

AMERICAN MISREPRESENTATION OF CANADA,

A short time ago, we commented on the untruthfulness of American newspapers, when speaking of this (to them) little known Canada of ours. The *Montreal Witness*, of January 7th, gives another ludicrous instance of the inventiveness of the American reporter, backed, as it seems to be, by the credulity of the American newspaper reader. A New York reporter has obtained from a detective the story told by a criminal named Fishel, who had been followed to Canada, and arrested. Fishel says he found his way to Gravenhurst, an out-of-the-way place, near Hamilton. It happens that Gravenhurst is away back in the rocky wilds of Muskoka, about 200 miles from Hamilton. There he fell in with a man whose occupation was to conceal American refugees, and who took him to a cattle ranche, about thirty miles distant, kept by a Frenchman named Beaumont. We may remark, *en parenthese*, that cattle ranches are about as rare in Muskoka, as American defaulters are. Detectives tracked him and his protector to this blissful home of the wearied refugee, and were told by Beaumont that their friends had gone for a sleigh drive. Following the sleigh-track, the detectives overtook the fugitives in Hamilton. We may safely say that none but New York detectives could have tracked a particular sleigh along the well-beaten roads in the neighbourhood of a city; and a drive of a couple of hundred miles, part of which lay in an unbroken, roadless country, must have been in itself a miniature carnival.

Such wonderful tales, appearing in New York journals, must force upon us one of two conclusions. Either the American public are densely ignorant of all that concerns their next-door neighbors, or they feel a secret pleasure in hearing anything depreciatory to Canada. That the former is true, we have seen many reasons to believe; that some of the misrepresentations of newspapers, when speaking of Canada, are intentional, appears to be the view taken by the *Ottawa Evening Journal*, from which we clip the following spicy paragraph—

"President Cleveland is credited with saying—'I don't think that there ever was a time when newspaper lying was so general and so mean as at present, and there never was a country under the sun where it flourished as it does in this.' It is no part of our duty to settle difficulties between the American press and the President of the great American Republic; but we would like to assure our conferees on the other side that we believe that the usually phlegmatic Cleveland speaks from a feeling of personal pique. For our part, we believe that the liars of the American press are no more talented or industrious than they were aforesaid. The American papers have done lying enough about Canada, her resources and policy in the past, to make us believe that they can never beat their own record. Canada has been here a long time to be lied about, but Cleveland has been in a position to get a fair share of misrepresentation for only a few months. Let Grover keep cool, and remember that the whole course of human events has not been changed by the accident of his trip to the White House."

OUR EASTERN EMPIRE.

The growth of the British Empire in the East, during the past 150 years, has been phenomenal. When Clive and his two hundred European followers succeeded in occupying the fortress at Arcot, in 1751, and defending it throughout a long and trying siege, Britain had scarce gained a foothold in the country which now constitutes her great Indian Empire.

From the days of Lord Clive down to the present time, the expansion of her Asiatic possessions has steadily gone on, and Queen Victoria now rules an Eastern Empire, having an area twenty times as great as that of the British Isles, 270,000,000 Asiatics now recognizing the sovereignty of the Empress of India. To the millions inhabiting this vast domain, the domination of Britain has proved most salutary. Christianity has been introduced, peace and good government maintained, and the status of the people advanced from semi-barbarism to civilization. 12,655 miles of railway, with 21,000 miles of telegraph line, now bring the most remote portions of India into direct and easy communication with the principal centres of trade. This is the empire upon which, according to Mr. Charles Marvin, Russia has fixed her envious gaze, and towards which she is rapidly pushing her railway communication; but if this be her aim, she is likely to find her designs frustrated.

Britain is not the only Asiatic power which looks with jealousy upon the rapid strides made by Russia over the barren steppes of central Asia. China, which has not forgiven the robbery by Russia of the fruitful provinces of the Amoor, and which, since the late campaign with the French in Tonquin, has awakened to a realization of her fighting capabilities, would, in the event of an Anglo-Russian struggle, take sides with Britain, and send her aid in checking the advance of the aggressive Muscovite. The recent annexation of Burmah, with all its commercial possibilities, both for England and China, will probably have the effect of allying, for mutual protection, the two great powers in Asia; and should it do so, it will at once and forever stamp out Asiatic Jingoism, leaving Britain free to complete her grand work of christianizing and civilizing the millions of her heathen subjects.

HALT AND CONSIDER.

