

UN DEBUT.

A SEED fell in a tiny rift
Between the rocks one autumn day,
And there, beneath the deepening drift,
Benumbed, it pining lay.

No throbbing of the mountain rills,
No music of a passing bird;
The wild wind shrieking through the hills,
Was the sole voice it heard.

It ne'er had known the petals rare
Within whose folds it sprang to birth,
The dead leaves fluttered in the air
When first it saw the earth.

Thus long it lay and murmured sore
That it was only born to die;
One morn it heard the sudden roar
Of torrents sweeping by.

As from a midnight of despair
It seemed to wake, to live, to rise;
And bursting upward to the air,
It saw the azure skies.

And swaying in the balmy wind,
With artless pride and dainty grace,
It bent above a stream to find
Its own sweet pictured face.

BARRY DANE.

PARISIAN LITERARY NOTES.

DAVID D'ANGERS. By M. Henry Jouin. (Calmann-Lévy.) This celebrated sculptor died in 1856, aged 67. The present volume comprises his correspondence with celebrities of his time, and in which is displayed a profound and childlike faith in the redemption of mankind by republicanism, and the cruel deceptions and bitter illusions he was destined to experience for his creed. David, by his talent and his academic situation, had his *entrée* into all the salons and circles where shone the literary and artistic glories of the epoch: Hugo, Lamartine, de Vigny, Chateaubriand, Lamennais, whom he adored—Balzac, Schlegel, Berzelius, etc., and with whom he maintained relations. He made a special voyage to Weimar to see Goethe, the better to reproduce his features. David was a man of stern republican simplicity. He did not like Napoleon, of whom he writes in 1845, "I do not regret not having been commissioned to execute the monument to that man, who did so much injury to liberty, and who displayed so little nobility towards the nation that had so generously charged him with its interests. The remembrance of such a man paralyzes the heart of a republican." That republican heart David owned; it inspired his works to propagate love for the martyrs of liberty. For him the artist had an educational mission. He did not subscribe to the theory of "art for art."

L'ESPRIT DE NOS BÊTES. By M. Alix. (Baillière.) The author, a veterinary surgeon, likes all animals, but more especially horses and dogs. Now to write about animals, one must not be their enemy. M. Alix belongs to this class; he goes so far as to accord to animals the greater part of the intellectual qualities of man. It is very difficult to deny his thesis, after reading the well-authenticated and most amusing anecdotes he adduces. That animals have memories, is a truism; but that they can reason or make guesses at truth, is more difficult to admit. As to other phenomena, the intellectual powers of animals are so limited, that they cannot bear any comparison with mentally developed man. M. Alix believes in the intellectual development of animals. Darwin has shown that they can change in manners when external conditions change. Birds on an island sparsely inhabited are not very wild, but when man arrives with his traps and guns they become wary. But that is not progress in the human sense. It is by education and through language that man imbibes ideas, facts and laws. There is nothing akin to this with animals.

BLAISE PASCAL. By M. Joseph Bertrand. (Gautier.) Of late much attention is devoted to Pascal. As one of the first mathematicians and physicists in France, M. Bertrand is well-fitted to treat of Pascal as a geometrician and scientist. There is an interesting volume still to be written—as in Pascal's case—on the connection between disease, its bearing on precocious intellect and the aberrations of genius. Pascal, who died in 1662, aged 39, lost his mother when three years old. We know but little of her, only that she died happy, having heard her infant "lisp the name of God." Being a quick child, and his only son, his father devoted himself wholly to the lad's education. The father was a magistrate, who believed in sorcerers while possessing the most exalted ideas on religion. His son was an invalid from infancy, and from eighteen years old not a day of his life was he free from headache and colic. Hence it is not surprising that his character was lugubrious and made him the enemy of himself and of his fellow-creatures. It would not be wrong to say that Pascal was unconscious of or indifferent to his genius. At least it was not accompanied by any vanity. When a child he wanted to know the why and the wherefore of everything. Euclid was hid from him, so he invented euclid at the age

of twelve. When sixteen he wrote a treatise on conic sections. Later he invented a calculating machine to assist his father; the hydraulic press, the wheelbarrow, the long wine cart, the cruetstand, and he sketched the omnibus. He described the theory of roulette, demonstrated that the rising of the mercury in the barometer tube was due to differences in atmospheric pressure. To commemorate the latter discovery his statue in Paris fitly stands under the tower of St. Jacques, where his barometrical experiments were conducted.

