

cribing and developing imaginatively, the beauties, the flora, the climate, the manners, the history, and so forth, which appertain to our northern climate and our particular situation, a very important phase of which is our *national* situation. This work must necessarily be our own and cannot be done by residents in any other part of the world. It, and the tinges of it which would naturally color the world-work of our writers, constitute, or will and ought to constitute the Canadian school, of which the rudiments presently exist. They are to me on these accounts interesting.

In style, I do not on the whole find much that is original in Canadian prose either English or French; yet there is a good deal which is very creditable. Some names which occur to me are Mrs. Moodie, "Seranus" of Toronto, E. W. Thomson, Haliburton, F. G. Scott, Gilbert Parker, and so forth. The French pens seem to me much inferior to the English of late years in both prose and verse.

The material gathered, the characteristics noted, the history recorded, by the prose writers, in both languages form, however, I think, precious stores for future literary development; and in fact are now coming into use. This, I consider, no small service. I also set a high value on every reasonable Canadian literary departure from set European phrases and thought. Few know the difficulty of opening up an original track, even a very mildly original one, in a new country, a fact especially impressed upon me by an examination of our verse literature some years ago.

As to our future, it depends largely on our own strength of character. Shall we recognize that we have a *people to make*? Shall our colleges adapt their teaching to the living world about them and its needs? Shall we *organize* in every way that looks toward social and national improvement? Shall our young men each make this his personal matter and ask himself what his people need in order to be more united, purer, higher in national solidity and progress, clearer in national ideal? And after thinking out our needs and his own duty, will he start or assist what will do some share of the work. Patriotism is part of religion. If we have real patriots, then a literature will follow—the burning word will accompany the burning deed.

Montreal.

W. D. LIGHTHALL.

PARIS LETTER.

Since it was evident to the French that Mr. Gladstone would not scuttle out of Egypt, and would not seriously resist the augmentation of the British Navy, he had ceased to be counted with as a Marplot to be utilized by France. Then he was so uncertain as to be unsafe for playing a political game of speculation. The French never counted much upon Home Rule aiding their calculations, knowing full well that in the event of foreign complications, Irish quarrels would have to be hushed up or suspended. But with respect to the intellectual side of Mr. Gladstone's character, his wonderful natural gifts and perennial freshness, there is no dissenting voice here—no more than anywhere else. On the internal politics of England the French never have any clear ideas, save to note that they never change the foreign policy of the country. But the French envy, and while deploring the fact, they cannot pay such testimony of respect and admiration for the natural gifts, high personal character,

and long and honourable career to so eminent a public man—as well as to all great Englishmen—by adversaries or enemies; tributes that follow their object in his retirement and even accompany his bier. In France public men are hated and execrated, party passions follow them whether they retire or cease to exist. Even the tomb does not still the rabidness of dissensions. In Lord Rosebery the French discount a statesman devoid of emotion, free of all sentiment, never magnifying trifles, very cool, of a practical turn of mind, who swiftly takes in a situation, and at once arrives at a decision; a Minister who will pull amicably with all foreign powers, but who will, now that he is master of the helm, never surrender a single right of England, and never leave her defenceless, and so warn off designing foes, while inspiring his fellow-countrymen with a sense of their security and power.

The extraordinary weather commences to inspire uneasiness; people are now falling ill who have escaped every ailment since October; one day heralding spring, and then a week of glacial rain, shrivelling-up nor-eastern winds, and with more than infant frosts at night. Farmers commence to growl, while invalids moan. It would seem that the cause of all these misfortunes has at last been discovered; it is the old enemy, a spot on the sun, only this time it is earlier and bigger—about three times the size of the earth, and visible to the naked eye. Only we do not know how to prevent its bad influence. Astronomy that has always influenced the fate of mortals—at least astrologers and poets say so—asserts that the solar spots are a combination of huge fountains of hydrogen shooting up with an amplitude of space representing a dark kernel. If all these phlegm phenomena would only leave our poor lungs and vegetation alone, we would not growl at grinding taxes or the over population of our planet.