The advocates of the annexation of Canada to the United States, who are now endeavoring to cloak their real purpose under a misleading guise, which they term "closer commercial union," should certainly study the social and political phases of American life, and ask themselves whether, in the event of their design being carried to a successful issue, the people of Canada would be gainers thereby. Take as an illustration, the Marriage

and Divorce Laws of the two countries. In Canada, society recognizes the marriage of two persons as indissoluble during life, and when the law intervenes and allows the separation of husband and wife, the parties thereto lose their status in the community. In the United States it is quite otherwise. A man can woo and win the affections of an estimable lady, marry her, and after a few months of anything but conjugal bliss, obtain a divorce upon the most trivial grounds. In like manner, a woman may become the wife of an honorable and respected man, may become the mother of his children, and yet may, upon the slightest pretense, seek and obtain a divorce. Such a loose state of the marriage laws strikes a heavy blow at the root of society, making the tenure of domestic life quite as uncertain as that of life itself. The dollar-and-cent policy of annexation may have its attractions for those whose aspirations never led them to consider anything of vital importance that is not directly connected with the "flesh pots"; but there are many reasons why Canadians should halt and consider before taking many steps down the broad, but deceptive highway of commercial union.

DR. ALEXANDER'S LECTURE.

Dr. Alexander's lecture on Browning, delivered in the Y. M. C. A. Hall, on the evening of the 14th inst., was a lucid and philosophical treatment of poetical works which are not popular, because seldom viewed in their proper setting. The lecturer considered Browning first as a dramatist, then as a lyric poet. His dramas have the disadvantage of appearing in a thoroughly undramatic age—one which does not furnish material of dramatic interest. A review of the history of art and poetry shows, that when any particular field has been fully occupied, artistic attempts in that field fail; and that a new field is opened only by the characteristic requirements of a new age. The present age of scientific, religious, and philosophical thought has called forth the psychological studies of Browning. These the poet has endeavored to set forth in the form of monologues, which often have the incongruous effect of placing Browning's ideas and language in the minds and mouths of persons who could neither conceive nor express them. The lecturer illustrated his remarks by reading and commenting on two poems—"A Woman's Last Word," and "My Last Duchess." His reading of these was most effective, and his remarks lucid and pointed. Dr. Alexander has the facility of expressing his views clearly and in appropriate language; and his audience of Thursday evening have a distinct desire to hear him again.

DEMOCRACY IN ENGLAND.

The increase of democracy in England is strikingly shewn by the composition of the new British Parliament. About two thirds of the entire House are educated members of the middle class, while the number of undoubted aristocrats is only forty-six. In 1863, Mr. Sandford, a Liberal, in his account of the "Great Governing Families," estimated the aristocrats at one-third of the whole House; and saw no prospect of the decline of aristocratic and plutocratic influence. To-day, the trained professional men and thinkers (we mean those who gain their livelihood by thinking) have a working majority. The *London Spectator* furnishes the following distribution of 453 members of the new House:—Barristers, 112; Solicitors, 22; Civil Servants, 23; Doctors, 16; Journalists, 34; Professors, 18; Engineers, 6; Clergymen, 2; Builders, 6; Bankers, 25; Brewers and Distillers, 24; Colliery Owners, 16; Estate Agents, 4; Manufacturers, 69; Merchants, 42; Printers, 6; Stockbrokers, 6; Ship-owners, 22.

PRISON STATISTICS OF CRIME.

It is not always safe to estimate the morality of a city, or to compare it with that of other cities, solely on the strength of prison statistics of crime. Some writers in our daily papers have been doing so of late, notwithstanding the fact that prison statistics do not represent the immorality of the citizens, and only imperfectly that of transient visitors. Of certain vices, more prevalent in some cities than others, not one-hundredth part is ever ventilated in the police court. Again, the vigilance and efficiency of the police vary exceedingly in different cities; and, unless due allowance is made for this fact, the efforts of an energetic police force will have the effect of bringing their city into disrepute in the eyes of the outside world.

HELIGOLAND.

The Island of Heligoland, in the North Sea, enjoys the distinction of never being disturbed by the rumbling of wheels. Its two thousand inhabitants, with the summer tourists who visit it, can manage to cover any distance on its surface of one-third of a square mile, on foot. No wonder the weary Englishman or German seeks the quietness of this happy island, for there, as a contemporary says—"No heedless nobleman or bloated plutocrat splashes us as he rolls by, with his chariot wheels. . . . No pianos, no organs, no peripatetic German bands, no itinerant sandwich-men; even the very dogs, cats, and fowls, have a happy habit of holding their peace."

Humming birds are, in Brazil, as numerous as flies, and the natives style them "be aflores." Thousands of these brilliant plumaged birds are annually shot and sent to London or Paris, the demand having quadrupled since feather trimming became fashionable.