

of being thrown on our own resources, and of being compelled to build up little by little a literature, fresh, original and racy, of the soil. We have tried and failed in comic journalism. It is consolation of a sort that our neighbors beyond the great inland seas have been equally unsuccessful. It is not that we are too sober-minded and Quaker-faced to smile. Is it because the shafts of polished wit which provoke a smile in old and highly-cultured communities are not "broad" enough, have not enough "bite," to use an expressive Westernism, for the free, strong life of this northern continent? Or are we habitually so surfeited with the ludicrous and the sarcastic, in the short, spicy, snappy paragraphs which form so unique a feature in American, and to some extent in Canadian, journalism, that there is no field left for the purely humorous paper?

Fifty-five years ago the *Kingston Gazette* was the only paper published in Ontario. From Mr. Lovell's carefully-compiled directory we learn that there are now published in Ontario 24 dailies, 2 tri-weeklies, 1 semi-weekly, 6 semi-monthlies, 25 monthlies, 1 quarterly, 1 annual, 195 weeklies—a grand total in all of 255. The Province of Quebec publishes 96 journals of all sorts; Nova Scotia, 37; New Brunswick, 34; Newfoundland, 15; Prince Edward Island, 10. The figures for British Columbia and Manitoba are not given; but it may be safely stated that Ontario publishes as many journals as the seven remaining Provinces of British North America combined. It may be questioned if this multiplication of journals has not been carried too far, and whether some process of "natural selection" would not improve those which might be left. Fewer and stronger journals, using the telegraph wires more freely, and employing a higher class of talent on their columns, would better meet the requirements of the reading public. Our splendid system of Canadian telegraphy has been until lately comparatively little used for the purposes of the newspaper press, except by the Toronto journals. The Montreal Telegraph Company is fitted to become a strong ally of the newspaper press of Ontario and of Canada, having now under its control no fewer than

8,700 miles of poles, 22,347 miles of wire, and over 700 telegraph stations. The Dominion Telegraph Company, a new enterprise, is also rapidly extending its sphere of operations.

In a literary point of view Canadian journalism cannot expect at one bound to spring into the position occupied by leading English journals; but a high standard should be ever kept before the conductors of our press. In many cases a wiser censorship might be exercised by editors over the "original" contributions of some of their zealous friends. For instance, the greater share of the poetry, so-called, in weekly journals, would show to better advantage in the waste-basket. Look at these extracts from a *bona-fide* specimen sent to a well-known Ontario newspaper, and say where they should be inserted:

A JOURNEY THREW LIFE.

I am a stranger yes a pilgrim
Wandering threw this Unfriendly World
But there is a friend to guide you

And he will guide you safely
Onward to Canaan happy shore.

* * * * *

It was Gods will that
We should part
But hopeful We shall meet agane
On this side of the river Thames
But just keep the lord in mind
For he is good in every line.

LIBERTY.

No other land I choose
For none is so dear to me
I stand for nothing more
than the old Canadian shore
O give me Ontario.

* * * * *

O give me the land I love
the land so free and clear
Where froot will grow
Without a hough
O give me Ontario.

Leaving this bard to the enjoyment of the fullest "Liberty" of composition, and the pursuit of his "Journey Threw Life," a word may not be amiss as to the personalities between rival journals which sometimes disfigure white paper. One newspaper recently alluded to another as "a dying concern;" an editor lately spoke of his rival as a "sorrel pony;" a leading daily some time ago designated a rival as