But what a constitution was his! Chronic headache and abdominal pains; paralysed legs, so that he could only walk on crutches; paralysed throat, so that he could only swallow warm drinks, drop by drop. His feet were so icy cold that he had to wear stockings steeped in brandy. Martyr to toothache, he cured it one night and forever—while studying the curve described by a nail on the circumference of a wheel. Nine years before his death he recovered his health so far as to become a man of the world. Like Molière, he joined the Fronde. On one occasion, at Neuilly, outside Paris, the four horses drawing his carriage ran away; two were drowned in the Seine. Pascal was so terrified that afterwards he always imagined seeing on his left side a yawning abyss. He wrote this impression on a morsel of paper that he stitched into his wearing apparel, where the amulet was found after his death.

He induced his sister, Jacqueline, at 21, to become a nun, and she later led him to religion and to live at Port Royal, a few miles from Paris, that famous retreat for solitary savants. He was now 32 years of age. However, it was the accidental perusal of a work by Jansenius, the Dutch theologian, that led to his controversy with the Jesuits, as immortalized in the "Provincial Letters." At Port Royal, Pascal lived as an ascetic. He was his own housekeeper, so that he dwelt in filth. He gave his wealth to the poor, many of whom lodged with him, as the best way to please God. Self-mortification, even to ulcers like Lazarus, and vermin like Murillo's saint, were for him a saving sacrifice. He wore an iron belt with spikes next to his skin, and when he sinned in thought, word or deed he struck the belt with his elbow, and pricked himself into penitence.

M. Bertrand does not say if Pascal was troubled by "doubt." Pascal, the perfection of logic and precision, never hesitated to discuss religion with all comers, but he never deviated an iota from his position, of dissociating reason from faith. For him, Faith was God, sensible to the Heart, not to Reason.

The publishing season has so far brought out no first-class work—all are reprints.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MAIR, SCHULTZ AND LYNCH MEETING.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—I see in the last issue of THE WEEK a letter from Alderman Hallam, contradicting a statement made by me in my sketch of Charles Mair in your series of Prominent Canadians that there was a large meeting held in the City Hall Square to welcome Messrs. Mair, Schultz and Lynch, in 1870, and stating that the meeting was held right opposite his store, 85 Front Street East, and that he was responsible for calling it.

It is Mr. Hallam who is not correct in his statement. The meeting held to welcome the refugees from Red River was organized by the men of the Canada First party. In the issues of the *Daily Globe* for the 5th and 6th of April, 1870, will be seen the Mayor's proclamation calling this meeting; the requisition bears thirty-three signatures, among them being the ten most prominent members of the Canada First party. It will also be noticed that Mr. Hallam's name does not appear upon the requisition.

It was called for the St. Lawrence Hall but as thousands could not get in, Mr. Harman, the Mayor, adjourned the meeting to the City Hall Square, and the speeches were made from the top of the portico of the City Hall. In the *Daily Globe* of the 7th April, 1870, will be found a full report of the meeting which took place the previous evening. The speakers were: the Mayor, Hon. M. C. Cameron, Dr. Canniff, Mr. Sellar, Mr. Mair, Dr. Lynch, Dr. Schultz, Ald. Dickey, W. H. Howland, Capt. Bennett, Col. G. T. Denison, Andrew Fleming, Ald. Medcalf and Mr. D'Arcy Boulton. Mr. Hallam's name does not appear in the report, but he was present at the meeting, for I saw him there.

On the 9th April, 1870, three days later, a second meeting was held, got up, I believe, by Mr. Hallam, not to welcome Messrs. Mair, Schultz and Lynch, for they had then gone to Ottawa, but for the purpose of working up political capital against the Government.

When a man's memory is as defective as Mr. Hallam's appears to be, he should hesitate about attributing false statements to others, and should only do so when he can prove the truth of his assertions.

YORK.

Toronto, Jan. 5, 1891.

[The above letter has vividly recalled to our memory the meeting to welcome Messrs. Mair, Schultz and Lynch, which was held in the City Hall Square, where we stood and heard the speakers deliver their addresses from the portico over the entrance to the Hall. This correspondence may as well rest here.—ED.]

LA SALLE'S HOMESTEAD AT LACHINE.

WHERE is that block of four hundred and twenty acres of land on the lower Lachine road, reserved in 1666 by Robert Cavelier Sieur de la Salle as a homestead for himself?

