

THE MINISTERIAL BANQUET AT OTTAWA.

The political event of the week was the banquet tendered to Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD and his colleagues at Ottawa. Its importance is such that it cannot be overlooked, especially from the fact that the demonstration overflowed the limits of a local tribute and was attended by representatives of every single province of the Dominion. In its spectacular features the banquet was in the highest degree successful, the decorations of the hall, the symbolic mottoes, the floral treasures and the music being arranged in the best taste. The enthusiasm was genuine and universal. The Ministerial party found an echo for its pent-up feelings on the occasion, and it must be confessed that the outburst was a concentrated expression of confidence and fealty to its leaders. But the main feature was, of course, the speeches, and seldom has any public gathering been favored with so many substantial and authoritative discourses, the wonder of which will be less when our readers are informed that the principal orators were such men as SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD, SIR LEONARD TILLEY, SIR CHARLES TUPPER, SIR ALEXANDER GALT and HON. MR. LANGEVIN. The speech of the evening was SIR JOHN'S. Seldom has the Right Honourable Knight been in happier mood. Throughout he displayed the best qualities of his oratory—humor, epigram, anecdote, genuine sentiment, and a retrospect of his long political career. Among his political announcements were two which deserve attention. The first, that his government were determined to keep strict faith with British Columbia in the matter of the Pacific Railway, and the other, that trade relations were very soon to be opened with Brazil. He took occasion to declare also, that so long as we were living under a monarchy, with Her Most Gracious Majesty as the source and fountain of honor, Canadians should take pride in accepting titles from the Imperial Government. This is sensible. Such titles are so many links that attach us to British institutions. Hardly less important was the speech of SIR LEONARD TILLEY. Coming fresh from visits to our manufacturers in Ontario and Montreal, he was enabled to give his views on the general results of the National Policy. These he pronounced satisfactory on the whole, and he publicly reiterated the promise made previously on different occasions, that he was prepared to make such alterations and modifications in the tariff as would tend to make that instrument of the greatest benefit to the greatest number. Outside of all party spirit, it must be acknowledged that such a disposition is a wise one, testifying to a genuine desire of helping the general wants of the country as much as possible. SIR LEONARD further stated, what must be a source of gratification to all without distinction of party, that the balance of revenue and expenditure for the fiscal year would come within his estimates, thus placing us beyond the peradventure of another deficit. SIR CHARLES TUPPER dealt mainly with the Pacific Railway, as was expected from his official position. He showed how much had already been done, and explained what was being attempted in the near future. He pledged the government also to the utmost economy in the running of the Intercolonial Railway. With regard to the Pembina branch, the importance of which we pointed out only last week, he declared that the Government would take that line in its own hands and work it free of monopolies in the best interests of the country. It was late in the evening when SIR ALEXANDER GALT rose to speak, but his discourse was received with the greatest interest. The burden of his remarks related to our foreign commercial relations. He stated that the British Government had kindly allowed him, last winter, to enter into direct negotiations with France and Spain, the first instance of the kind in Colonial history, and he further expressed conviction that other concessions in the

same direction would be granted. This is a very important step, leading up to commercial independence, and opening up new horizons for this young country. SIR ALEXANDER GALT goes out within a few days as Minister Resident in London, with all the prestige and authority of a Colonial Minister. He will watch all our interests at home—promoting emigration, making commercial treaties, negotiating loans when needed, and acting as general intermediary between Ottawa and the Court of St. James. We have a right to expect the best results from this mission, the importance of which is such that we shall have occasion to speak of it again. HON. MR. LANGEVIN confined himself to the constitutional question, and most of his speech was occupied with the assurance of French Canadian loyalty and adhesion to British institutions. Coming from such high authority the statement chimed in nicely with the general enthusiastic feeling of the evening. Altogether the banquet was a significant one, and whether regarded as a party demonstration or not, must do good in strengthening our faith in the destinies of the Dominion; and stimulating the energies of all toward the prosecution of whatever may tend to make those destinies more enduring and more brilliant.

SANITARY COMMISSION.

To the Editor of CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

SIR,—The rapid spread of typhoid fever, and the continual outbreaks of diphtheria and small-pox in this city, naturally lead one seriously to consider whether the Sanitary Inspector and Board of Health are able, or are incompetent, to cope with the existing evil; and, if not able, or too incompetent or apathetic, is it not time the citizens themselves should take the sanitary question vigorously in hand and adopt some measures to remedy the evil and redeem us from the reproach of possessing one of the most unhealthy cities in North America?

