

guration, made their annual pilgrimage to the 1871 common grave of the Communists and the tombs duly erected to the chiefs who since then have joined the silent majority. The usual oratorical litanies were indulged in; there was nothing new, save that the extreme patriots on passing the Thiers' mausoleum indulged in a few hisses.

M. Pasteur begs the press to announce that he has not discovered any anti-epileptic vaccine, and that he is inundated not only with congratulations, but with demands how to use his cure, and even by visits of patients, not only from the provinces, but from abroad. Should he be fortunate enough to discover any remedy in his constant investigations of the causes of disease, he will make it known at once. No fear of him arranging with the Government to pay off the national debt by exploiting the discovery. It appears that a patient suffering from epilepsy had been bitten by a mad dog; on being inoculated against hydrophobia the attacks of epilepsy ceased, and hence the rumour of the discovery. Dr. Charcot has stated that it is not uncommon, under the influence of powerful calming-drugs, to ward off attacks during not only weeks, but months. But the conclusion that that transient appearing is definite curing, is far-fetched indeed. To test such a remedy, years, and many of them, would be necessary for carrying on experiments. Epilepsy is hereditary, hydrophobia is not, and that is an important difference. This matter has drawn forth one practical result from M. Pasteur, that madness in dogs is on the increase among pets or poodles. He still counsels the immediate destruction of all wandering dogs.

The well-known tavern-keeper, Brébant, has died. He was called the "restaurateur" of letters on account of the monopoly of dinners and suppers he served to press clubs and literary societies. He certainly made no profit by them, and that may explain why he broke down in business. His cooking was faultless, and his wines never caused a protest. He and his wife, who kept the books, had their daily drive in the Bois, and on returning she resumed her seat at the receipt of customs, and he circulated among pots, pans, waiters, cooks, pantries, dining-rooms and wine cellars. He was ever as red as a rose, a colour that contrasted well with his head of snow white hair. When called in to receive the thanks and encomiums from a dinner party for the excellence of the repast, it was with great diffidence that he accepted the summons, and when he entered he was dumb—his features rendered blushing impossible. Every repast was a model, in point also of service.

Mr. Ernest Renan attributes his gout to Brébant's kitchen.

Z.

### CANOE SONG.

Bowward, pealing of thunder—  
Sternward, the setting sun;  
Lowering storm-clouds yonder,  
Here peaceful day nigh done.

Why paddle, paddle onward  
Reckless not clouds and storm?  
Why is the course not sunward,  
Whither 't is bright and warm?

Beyond the storm is beating  
A longing heart and true;  
On to a joyful meeting  
Bounds gladly the light canoe.

G. H. NEEDLER.

### A CURIOUS CORRESPONDENCE.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, April 23, 1892.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—I enclose a letter from an occasional correspondent and esteemed friend, which greatly perplexes me. I would write to him, but he is such a peripatetic that he is more likely to be in Cairo or perhaps Hong Kong than London. I observe that the missive is undated, and perhaps it should not have been mailed till some years hence. As my friend is however more of a practical man than a dreamer, I think it best to write to you to confirm, deny or explain his astonishing statements. Your obedient servant,

E. T. VOKES.

LONDON, 9th November.

MY DEAR NED,—I have just returned from Canada, where I enjoyed myself immensely. The people are nice, the fishing and sport generally all one could desire, and the scenery in many places sublime and almost everywhere attractive. But you have no idea of the marvellous change which has taken place in the condition of the people since the time of my residence there many years ago. Probably you have heard me mention that I was for about three years stationed in Toronto as my headquarters, engaged in business that compelled me to travel annually through Ontario, Quebec, and a portion of the Maritime Provinces. At that period the Canadians bowed down before a single man, and a single idea, which they called the National Policy. Under this latter they contributed to the Dominion revenue a percentage in their ordinary outlay equal to about one-third of the price of almost everything which they purchased, whether for food, for clothing, or otherwise, and perhaps the strangest thing of