The Woman's Rights League has held its annual banquet under the presidency of of Madame Pognon, the successor to Madlle. Maria Desraimes, deceased. The members have displayed disappointment at the latter not leaving the League one sou out of her fortune of 50,000 frs. a year—after giving it to be understood she would make a bequest. But when the will was read, the deceased had made a tontine arrangement with her sister, by which the latter naturally inherits all, and the survivor is not a known emancipationist. The banquet-room was ornamented with symbols and devices—a spinning wheel and sledge-hammer typified the sexes—thus admitting a difference, the scales of justice, where women kicked the beam, etc. There was a very numerous attendance of pretty young ladies, to protest against the "insexuality" of the brain. The speeches were directed to combat the injustice that before the law two women witnesses were not considered to be equal to two men. The "tear 'em" oration was by Madame Patonie, who scored economist P. L. Beaulieu for his ignorance and insolence by asserting the role of woman was to love and to rear children. Madame asserted the cause of the decay of the French population was due to husbands declining to be saddled with the expenses of rearing families, and to the injustice of the law in placing women outside the pale of civilization by depriving her of her legal rights. The meeting broke up without any doxology.

The Budget has again been postponed;

it is not an easy matter to find 3½ milliard frs. to meet payments for all the needs and the glories of France. It has been discovered that owing to the laxity and inequalities of the excise laws in the matter of alcohol the Treasury loses 150 millions frs. a year. Germany is accused of killing the French with her cheap spirits prepared from potatoes and mangolds, but French farmers have now begun to distil from these roots themselves. That clever deputy, Jules Roche, had a project by which the state could realize at once one milliard francs revenue per year, by taking over the monopoly of alcohol, as it does tobacco and lucifer matches, etc.; he claimed that his plan would secure pure spirit for the consumer and not cost him one sou dearer. The great increase in the consumption of low grade spirits baptized "brandy," in the fish tavern as well as in the rum hole is decimating the French. They cannot stand the dose like people of higher latitudes.

Lord Dufferin's speech has been timely and plucky; it is only to be regretted he does not seek the occasion and improve it more frequently by similar discourses; a mixture of sound sense and bantering is what "catches on" with the French. Take the wind out of inflated trifles; show that imaginary mountains are but mole-hills, that blatant Anglophobists are only eccentric personalities, that the two peoples only want to know each other better to become faster and more money-making friends, and that fighting is not a national industry with the Britishers, nor ephemeral dissensions the overture to a seven, thirty, or a hundred years' war. Knock the vanity of the wind-bags into a cocked hat, that's the way to handle the little great people who puff themselves up to do Tooley-streetism for France. Above all, courage and boldness, united with common sense, kindness, and all the courtesies, with a little wit and a few grains of humor, then France and England will remain within the fraternities for twelve millions of years, when the world's lease of life will expire, according to astronomers.

Only two new but important facts have been settled about the 1900 Exhibition; the grand entrance will be on the Place de la Concorde, with electric trams running therefrom into all the head centres of the fair; next, there will be no more gormandizing, guzzling and drinking saloons, or anything approaching a kermesse. It will be serious and so shadow forth the twentieth century.

The work of cleansing and flushing society of anarchists by the authorities goes bravely on. The wild men have been scared and that is no small success. It will be salutary also in discouraging new disciples. The police bag about a dozen of affiliated members daily, and one is painfully surprised to see so many of the unfortunates well-to-do workmen having families of three to six children. Each one arrested is measured and photoed and his biography in full follows his portrait, and all figures for ever in the police day of judgment book. In making an arrest—the total at present numbers 1,500—the police search in presence of the captured all his papers and carry away whatever may be compromising. Now the uniform character of documents whether printed or private letter, is either inflammatory, melancholy or pitiable nonsense. The police had one exceptionally good find; they dropped upon a sort of general treasurer of the anarchists; this man of money was in the habit of receiving