We know that however learned and competent, in some respects, the gentlemen may be who constitute the Board of Health, the members of that Board have neither time to spare nor authority sufficient to deal with so potent a question as sanitary reform. Theory and suggestions, if practical, are excellent if properly applied, but utterly thrown away without the power to carry them into execution. It is a fact, also, that not only the public as a body, but most intelligent men show the greatest degree of apathy towards sanitary matters, and we only can account for such indifference thuswise, that it is one of those things we never actually realize the extent of the danger surrounding us until the messenger of death raps at our door in the form of some deadly zymotic disease. The apathy evinced by the mass in this city towards sanitary reform, is in striking contrast to the great interest now taken in the sanitary subject by the leading minds abroad—and also nearer home—i.e., in the United States, where it is now the all-engrossing topic in scientific papers. As we appear to make no satisfactory progress in this city from year to year under the present abortive system—in fact, without any apparent amelioration in our death-rate from zymotic diseases—is it not time, we again ask, that the sentiment of the people should be taken as to whether the sanitary affairs of Montreal should be allowed to continue in their present unsatisfactory state, or whether the whole question would not be more satisfactorily conducted if placed in the hands of a Sanitary Commission? Surely the educated and enlightened body of the community who, naturally, in such a question, are supposed to guide the less instructed, should arouse themselves from their apathy, and in deeds, and not in words, insist that the Sanitary Department of the city should be placed in future on such a footing that the health and lives of its citizens are no longer to be at the mercy of either errors in judgment, incompetency of officials, want of proper superintendence, or from bad workmanship in the laying of tile drains and bad plumbing. Let us thoroughly rectify existing evils, and there would no longer exist the necessity of a farcical inquiry into the conduct of a sanitary official, dragging day by day its weary length along.

But the object of this communication is not to discuss the subject of sanitary reform through the columns of the press, but to solicit its co-operation and powerful influence in advocating the necessity of a Commission of Enquiry being appointed to thoroughly investigate and report upon the following questions, which will set many doubts at rest:

1. The state of the drains in every part of the city; their construction, &c., &c.
2. The state of the drains inside of dwelling-houses and stores.
3. The condition of the plumbing.
4. Upon all other causes existing in this city tending to produce and spread zymotic diseases.

5. The remedy for all of our existing sanitary evils.

I would submit that the gentleman who should sit at the head of a Sanitary Commission should be a stranger. He should be a Sanitary Engineer of great experience and marked ability, in order that the public might have full confidence in his report, and feel that he was not debarred from speaking out truthfully from fear of giving offence to men in power or influenced by interested motives.

The object of the Commission should not be to throw blame upon the parties who have had to deal with the drains or sanitary matters in the past, but to adopt such measures as would lead to the avoidance of the errors committed and point out the proper course to pursue to secure a healthy city for the future, as well as to correct the many erroneous ideas held by learned but not practical men in respect to sanitary theories and their mechanical application.

The sanitary condition of Montreal can never be considered at all near to perfection until a strict superintendence is kept over the plumber's work and drains in the interior of houses. The money spent upon the sewers is but of little use so long as house drains and plumbing are imperfect—in fact the two should go hand and hand together—for as long as the plumber's work is constructed by so many imperfect workmen, as has been the case in the past, the sanitary condition of this city will always be bad. So long as the plumber's work is imperfect sickness must prevail. The germs of disease will increase more rapidly from foul traps and from the leaking joints of soil pipes and tile drains inside of houses than it will in the city sewers—for the last do occasionally get flushed out by heavy rain—but where leaking pipes exist, there corruption is bred to the foulest extent. The great cry has always been against the city drains. But I say that imperfect house drains and bad plumbing are more to blame for being the cause of so many deaths from fevers, diphtheria and small-pox, than ever could be laid at the door of the city drains, and that more fevers are engendered in foul pipes within doors than in foul drains without.

The sanitary department of any large city should be entirely under the control of a competent sanitary engineer, who should have a sub-inspector and staff of workmen. He should be entirely free from the influence of individual members of the Council, and empowered with authority to carry out rules and regulations similar to those adopted by the city of London, where a crowded population of about four million souls enjoy greater immunity from disease than perhaps any other city in the world.

It is a sad reproach upon us to say that so fine a city as Montreal, so beautifully and healthfully situated, and which could be made as salubrious as any city in the world, should bear almost a plague reputation. In my own department, as Editor of the *Scientific Canadian*, it has been my duty to point out the errors, abuses and imperfections of our present sanitary system, in which we have had a total lack of energy, too much theory and talk, and too little common sense. But as the *Scientific Canadian* does not reach all classes of the community, permit me then to hope for a hearty co-operation from the press of Montreal in endeavoring to bring about sound sanitary reform and in such a shape that it will bear good fruit for the future, and not remain, as it is at present, a dead tree in our midst.

