

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE HOLLAND SOCIETY AND CANADA.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—A very interesting work is being performed by The Holland Society of New York, in which historians and many other persons in Canada ought to feel an interest. It is the preservation of all that concerns a race—the Knickerbocker Dutch of the old Province of New Netherland—(New York)—who, though not of British origin, once took a prominent part in the founding both of British Dominion in North America, and afterwards of both the United States and Canada, many active Loyalists and Revolutionists being of the stock. The occurrence of such names as Vankoughnet, Rykert, Vermilye, Van Black, Van Bogart, etc., here, and of others less recognizable, such as Waterhouse, Fisher (Visscher), Brewer (Brouwer), and so forth, will illustrate.

As a separate people they have long passed out of history, but besides their mark in history, which will some day be more clearly chronicled, traces of great interest remain in the Hudson River Valley and among the descendants of the Loyalists in Canada. The Holland Society is a large association seriously devoted to the collection of such traces. Its membership is open to all who bear the old Dutch names and it receives with appreciation all information which may bear on the question. It is desirous of hearing from anyone in Canada who can throw light on Dutch-American matters, and seeks to add to its membership all persons of the Canadian branch of the race. Anyone may address the Secretary, G. W. Van Sichen, Esq., 7 Wall Street, N. Y. The beautiful illustrated year-books of the Society contain a great deal of curious matter.

ALCHEMIST.

THE MATTER OF TREE-PLANTING.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—Hon. H. G. Joly's remarks upon the subject of tree-planting on the prairies in your issue of the 15th ult. are well worthy of consideration, and I trust the question will not be allowed to drop until some practical results are obtained. In my opinion, however, the work should be undertaken in connection with the Dominion Experimental Farms rather than by the Mounted Police, whose efforts would, at best, be but half-hearted and whose opportunities for experiment and practical information would be limited.

A great deal of information can be obtained from the farmers of Manitoba and Dakota, which, in the hands of an intelligent and careful man would almost be enough to place the work beyond the experimental stage.

It is well known that forest trees will not grow on the best wheat-growing prairie land until it has had several years of cultivation. The soil in the vicinity of Brandon with a porous gravelly subsoil is better adapted to tree culture than that with hard pan subsoil which is the character of most of the best prairie land. Again, in places where the original forest has recently been cut away, trees and shrubs make rapid growth, as, for instance, at High Bluff, Kildonan, and Selkirk, in Manitoba, and the towns situated on the Red River in Minnesota and Dakota. In Brown county, Dakota, latitude 46, apple trees do well, also all fruits that are grown in the Province of Quebec, and it is probable that the difficulty heretofore met with in growing fruit trees in Manitoba is to be found in the character of the soil rather than in the severity of the climate.

For many years it was believed to be impossible to grow apple trees upon the heavy clay lands of the province of Quebec, but by means of underdraining and deep cultivation these lands have been made to produce apple crops equal to the best in Canada. May it not prove so in Manitoba? Show the Manitoba farmer how to get a profit from tree planting and he will be quick to undertake it.

It will be better for the country to have small orchards around every house than to have larger forests at intervals of many miles.

GEO. B. CROSS.

Vancouver, B. C., Nov. 23rd., 1889.

A FARMER'S VIEW.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—In your remarks concerning Mr. Wiman you say, "But there are surely higher considerations than any pertaining to trade. There are stronger obligations than those which impel a people to seek to extend their commerce and increase their wealth." Granted, but in looking at the question I fail to see what these "higher considerations" are.

The United States is a Christian nation, so is Canada. The two nations are essentially the same in origin. The strong sense of moral responsibility must be the same in the individual members of both nations. The newer and more thinly settled portions of the States may be, to a certain extent, lawless, and neglectful of religious forms; but are the facts true of the States of New York and Pennsylvania? In regard to the "increase of wealth," etc., it does not, among the farmers, mean that. It means the keeping of what we have. Unless there is some change in the relative values of what we have to sell and what we have to buy, we shall be in the position of paupers before long. Here is a statement of our business this year upon a 300 acre farm: Dr.—Rent, \$900; wages, \$700; taxes,

\$105; sundries, \$200; total, \$1,905. Cr.—Barley at 40c., \$680; Oats at 30c., \$600; peas at 50c., \$150; wheat at 80c., \$150. Increase in live stock value, estimated \$500; total, \$2,080; balance, \$175. An estimated profit which will, in all probability, before realized, be used up in additional wages for two able-bodied men.

