

However, the average man naturally desires to know what is going on in those parts of a common field of action which lie beyond his own sight and experience. He cannot do his work with high efficiency unless he freshens, from time to time, his knowledge of the methods of others, and without an occasional view of the general movement he cannot forecast his own future. Nor, to strike a lower note, can he maintain rational intercourse with his kind except he knows, in a general and comprehensive way, what the men of his time are thinking, saying and doing. All these wants must and will be supplied in some mode, and the daily journal does not appear to be the mode most desirable. As for the weekly editions of the daily press, motives of economy make them, in their intelligence and editorial departments, mere reprints of the daily issues, and thus open them to all the objections urged against their originals.

We are now brought to a realization of the need of and justification for a distinct weekly, fortnightly, or monthly press, independent in tone, fearless in expression, thoughtful in discussion, discriminating in the ranking of topics, moderate in exposition, elevated in style and pure in diction. It is, to such a press that the average man should and must look for that broad and clear perspective of his surroundings without which there cannot be, in a full or true sense, a successful or satisfactory existence. The daily journal, accepted and used within the limitations which every such journal, honestly conducted, accepts for itself, will satisfy his daily needs; and, as its facilities and efforts in that direction increase, he will increasingly rely upon the more leisurely issues of the press for the general news, opinion and tendency of the time. The relations of the daily and the serial press are not those of rivalry, but coöperation. Energy is the true characteristic of the first, deliberation of the last. The one produces the glowing metal which the other beats into final shapes. By their combined operation they refine and crystallize the crude results of social activity, separating truth from error, rejecting triviality, dismissing evanescence, placing facts in their true relations, encouraging sound thought, exemplifying plain speaking, exalting justice, and, in a larger and better measure than Shakespeare's chosen instrument is capable of, they "hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to Nature, to show Virtue her own feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." B.

#### LATITUDE.

VERY many people who are incapable of forming an independent opinion have opened Miss Cleveland's book with prejudice born of newspaper comments. Others, not seeing clearly through the mists of adverse criticism, have met it with indifference, and have not bestowed upon it that thought which it deserves. Some have been repelled by the title. Every book which has any right to live deserves a name short, crisp and easily repeated. It should neither contain a summary of the contents nor be dependent upon any ephemeral subject of the hour. "George Eliot's poetry and other Studies" is not a pleasing title after the types have been long burdened by a subject, and after a certain name has passed into history. The leading subject is ephemeral, if one should judge by the title alone, though not so in the way it is treated. There is a central truth evolved which is well expressed in one sentence of the first essay: "Poetry," she says, "whose necessity it is to deal with humanity in all its bearings, can never, consistently with its mission, leave the reader with merely the silence of the Sphinx concerning the hereafter." She shows how the Agnostic leads one up to a blank wall and leaves him there, and how the spirit of poesy rebels against such treatment, and the dire result.

Still another class of people have met the book with indifference. Certain members of the literary guild have not relished the idea of having their realm invaded by an uninvited guest. According to their notion no fortuitous circumstance can be a sufficient excuse for slipping in by a side entrance and taking place among the favoured ones, without so much as "by your leave, gentlemen." That this book has made its way against all these obstacles is proof of its genuine worth. The Christian world ought especially to meet it without prejudice, for it is utterly free from the taint of infidelity which seems to be a fashion of the hour.

Although many quotations have been given from it by the critics, very few have been given fairly. It is not difficult to take the first book of any author and by quoting isolated passages place that author at a disadvantage before the public. The book has suffered more than most others in this way, the critics having been quite frequently affected by the political eclipse which overshadowed them. One would think that a critic would learn to discern truth in the dark as well as in the light; but it is surprising how small an object will obscure the vision if held too near. Replete with good thoughts, it is difficult to select specimens for quotation; yet, as an offset to some that have been mutilated, let us see what she says about the expression of thought in the essay on "Reciprocity."

"I am convinced that people think enough: it is the utterance of thought that is needed. If the habit of brave attempt at this utterance could be formed, and despite all criticism persevered in, how much more should we give to each other."

"How many of us excuse the second best thoughts, which we give to others in conversation, by the plea that we are not original thinkers: that we have no original ideas. Nothing is worse for you than to think yourself *not* an original person, except to think that you *are* an original person. Do not flatter yourself in either direction."

