

Contemporary Thought.

PROF. SAUNDERS, chief director of the Dominion experimental farms, is engaged preparing a report of his recent trip. Speaking of British Columbia, he says: "The prospects are that stock-raising, fruit-growing, and dairying will be there indulged in on an extensive scale. The coast climate will not prove favourable to wheat culture, owing to the excessive rain falls, but roots and fruits of all descriptions will thrive exceedingly. East of the Cascades is a fine stretch of country, unsurpassed for ranching purposes. The works in the province next year on the proposed farm will include experiments with permanent grasses suited for stock raising, as well as experiments in dairying, cereals, and roots." When the work is inaugurated farmers from British Columbia to Nova Scotia will be able to send their grain to the central farm at Ottawa, and have its germinative powers tested free of cost.

M. RENAN has assured us in his "Souvenirs de Jeunesse" that he is a singularly modest man, so there can be no doubt upon the point. The encouragement, then, which he gives to the attempts to place "L'Abbesse de Jouarre" on the stage, must be regarded as another proof of the fatal fascination possessed by the footlights for even the most staid of sages. The dialogue has been acted at the Teatro Valle in Rome, and is soon to be produced in Milan, whether M. Renan proposes to betake himself in order to see it and make arrangements for its production in Paris. After all M. Renan is not the first great poet (for such he is in a sense) who has become stage struck in his old age. We have instances nearer home, and if any one had proposed to put the "Symposium" on the stage, it is not certain that Plato himself would have resisted the temptation to attend rehearsals and pose as a playwright.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

WHAT constitutes the abiding fascination of Lamb's personality? Not his funny sayings—let the funny man of every generation lay this well to heart. His humor? Yes—for his humor was part and parcel of his character. It is character that makes men loved. It was the rare combination in Lamb of strength and weakness. He was "a hero with a failing." His heroism was greater than many could hope to show. Charity, in him, most assuredly fulfilled the well-known definition. It suffered long and was kind; it thought no evil, and it never vaunted itself nor was puffed up. And as we watch its daily manifestations, never asking for the world's recognition, and never thinking it had done enough, or could do enough, for its beloved object, we may well reckon it large enough to cover a greater multitude of frailties than those we are able to detect in the life of Charles Lamb.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

TECHNICAL education in all countries is now receiving special attention. It is a generally recognized fact that only by careful scientific training in the most common trades can any nation hope to keep up with the age. Germany seems to have been the first country to recognize this nineteenth century necessity, and the comprehensive system of technical education for mechanics, which has been carried out for several years, is already bearing fruit in a superiority of German goods,

both in texture and appearance, which is now recognized in all the markets of the world. In the different German states there are now numerous training schools for the mechanical education of young men and women in every department of skilled labour. A college for weavers at Mulheim on the Rhine, has given a full course of instruction to over seventeen hundred students. The education at these institutions is remarkably thorough to every detail of the trade studied, and no one can graduate until he has become practically proficient in his chosen profession. Perceiving what has been accomplished in Germany, the leaders of thought in other nations are now energetically taking steps to follow her example. In England there is some talk of establishing a technical university.—*Halifax Chronicle*.

IN Germany the woods have their police, whose duty it is to see that no devastation is wrought by inconsiderate owners. No man may cut down his trees without the sanction of these authorities. The reason is that wood is the staple fuel of the country, and if the government did not step in to protect the people against their own improvidence, the peasants would speedily sweep away all their forests to enable them to clear the mortgages which the Jews hold on their lands. In Bavaria the price of fuel rose, between 1830 and 1860, as much as sixty per cent., and building timber rose seventy per cent. In the sixteenth century the forests had dwindled so much, and the cost of firing had risen so high, that the princes took the forests under their sovereign protection, and appointed a class of officials, whose duty it was to see after the fuel supply in their provinces, and look to the protection of trees just as the police have to see to the protection of citizens. One result has been that no trees are allowed to grow longer than when they have reached maturity. After they have attained a certain age their rate of growth is so slow that their room is needed for younger plants, and they are cut down. Thus a pine reaches its perfection after its thirtieth year, and goes back after its eightieth. As a rule, a forest is cleared and replanted every thirty years, and it is an exception anywhere to see an older pine or beech. But the Bohmer wald has not been subject to this policement, and there do remain in it magnificent pines several hundred years old.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