Any one can see here what the profit of the farmer will amount to this year. If it were not for reserve stock we could not pay our way. There will be a heavy loss on all grain farms this season, while mixed farmers will lose the increase in their live stock, which was about their only profit before. The outcome of this state of affairs will be rent reductions, and consequently reduction in land values, which will be an immense loss of wealth instead of gain.

In common with many others, I cannot help but feel that free trade with our neighbours south would tend to remedy this. It would, at least, put us on an equality with parts of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, instead of Nebraska and Minnesota. Witness prices of barley in said localities.

E. W.

Province of Ontario.

UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—The general positions you have taken on the matter of University appointments seem to me on the whole so fair and reasonable that there would be no reason for a second letter from me, were the general principles of appointment the matter under discussion. But, in your latest article, you call attention to a statement of mine that seems to imply that it makes no difference whether a professor of philosophy is a Christian or an infidel, so long as he teaches philosophy "for its own sake." I need scarcely say that I hold no such belief, and that I should consider it an "unpardonable outrage" to appoint an atheist to such a position. The inference was, I submit, scarcely warranted, seeing that I was dealing, not with general principles, but with a special case in which both candidates were understood to be members of a Christian Church, and one of whom (Mr. Hume) had taken the trouble to embody in his application certificates of standing in his church. The point I tried to make was this, that in a State-supported institution like the University of Toronto, surrounded as it is by theological schools, some of whose theologies are as wide apart as the poles, no one school of thought ought to be allowed to determine the appointment of a professor of philosophy. Let each and all urge that the appointee must be a man of undoubted ability, of high character and of Christian creed, but let the line be drawn there, and with these safeguards let "philosophy be taught for its own sake."

Permit me two or three further remarks. It is scarcely an "accusation" to say that certain theological professors opposed Mr. Hume because of the school of philosophy to which he belongs. I fancy they would be quite willing to express publicly, if occasion arose, their preference.

This is not the place to discuss whether or not Dr. McCosh's system rests on a dogmatic basis. This much may be said. At the basis of his philosophy lie certain assumptions, "intuitions of the human mind." Grant these, and the system follows. I need not say the critical philosophy does not grant these, nor does it proceed by this method. But the question so far as university instruction is concerned does not depend on which side is right and which wrong in this battle of philosophies. The question here is, Which system gives the best mental training? In deciding this, let it be remembered that the greatest thinkers of modern times are on the side of the critical philosophy.

I do not regret the double appointment. I do not think many Toronto graduates are disappointed that a double appointment was made. But not many of them I venture to think take your optimistic view of the reasons for which it was done. Of course, under the circumstances, "sure ground of knowledge" is difficult to obtain, but there is no need to suppose the minister in either case was coerced by political considerations into appointing to a professorship a candidate whom they thought unworthy of the office. It is more than likely that one reason for the appointment was that both the candidates were judged equally worthy.

It is perhaps a little unfortunate that this matter should have come up again just when Mr. Baldwin came to fill his chair. I feel sure that the graduates and undergraduates are prepared to give him a cordial welcome. He comes to fill a most difficult position, and every circumstance connected with the case ought to insure him kindly consideration and sympathy.

Barrie, Nov. 25th, 1889.

JAMES M. HUNTER.

THE American sardine has a particularly evil reputation as at present put up. The label is French in the well-known yellow and black letters, but the contents are not sardines, nor are they put up in *huile d'olive et pure*, but in cotton-seed oil. The fish in the tin was eaten by three persons, two of whom were children, and all were taken ill within half an hour, one child dying within twenty-four hours. A chemical examination of the viscera revealed lead, which was also found in the oil and in the remaining contents of the tin. The verdict at the coroner's inquest was that death resulted from lead poisoning from a sardine tin improperly soldered.—*Public Opinion*.

TRUE TALE.

ONE dull winter a lodger of polite exterior came under the roof of a respectable lady in a suburban district of the world's metropolis. Somewhat worn, not in clothes but rather in brow and furrow, gaze—not garment, he, self-recommended by this dash of melancholy (the late lodger had been a flashy person, ex-drummer, commercial cad), was taken at once by the much-harassed Mrs. Juniper, widow of Jasper Juniper, Esq.

