

wisdom sees nothing beyond the immediate consequences of his act, and unwittingly kills voluntary agencies, which his coercive measure very imperfectly replaces. Undertaking to provide for the poor better lodging at the public expense, he prevents the investment of private capital in house building, and thus aggravates the dearth of house room in the long run. Larger and more threatening developments of the paternal principle begin to loom, and Government is in some quarters encouraged to become the universal educator, sanitary guide, purveyor of literature, and provider of amusement for the people, as well as the reliever of every kind of distress. The money necessary for all this beneficent outlay is regarded as the largess of a superior power called the State, when in fact it is taken out of the earnings of the more industrious classes for the benefit, too often, of those less industrious. Finally we come to proposals for confiscation, for turning out as "marauders" all whose property is in land and all those who have been allowed "to lay hands on our great railway communications," that is to say, on roads which the stockholders constructed with their own money, and quite as often to their loss as to their gain. Socialism, the ultimate consummation of the system on which the world seems now disposed to enter, would actually, as Mr. Spencer says, be a revival of Slavery, since each man in the army of workers would be compelled to render absolute obedience to the command of the officers appointed to set each his task. Then liberty and progress at once would cease.

AMONG the curious and characteristic phenomena of the time is the proposed erection of an international monument to Schopenhauer. To his own generation the prophet of Pessimism seemed crazed. But he has now found a number of people to believe with him that this is the worst of all possible worlds, and that the only hope of man is release from consciousness, or what Buddhists call *Nirvana*. Undoubtedly he can make a case, if not as to the whole, as to a large portion of mankind. To a Roman slave, for instance, who spent his life in hard labour for a ruthless master, was lodged with his fellow slaves in an underground dungeon, and perhaps in the end was crucified, this might well appear the worst of all possible worlds. He might well think with Schopenhauer that it could not have been worse without going to pieces altogether. His was an extreme case, but with regard even to mankind at large, when bereavement is taken into the account as well as death and pain, the pessimist has surely a formidable array of evidence on his side. Christianity has a reply to him. She avows that the present state of man in the main is evil, but asserts that it is not the final state; that this world is a training place and a theatre of action, not a permanent abode; that the evil may by moral effort be turned into good; and that the Gospel contains the secret of that process. Her faith may be a dream, but her hypothesis covers the facts. Not so with the philosophy whose hope is summed in intensity and duration of earthly life, to which pain is necessarily evil, and painlessness is the goal of all effort, or rather of all evolution. "The absolutely good, the absolutely right in conduct," we are told in the *Data of Ethics* "can be that only which produces pure pleasure—pleasure unalloyed with pain anywhere. By implication, conduct which has any concomitant of pain, or any painful consequence is partially wrong; and the highest claim to be made for such conduct is that it is the least wrong which, under the conditions, is possible—the relatively right." On this hypothesis, unless the pains of childbirth can be abolished, it will always be at least partially wrong to bring a man into the world. From the positive pain of bereavement, which will become more intense with every increase of our sensibilities, there is evidently no escape any more than from death and the shadow which death casts over life. But whatever may be the visions of philosophy with regard to the future they will not cure the ills of the present, on the supposition that the sufferers have no hope beyond. A man dying of thirst on this planet would not be refreshed by knowing that a being like himself was quaffing sherbet in Uranus. Nor will the pain and sorrow of to-day be deprived of their sting by any philosophic forecast of happiness to be enjoyed by others, thousands of years after we are dead and gone.

A BYSTANDER.

LECTURING on "Emerson" at the Crystal Palace, Mr. Joseph Foster said: "A man who thinks of the success of his writing, and not of his writing only, may gain a superficial success; he may be noticed in the *Times*, but he never gains, and never deserves to gain, a hold on the brains and hearts of mankind. It is not by pleasing the vulgar that a man succeeds; it is by pleasing the wise and discriminating, who dictate to the vulgar what to admire. Genius can only be thoroughly appreciated by genius. A man can only be really judged by his peers. But still we little people may pick up some thoughts and ideas suitable to our size, and, if we are strong enough, carry them away."