THERE are few words which exert as great an influence upon the popular imagination as does the term *liberalism*. Let a politician or a preacher, or any other pretender, but call himself *liberal*, and he will have a following. The term as commonly used is entirely modern. In France and Spain it was used extensively from 1814 to 1830, when every opponent of the absurd Bourbons delighted to call himself a *liberal*. The word is said to have received its modern sense from Madame de Staël or Chateaubriand; but it occurs in a famous epigram of Ecouchard Lebrun's, and he died in 1807. Littré thinks that the term arose during the Consulate. In England the term was introduced by Lord Byron, who began to publish the *Liberal*, a periodical, in 1822. Lord Byron probably borrowed the term from the French. In this country the term is used almost exclusively of theology, except in the common sense of polite (liberal arts) or lavish (liberal gifts). In Boston a minister is called a liberal when he rejects the Andover creed

and, perhaps, the apostles' creed. In the United Kingdom a man is a Liberal when he professes to hate the Conservative programme. In France the term is no longer a favorite. In Germany liberalism means opposition to the prerogative of the crown, or to established creeds. Originally, that is in Latin, the word meant "worthy of a free-born person," or "generous." It is a little puzzling why an opponent of a creed or of a person should be called a liberal; but the term is prized throughout the English-speaking world as much as are the words reform and progress. Most likely the term *liberal* is so popular because it is associated with the idea of lavishness or pecuniary generosity.—*Boston Beacon*.

MR. C. E. HOWARD VINCENT, with the assistance of Mr. Stephen Bourne, the well-known statistician, has prepared a table showing the value and general character of the interchange of commerce between the various sections of the British Empire. The table is of great interest to Canadians, as it indicates the possibilities of development of the trade between Canada and the other colonies. Last year, the Colonial and Indian peoples purchased from the United Kingdom in round numbers \$537,465,000 worth of goods, while they exported to the United Kingdom in round numbers \$494,000,000. The trade between Canada and the United Kingdom amounted to about \$94,721,400. Excluding the United Kingdom, the trade between the different British possessions amounted to about \$209,755,000. Of this intercolonial trade Canada's share amounted to only about \$7,000,000. This trade is capable of very great expansion. Now that the Canadian Pacific railroad is completed, Canadian merchants and manufacturers should be able to make enormous sales in Australia and the other islands of the Pacific. New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand, together import annually from the United Kingdom about \$27,883,960,000 worth of goods. From other British possessions they import \$114,501,600 worth of goods. The last amount, however, includes the exchange of goods between the different Australian colonies, and cannot be regarded as an indication of their combined buying capacity. What is of most interest is the fact that these Australasian colonies annually purchase from the United Kingdom nearly \$28,000,000,000 worth of manufactured goods. Canada is much nearer to Australia than England, and Canadians should be able to secure a large share of that enormous trade. If Canada could secure the one-hundredth part of that trade with the Australian colonies, it would amount to nearly \$280,000,000, whereas at present the Canadian exports to all the British possessions, excluding the United Kingdom, only amounts to about \$4,179,600. For such great stakes Canadian manufacturers ought to be prepared to take great risks. Every effort should be made to advertise Canada and Canadian goods in the Australian colonies. Exhibits of Canadian manufactures should be sent to all the Australian exhibitions, Australian newspapers should be patronized, and travellers should be sent to all the cities and towns of Australia to drum up business. Men of enterprise and push may make big fortunes by working to establish a commercial connection between Canada and Australia.—*Montreal Star*.