Samuel de Champlain established while governor of French Canada, between the years 1609 and 1615, three fur trading posts; one at Tadousac, one at Three Rivers, the other at the head of the Lachine rapids, the old Sault St. Louis, which for nearly fifty years was the most important trading post in the whole colony. This was about thirty years before the foundation in 1642 of Montreal by Maisonneuve, and fully fifty years before the appearance of La Salle at Lachine. The post established by Champlain at the head of the rapids was built upon the present Fraser homestead farm, on the exact site where the ruins of Fort Cuillerier may now be seen, ruins which have been often designated as those of La Salle's home. Close by stood the old English king's posts, the most celebrated military point in Canada during the war of 1812, the transferring post of navigation prior to the building of the Lachine canal. Every British soldier, every British regiment sailed westward in bateaux from this post and returned here at the end of the war. A full account of the post and of all the buildings about it at the time of its evacuation in 1826, was given in my "Sixth Summer Morning Walk around Montreal."

The writer is one of the very few now living who can recall and picture in its almost primeval beauty the shore of the St. Lawrence river, from the foot of the La Salle common to the Windmill point. The scene within these two short miles embraces the La Salle common of 1666, the English king's posts of 1812, the intended homestead of La Salle, the ruins of Fort Cuillerier built on the site of Champlain's fur trading post of 1615, the old Penner farm, the St. Lawrence bridge, and the present novitiate of the Fathers Oblats built on the spot on which Fort Remy of 1689 stood—within the ground of the palisaded of old Lachine laid out by La Salle in 1666. There is not another historic two miles on the whole river front of the noble St. Lawrence from Gaspé to Kingston to compare with this in its interesting places connected with the early history of Canada.

All Canadian readers, and others who take an interest in La Salle, will be pleased to know that in placing before the public an account of this property in 1884 I offered the site for a monument, still open to public acceptance. Canadians should bestir themselves and do something worthy the memory of so great a man, the brightest figure either in Canadian or American history. Lachine is the only place in Canada in which he had a home. Two and a quarter centuries ago this Frenchman, then an adventurous youth, left Lachine in his bark canoe on a romantic voyage of discovery. He traversed, or rather coasted, all our great inland lakes, travelled through dense forests untrod by civilized man, sailed down turbulent and unknown rivers, even reaching the mouth of the grand Mississippi. Where does history exhibit another such a character? Canada should be proud to do honour to her La Salle, and Canadians should vie with each other in paying a tribute of respect to his memory. Truly La Salle has left his footprints on the sands of Canada. Will Canadians allow them to be blotted out?

La Salle, it is true, needs no monument along our river. No storied urn, no animated bust, to perpetuate or transmit to future generations the great deeds of his life. This whole northern continent of America, boundless and vast, bears unmistakable traces of his travels. His discoveries and explorations were all made in the interests of old France, the land of his birth, the country he loved. Therefore, so long as the noble St. Lawrence winds its course seaward and our great inland lakes exist as feeders thereof, or the great and broad Mississippi rolls its mighty waters to the main, these river banks and lake shores, if all else were mute, will silently testify to the memory of that youthful hero.

Scotchmen above all men are jealous of family traditions, holding them nearly as sacred as Holy Writ. When this homestead came into the possession of my grandfather in 1814, the interesting tradition was handed down to him through the former French occupants, the Cuilleriers, the Lapromenades, and others, that on the exact site where then stood in 1814, and still stands the ruins of Fort Cuillerier, was Champlain's fur trading post of 1615, and that the three farms of the present Fraser estate, having a frontage on the lower Lachine road of nine acres by a depth of forty-six and two-thirds acres, a block of four hundred and twenty acres of land bordering and adjoining the La Salle common of two hundred acres, was the veritable four hundred and twenty acres reserved in 1666 by La Salle as a homestead for himself. These three farms of the present Fraser estate are still intact, the common adjoining them is still well known, and the ruins of Fort Cuillerier built on the site of Champlain's fur post exist to mark the spot. I maintain that these farms comprise the actual block of land selected by La Salle. No other on the road named between the eastern boundary of the old English king's post and the present Windmill has any pretensions to being called La Salle's intended homestead, except this one particular block. It is not to be supposed La Salle lived altogether at his intended homestead during his short residence in Canada of three years. He was preparing it for a permanent home, and dwelt part of his time in a log house in his palisaded village, a fifteen minutes' walk distant or there-