The house was let, every inch of it. The widow only handled one flat, that at the top of the house. The lodger brought some luggage, a good many books, out of which, like De Quincey's youth amid the lakes, he manufactured a kind of bolster, his pillow not being high enough. His landlady implored him to let her make him more comfortable (this was the morning after he arrived), but he smilingly refused an extra pillow. Mrs. Juniper thought this very peculiar of him, but then he was altogether peculiar. He had arrived about five o'clock the afternoon before, and he had only been in his room about three-quarters of an hour when he had emerged on the landing outside his door, and called down through the dusk to Mrs. Juniper. That good lady answered, a bulky shape at the foot of the stair. "I will ask you to remove this Chair," said the pleasant lodger to her, smiling down in the dusk. And Mrs. Juniper remarked that he held a chair aloft and strictly, peculiarly, aggressively from him as he spoke.

"Certainly," replied the widow, "if it inconveniences you, sir."

The chair being disposed of, she had thought no more about the matter. Next day, however, the same call attracted her once again to the foot of the stair. There was her mild lodger with another chair. This time an additional earnestness animated his manner.

"I must really call your attention to this," he said, with the slightest of frowns. "I suppose you neglected to tell the girl who looks after my room. But really, if you would remember in the future—" which Mrs. Juniper promised to do.

That afternoon, when the lodger had gone out, she entered the room. All was neat, respectable, superior, as the good lady saw from the number and quality of the books and from a few toilet articles and ornaments carelessly left on the dressing-table. She went to the bed. The improvised pillow of books was there under the ordinary one.

For three or four days all went smoothly, but on the seventh day the girl, who was but an absent country lass, her head full of Devon cream and Cornish dance, forgot her mistress' injunction, and put a chair into the lodger's room. Mrs. Juniper, busy in household affairs, did not make any investigations that day, and when dusk arrived there came with it the lodger, brought back with Hesperus to his plain but comfortable abode. Instantly he flung himself out of his room, chair in hand, and shouted for his landlady. She came, trembling, frightened, dismayed.

"So much trouble about a chair!" she gasped. "What does it mean?"

"It means," shrieked the lodger, "that I will not have chairs in my room—chairs! chairs! chairs! Am I never to be left alone? Here—take it—burn it, break it up, throw it away!"

And Mrs. Juniper, running up as fast as she could, stayed his arm in time to prevent one of her best bedroom chairs being dashed to pieces.

Naturally, the good woman was disturbed, but, as in every other respect, the lodger was charming, why take any notice of his one aberration, for so she termed it? A more careful, nay, an incessant and rigorous watch was kept upon his room and not a chair was allowed inside it, not even one placed outside in the hall where he might see it and so be troubled.

But the lodger's fate pursued him. Every evening, while he took his dinner in her parlour, Mrs. Juniper examined his room carefully and never did she find a chair in it, nor anything else which presaged violence or trouble. On Christmas Eve, she paid her last visit to the room while he was in it, going so far as to mix and bring him up a glass of good mulled wine (an old-fashioned, unprogressive person this Mrs. Juniper) and noted the neatness of his attire—poor gentleman—and the unceasing care with which he wrote page after page in fine characters upon fair and large white paper. She had long since made up her mind that he was an author, unknown as yet but surely destined to greatness.

At half-past ten she left him, and listened after that for the moving about and the locking of his door. The night wore on—the beautiful holy night before Christmas, the beautiful, holy day, and Mrs. Juniper could not sleep. Strange thoughts of other years and other surroundings pressed upon her brain, till when the fires of dawn crept over the gray she turned over and fell into a wearied slumber. In the morning they could not make the lodger hear. Mrs. Juniper, petrified with fear, sent for the only two men she knew in the neighbourhood, and they broke the door open. The lodger sat up in bed—no longer polite, alive and pleasant—and he pointed with stiffened fingers to a Chair that was in the middle of the room. And it was a chair which Mrs. Juniper had never seen before. A chair of old oak, carved, heavy, ponderous. A chair of sinister purport, with a snarling gargoyle coiled on its back ready to spring.

This is a Legend of the Great World of London! 'Tis not alone fair countrysides in Kent nor ruined halls in Leicestershire that bear—each its grim tale of sin and woe. A legend may live anywhere.