"Though the institution of chivalry did not spring from Christianity, yet it had its springs in the religious nature of man. It sprang from the necessity in man to create for himself an ideal—from that inalienable endowment of human nature by which we must worship, aspire, obey."

It would not be possible within the limits of this short notice to quote many passages, but it is enough to say the book pays the impartial reader for a careful perusal; and if there is a certain redundancy of style, what of that? The time will come when America will accord to her children, both of the brush and pen, a freedom peculiar to her nationality. Why should they model after the ancients through all time? There is room in this country for any number of "schools," or for the exercise of individual taste. Should they not demand the freedom of the prairie—be satisfied with nothing less than the bounds of the continent, the depth and height of lake and mountain, with something of the wildness and beauty of their own forests?

J. OLIVER SMITH.

#### MONTREAL MATTERS.

MONTREAL, Nov. 16.

MONTREAL saw the worst of the small-pox epidemic at the end of October. Ever since the daily bills of mortality have grown shorter, till now they stand at less than one-half their length a month ago. As far as credit for the relaxation of the pest's grasp upon the city can be awarded, it certainly seems due to the citizens who were added to the Civic Board of Health. Unfortunately, none of the aldermen on the Board were very seriously affected by the epidemic, financially or otherwise; and until some of the citizens who were so affected took up the fight small-pox had it all its own way. There is a widely prevalent impression that had the Roman Catholic Bishop as fully exerted his authority as his predecessor, Monseigneur Bourget, would have done, our ghastly intruder's stay would have been less disastrous. Monseigneur Fabre is a typical ecclesiastic as to the utmost courtesy of manners, but he lacks the vigour, as an administrator which distinguished the prelate whom he succeeds. Small-pox is not a thing to be bowed out, as this city knows to its cost.

Now that matters are on the mend, there is a good deal of anxiety felt about the possibility of the epidemic's recurrence. As probably twenty babes are born every day among the French-Canadian population, their compulsory vaccination is clearly the one resource against the scourge of 1885 being repeated. This measure depends upon compulsory registration of births, and to this the Roman Catholic Church is opposed. Again and again legislation on this point has been unsuccessfully sought; it would seem that the priests think that if births were required to be registered in a public office a blow would be dealt at the obligation to baptize. However, it is likely that at the next parliamentary session at Quebec compulsory registration will be asked for once more, with perhaps such concessions to ecclesiastical privilege as may lead to its being granted.

As small-pox becomes less devastating in its sweep other topics are getting a share of public attention, and among these the constantly recurrent subject of Canada's political future. Montreal's interest, of course, furnishes the standpoint of ordinary outlook. Not many of the population are of British birth, and the new generation of British stock native to the city or country have a decidedly modified sentiment of regard for the mother-land. Interest in politics in this commercial metropolis proceeds in the main from commercial considerations in the minds of men with whom business is business. Otherwise there is much less political activity than in any other city of Canada. Here differences of race enfeeble party unity, and as the English-speaking section sends but one representative to Ottawa its political passiveness is not to be wondered at. Quebec as a Province has perhaps less reason than any other in the confederation to be dissatisfied with the Dominion Government. Growlings from Nova Scotia, discontent in New Brunswick, uneasiness in Manitoba and the North-West, mutterings in Ontario, all about Confederation, find no echoes in this home of a privileged church, where a frugal, country population exchanges at the federal exchequer dimes of taxes for dollars of appropriation.

Montreal as a city has as little cause as her Province to complain of the links which bind the Dominion together. She is very dependent on the country at large for a market for her imports and manufactures. Her investments reach out the length and breadth of the land, and a thousand cords of interest bind her to let things remain as they are. Were any disruption of the Dominion to part Quebec from Ontario and Manitoba, the erection of an adverse tariff would shatter many of Montreal's leading industries, and plunge the city into the gulf of commercial ruin. Hence the folly of the Bleus and Ultramontanes generally, whose sentiments, voiced by *l'Etendard*, threaten the stability of a partnership which, to Quebec, has been in every way profitable.

Independence is little discussed, from the probability of its leading to Annexation with the United States. Our manufacturers, who so heartily