HERE AND THERE.

CONTRARY to general expectation, the wedding of Princess Victoria of Hesse to Prince Louis of Battenburg is not postponed on account of the death of Prince Leopold, though the marriage ceremony will be shorn of much of its intended brilliancy. Despite the deep grief experienced by the Queen at the death of her favourite son, her Majesty has proceeded to Darmstadt, in order to be present at the ceremony. The Emperor William, whose iron constitution at length begins to show signs of decay, has, by the advice of his physicians, gone into retirement at Weisbaden, and as the Empress Augusta is also in delicate health, neither will be present. Their absence and the general mourning of the Royal families present will invest the whole ceremony with a certain amount of gloom.

It is very curious to note how the legendary influence and position of the London *Times* is insisted upon by journalists and others who ought to know better. On Saturday a leading Toronto daily spoke of the erstwhile "Thunderer" as "the great organ of public opinion" in England, whereas the *Times* rarely represents, nor does it but seldom influence, public opinion there. It does not even possess the merit of being independent, for it usually inclines to the Government of the day, though it never becomes an out-and-out party organ. At the present moment the *News* and the *Standard*, respectively, represent the Liberals and Conservatives, the *Morning Post* is the extreme Tory and aristocratic organ, the *Chronicle* is the paper representing the masses, whilst the *Telegraph* is, somewhat after the manner of the *Times*, a trimmer, and has its strength more in providing general sensational reading than in posing as the exponent of public opinion. On the Continent and generally abroad the *Times* is still looked upon as occupying the position it did of old, hence the many mistakes made by writers and politicians in other countries as to English public affairs.

WHEN, some twelve months ago, in London, a general attack was made upon amateur actors and play-writers, almost all the world said "Amen!" And amongst those who subscribed to the anathemas, probably none did so more heartily than the unfortunate friends of the misguided people who deluded themselves by thinking they were destined for a kind of aristocratic sock-and-buskin career. The same condemnation cannot by any possibility be extended to the ladies and gentlemen whose performance of "Iolanthe" in the Hamilton Opera House last week met so enthusiastic a reception. On the contrary, the public verdict seems to be that the representation of Gilbert and Sullivan's sparkling production then and there given was one of which a professional company might well be proud, and the fact that it will probably run to four performances would appear to confirm this. Should the "company" consent to perform at Toronto, it would be safe to promise a hearty reception.

It is customary and proper in arranging celebrations, anniversaries, or the like, for the executive committee to invite local composers to write some musical or poetical composition commemorative of the event, or to advantage themselves of the opportunity and undertake the fitting production of some similar existing work which the author has not yet given to the world. Would it not, in connection with the forthcoming Toronto semi-centennial, be a graceful act, and one extremely appropriate to the occasion, to arrange a performance of Mr. Davenport Kerrison's symphony—"Canada," dedicated to the people of the Dominion? This musical composition has been favourably reviewed by the press of Toronto, and is well spoken of by those connoisseurs who have heard it. The author introduces English, Scotch, and Irish national airs, with cunning variations, and naturally assigns a prominent position to his Canadian national anthem. The composer's task is at best a hard and ungrateful one, and if opportunities of recognizing talent, like the forthcoming one, are overlooked or neglected, there is little to encourage a native composer to make any effort to do credit to native art.

A CHARMING yachting picture, representing the cutter "Eileen" rounding a buoy in an imaginary race, has just been finished by Mr. Robert F. Gagen, of King street, Toronto. The artist, in the working out of the "combination" picture, photographed Com. John Leys, Capt. W. Gooderham (owner), and seven friends separately on a temporary "deck" placed at an angle of about forty-five degrees, so as to get the correct posture, then painted the boat, water, and sky, and arranged the photographs in position. The result is a striking and natural picture, which it is intended eventually to photograph in reduced size. Mr. Gagen has also in hand some water-colour coast views painted round and about Bar