all was that although the country abounded in great vacant areas admirably adapted for all kinds of farming, but little attempt was made to attract or retain farmers, while every effort was used to build up manufactories. The result may readily be guessed. The sons of farmers flocked to the towns and cities or emigrated from the country; and very many of the manufacturers had no sufficient home market, and were generally met abroad by hostile tariffs or freight charges too heavy to leave a decent margin for profit. Then again the manufacturers who prospered, as a few did, with powerful chartered monopolists and contractors, formed a very potential class in Canadian affairs, of which the influence was directly opposed to the general interests of the people at large. More than once was the Government in a very tight place, even when led by one who, although not a great statesman, was certainly an astute politician. But on each occasion the party in power and the members of this class saved each other; the one agreeing that the tariff should be maintained, the chartered rights secured or increased, and the big contracts awarded; the others that the necessary funds for debauching the constituencies or satisfying clamorous and doubtful supporters of the administration should be supplied. The inevitable result is recorded in the saddest pages of Canadian history. In these we are told of the flagrant dishonesty of civil servants in high places, of speculation rampant in most of the Governmental departments. Nor is this the worst, for in politics as well as in private life the adage "Like master, like man," and I may add as a proposition if not an adage "Like man, like master," are equally true; and so not only deputy ministers and clerks, but members of Parliament and even Ministers of the Crown together fell. One would have thought that these developments would have forced Canadians to rise in wrath and drive from power those who had so badly conducted affairs. But alas! no; the people seemed to delight in being deceived and plundered, and, when I left the country, were as submissive as sheep in the hands of their unworthy master.

Now, however, everything is changed. The custom houses are closed and the great horde of customs officials of the past no longer exists. In a word, the Canadians are loyal, not merely in utterance as once they were, but in practice, have adopted British ideas and methods and become free-traders. That which was once considered the greatest of bug-bears, direct taxation, is now regarded as the most satisfactory test for comparing the result of one year's administration with that of another. From this tax, incomes up to five hundred dollars are exempt, and the balance of the revenue is derived mainly from excise duties. With the exception of these latter, all the Dominion taxes are collected at small cost through the municipal system of the Provinces. Canada is now comparatively a cheap place in which to live, and Canadians have the best of everything, and, while some of the manufactories are closed, many manufacturers are doing a safe business with smaller gross profits perhaps than of yore, but at less risk and expense.

It is true that some yearn for the old condition of affairs, but the prospect of its restoration is more than remote. Bribery and corruption are not now so potent as they once were, inasmuch as they are statutory offences punishable in the case of both the briber and the bribed, the corruptor and the corrupted, with fine and imprisonment, and deprivation of previously existing civil rights.

The exodus from the country has practically ceased, and there is a steady influx of thrifty industrious people of what some would call the lower middle class, from the British Isles and all parts of Europe. All this rather perplexes brother Jonathan, who must eventually be driven to resort to an entire change in his fiscal policy. It is true that he finds in Canada a free market, but at the same time Yankee importers are aware of the fact that there is such a thing as smuggling; and Yankee tourists to Canada have increased two-fold within only two or three years; nor is there any reason to doubt that, while enjoying the beautiful Canadian scenery and climate, they do not fail to provide themselves with European fabrics which they can purchase in the Dominion so much cheaper than at home. I am simply charmed with the new state of affairs, and am satisfied that Canada is now a place above all others wherein to live, not perhaps with the prospect of making a prodigious fortune, but with the certainty of securing a good living and everything which should make one contented.

Remember me to your wife and youngsters, and believe me to remain, very sincerely yours,

Edward T. Vokes, Esq.

P. L. ROBINSON.

### THE CRITIC.

MR. KIPLING'S admirers will admire his "Ballads"; his detractors will not, and probably in both classes of readers the admiration and the detraction will be more intense than the analogous sentiment evoked by his stories. For, as is natural, the characteristics peculiar to the stories are accentuated in the ballads. In them, as in the stories, there is the same wonderful narrative power: Mr. Kipling holds you with his glittering eye. There is the same "lantern-flash" method of depiction, as a critic has not inaptly termed it, a method more effective in the short story than in the novel, and still more effective in the ballad than in the short story. This, therefore, is in the latter's favour. There is the same unconventionality—

or rather, the conventionality is that of the sergeants mess, not that of the civilian's drawing-room. Mr. Atkins speaks freely. Some years since this would have been a treat; to-day we are becoming inured to it. But in the ballads this calling of a spade a spade is perhaps carried a step farther. It is never, indeed, called a shovel, but there are very many occasions for denominating the implement. The ballad headed "Tomlinson" is a case in point. To say it is bold, is to be euphemistic. Two things relieve its audacity: its originality and its cleverness. But there is no need to mention such things in the case of Mr. Kipling. In the ballads again, as in a majority of the stories, Mr. Kipling sings arms and the man—and always a big strong man:—

But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the  
ends of the earth.

