As Sir John's physical energy, and therefore his real power, declined, his *prestige* and public power rose, and it seemed a pleasure to a mind, in whose humour there was a deep but latent cynicism, to try how much dead matter he could by means of his own volatility float.

Lord Beaconsfield describes Conservatism under Sir Robert Peel as "an attempt to carry on affairs by substituting the fulfilment of the duties of office for the performance of the functions of Government." This could not be said of the Conservatism of the man who fathered and carried, though he did not originate, the National Policy, and who built the Pacific Railway. But it would seem to be an accurate description of the Conservatism of some of his followers, if we substitute the word "possession" for "fulfilment."

If men's difficulties are the measure of their opportunities, the opportunities of Mr. Abbott are great; and yet he is to-day in a much better position than anybody could have anticipated when he took the reins. The wheels have indeed gone into ruts not looked for, and an outsider has been unhorsed, but the team has behaved beautifully. No one, friend or foe, believed that after the death of Sir John Macdonald the party in the House and the country would show the organic life, the self-conscious direction, it has done. It may be said in passing, however, that twelve months before his death, when some newspapers were echoing the flim-flam—"after me the deluge"—the present writer declared, in a published article, that his demise would not be the signal for his following going to pieces, and pointed out that the Conservative party was a *party*, and not a faction or a mob. Mr. Abbott's opportunities extend beyond the bounds of his difficulties. His difficulties have in one or two directions enhanced his opportunities. Great responsibilities rest on him. He has had to cope with none of the restlessness, none of the bolting that was expected. Save for scandals for which he is in no way responsible, all he has had to do was to sit on the box and hold the ribands. It was not necessary to tighten the curbs or use the whip. Now, however, he is called on to act, and on his action may depend the fate of the Conservative party, the policy of the country for years to come, the progress of Canada, the character and aims of her political life. He is untrammelled by connections or antecedents; yet the task before him is difficult, but difficult in this sense alone—it requires *original*, or more properly *originating*, talent to deal with it. Many men of great ability, especially when they are lawyers, are mere imitators on an occasion like the present; they look for precedents when they should devise what the reason of the case demands. The situation then is this: if he fails he will fail where the majority of men would fail; if he succeeds he will succeed with great credit; the alternative is a negation or glory. Under the altered circumstances of the present we believe Sir John Macdonald, whose mind, old as he was, was plastic, would have cut right adrift from that system to which he seemed so

wedded, of working with and through inferior men. This sent him earlier to his grave. He had no men in his Cabinet who could command and influence public audiences, except Lower Province men, who had to be on the Atlantic coast. He had to do the work himself. He was fully sensible of what was needed, but, unspurred by a great necessity, he put off until "To-morrow." Mr. Abbott, we doubt not, knows that procrastination would be a mistake to-day. It depends on him whether confidence in public men shall be restored and what, in the haze of the public imagination, looms large as the wreck of public morality, shall be repaired. He can make himself stronger than Sir John Macdonald was if he falls back on the true principles of constitutional government, and will give the people a Cabinet of able men with names wholly unconnected with boodling transactions. He has himself held up in the Senate an ideal to which he must aspire or be condemned, and the people are heartily sick of ignorance, incompetence and imbecility in high places. Schools and universities have long been at work; with what feelings can the youth of Canada have seen Avarice, Dishonesty, Humbug, Brainlessness, crowned and enthroned? The revelations of the past session have come like a blessing from God. Men within the Conservative party who would fain serve Canada in the spirit in which a Kingston poet sings:—

For love or fame or whatever it be,  
I give the wine of my life for thee,

had begun to despair, and were ready to turn with disgust from an arena wherein it seemed Boodle was the Praetor who awarded the prize to Mediocrity armed with poisoned weapons. Mediocrity dreads real Ability in political life, because, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it pursues "the paths of high intent," and therefore cannot be "used" is "impractical," and of course hateful to the contractor who is eager to pay a few thousand dollars if he can get twenty times the amount in "extras," like the socialist described by the Chartist poet, who was ready

To fork out his penny and pocket your shilling.

Only a man of the peculiar talents and peculiar position of Sir John Macdonald could pursue the methods he pursued, and now that the public have had a glimpse such as God gave Ezekiel, as recorded in his eighth chapter, these methods are impossible. They were always unnecessary if the true principles of ruling party and governing a country had been resorted to. But what Humboldt says generally of man is specially true of politicians of the Walpole school: "We never confide sufficiently in the good feelings of our fellow-men." Give the people ability and honesty to challenge their confidence and generous recognition, it may be enthusiasm, and "every form of creeping things and abominable beasts" will be no longer indispensable among the engines of war. A free government is the greatest blessing a people can enjoy; but men are too enlightened to-day to confound free government with parliamentary imposture. Sir John Macdonald, amid many notes of genius, had this, the truest of all, versatility. In the House, owing partly to the ability of Sir John Thompson, who, save on two occasions, led with marked capacity, partly to the admirable morale of the Conservative members, Sir John Macdonald's loss was hardly felt. Will it be felt now and in the months to come? Leaving his undoubted statesmanship and his skill in party management aside, it would perhaps be difficult to compute how much of the success of the appeals to the popular mind was due to his humour, fun, comedy. With men whose lives are a dull routine these light gifts will make more votes than pile-driving arguments. To turn a morose politician into a genial Conservative, the first step is to surprise him with the revelation that he can laugh.

We hope great things from Mr. Abbott; we cannot say we are *sure* of great things, because he has never before been called on to act in such an emergency. His training is the training of a great commercial lawyer. To those who refer to his connection with the Pacific Scandal it is enough to say at the moment, that the Thiers of 1848, grown an old man, did, a quarter of a century afterwards, splendid service for France and for the world! The reference to an annexationist ebullition in very early years is entirely out of court. We are not always the same. A man may err to-day in judgment or conduct, and a few, or many years afterwards, do good service to mankind. Looking at the fact that on every ground, personal and patriotic, he must desire to give Canada the strongest government he possibly can, and bearing in mind the impression of statesman-like capacity he has given all who came in contact with him since he has become Premier, we await with some confidence the reorganization to which the Conservative party looks forward with expectancy, and the whole country with a curiosity not unmingled with unrest.

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN, M.P.

PROF. MAX MULLER defends himself from the recent attacks made upon his theory of the Asiatic origin of the Aryan race. He still reiterates his assertions that little progress in the determination of race can be made by the measurement of skulls, and that the home of the Aryans is to be determined by linguistic evidence only. He urges anew a principle which he enunciated 40 years ago; that there should be a "complete separation between physiology and philology." The physiology of the negroes in America gives no clew to the origin of the Anglo-Saxon language which they speak.