This is the refrain of the first ballad, and the burden of all the rest. Indeed the moral of Tomlinson's curiously unhappy fate, namely, his unfitness for either upper or nether world, was the fact that he was merely "a whimpering thief that came in the guise of a man." This penchant for blood and fire is even more prominent in the ballads than in the stories: the ballads reek with brute force, as if it and it alone were the dominating power on earth. The softer virtues are wholly ignored. And this brute force is not always portrayed in its most artistic aspects: "Snarleyow" is all but repulsive. Once again, in the ballads, as in the stories, there is throughout very prominent the note of human sympathy, a rough and a ready, a crude sympathy perhaps, but still a very human sympathy. This undoubtedly is one of the first and foremost sources of Mr. Kipling's power. His men and women are real flesh and blood men and women.—No doubt many will say they are nothing more; but that they are this is much: lay-figures in modern fiction there are in abundance. As to poetry, *qua* poetry, there is not over much in this Mr. Kipling's bundle of ballads, though perhaps the ballad is not exactly the place in which to look for poetry. Effective poetical touches there are some, for example: "If ye know the track of the morning mist, ye know where his pickets are"—"They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn, the dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a new-roused fawn"—"The dead dumb fog hath wrapped it—the frozen dews have kissed it—the naked stars have seen it, a fellow star in the mist"—but these are not numerous: Mr. Kipling turns on his brilliant and searching dark-lantern-flash; he does not trouble to throw other and softer light over his scenes. Of humour naturally enough there is not a little: Tommy Atkins is always drily if not profoundly humorous, and as Mr. Kipling has taken Tommy Atkins for his subject, he could not but be humorous. "Oonts" is most laughable, so is "An Imperial Rescript," so is "Fuzzy-Wuzzy." In this, too, the ballads resemble the stories. In one thing they differ, and that is in pathos. Here and there, in the "Plain Tales," in "Soldiers Three," and in "Life's Handicap," in "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep" and in "The Light that Failed" too, the pathos was keen. In the ballads it has lost its edge: Mr. Kipling here uses too heavy a weapon; he trusts to force, not to skill. Even in the tale of the Boondi Queen, made expressly, it would appear, for the presentation of pathos, it is not upon the pangs of the widow that the writer dwells, it is upon "the little flames and lean, red as slaughter, and blue as steel." This too, surely, may be regarded as a deficiency, for in the ballad, if anywhere, pathos should have full play. Perhaps the most beloved of British ballads are her pathetic ballads: the very word recalls to mind such an one, for example, as "Auld Robin Gray," the archetype, perhaps, of the pathetic ballad. With forcible expressions, it is needless to say, this book is replete, even to excess. Had the stories not prepared us for this, great would have been the amazement of readers. As it is we still open our eyes wide at

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and wrench the stars apart,  
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks: "It's striking, but is it  
Art?"

or at

Cleared—you that "lost" the League accounts—go, guard your hon-  
our still.  
Go, help to make our country's laws that broke God's law at will—  
One hand stuck out behind the back, to signal "strike again";  
The other on your dress-shirt-front to show your heart is clane.

or at

So I'll meet 'im later on,  
At the place where 'e is gone—  
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;  
'E'll be squattin' on the coals,  
Givin' drink to poor damned souls,  
And I'll get a swig in hell from Gunga Din!

What will posterity say to these ballads? Well, we are divided on the question as to what posterity will say to the stories, and of the two the former question is the more difficult. Besides, can the present form any opinion upon such a point—even when a "Paradise Lost" is in question?

THERE is a power above that can and will sustain us all in well-doing, if we seek its support in humility and truth.—Cooper.

THERE is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.—Washington Irving.