F. N. BOXER.

MATTHEW ARNOLD ON WORDSWORTH.

There was a certain fitness of things in Mr. Matthew Arnold taking up the poet Wordsworth, to be his witness to the English people in the name of culture, sweetness and light. There was no need for Mr. Arnold to tell us that he is a Wordsworthian himself. He reveals that in many pages of his own beautiful poems, sometimes in whole poems at once. Of course there is more of classic culture, more of Greek perfection of form in Matthew Arnold's verses than in those of Wordsworth; and the former is often animated by a questioning spirit of melancholy from which the latter is largely free. Nevertheless, there is in form and spirit, in simplicity of diction, in striking and effective homeliness of phrase, a certain family likeness between the two. No admirer of Wordsworth will probably pick a quarrel with Mr. Arnold for his preface to the selections from Wordsworth's works which he has published; but those who still continue to echo the *Edinburgh Review's* phrase, "This will never do," will probably object, and strongly to the fact which places Wordsworth for the future next to Milton, below Shakespeare the supreme, and above such names as those of Shelly, Keats, Goldsmith, Moore, Byron, Burns, Coleridge, Cooper, Dryden and Spencer.

No bolder piece of criticism has been dared in our time, and no man was likely to have dared it except Mr. Matthew Arnold, who has dared, and successfully in many cases, most of the literary dogmas of the day. Nevertheless we do not doubt at all that in the long run Mr. Arnold's defiance will be admitted to be just, in the main, however it may be immediately denied by the poets of sensation and their clique in the press. Mr. Arnold's estimate of the circumstances which contributed to the delay in the public recognition of Wordsworth, will not be found to be inaccurate. Wordsworth had critical hostility and intensely brilliant

rivalry in poetry to survive. It might have been easy to survive, as many other men did, the critical articles of the *Edinburgh Review*. But it was not so easy to survive and outshine at once Byron and Scott; nor was it easy to stem the rising tide of Tennysonianism. Yet Wordsworth has still preserved his hold upon a large section of the best minds of his time and of his after-time. And the introspective and reflective habits of our modern thought are strongly in his favor. The time is probably coming when the tide of literary opinion will turn strongly towards Wordsworth. It is a remarkable fact that such men as Newman, Faber, Pusey and Keble, not to speak of Mr. Arnold, should admit directly or indirectly the deep and active influence of Wordsworth in their fashion of writing and their tone of thought. Yet this is a fact which the most superficial acquaintance with the writings of these men must have made plain to any reader. There will come a time when there will be a revolt against the materialistic, scientific spirit of this age, just as there was a revolt against the asceticism of the early middle ages; and just as there was a revolt against the hard cynical scolding of the eighteenth century; and when that time comes the best and purest minds will turn to Wordsworth as the exemplar and witness of all that they would express themselves if the divine afflatus had been given them. Wordsworth will be popular and high placed because he "utters nothing base;" because he can be lofty without being defiant—lyrical without being licentious and simple without being (except occasionally—this is his weak spot) silly. The sudden fall from poetry to prose, from lofty thought to sentimental drivel which now and then occurs in the same poem, nay, in the very same verse, is a rock of offence always in Wordsworth. But this defect has been very greatly exaggerated by critics and by parodists, and is too readily admitted without protest by admirers. It really takes nothing from the true merit of the bulk of some of the best poetry of our time—no more than the bad puns and drivelling wit of some parts of Shakespeare takes away from the merits of the Master. It would be quite useless to stop here and criticize at length the poems of Wordsworth; but one cannot part with so pleasant a theme without turning for a moment to some of those which have long been favorites, even though they may not be all classed as high by Mr. Arnold in his more critical examination. Outside of purity of thought, and loftiness of ideas and sweetness of sentiment, Wordsworth is often a perfect master of musical rhythm; his verses run like the brook in June—

"That to the sleeping woods all night
Singseth a quiet tune."

One need only refer the student and lover of Wordsworth to such poems as "The Fountain," "Matthew," "Two April Mornings," &c., for examples of perfectly charming verse containing beautiful, tender and true thoughts on life and human nature. For instance:—

"I looked at her and looked again
And did not wish her mine."

Or this:—

"And many love me, but of none
Am I enough beloved."

These dissociated from the context do not mean so much as when joined, but they are quoted for the lover of the poet, who will know whether or not to agree with the present writer that the impression made by such lines is deep, and lasting and elevating. The "Ode to Duty," and the "Grand Ode," as Mr. Arnold calls it, do not need to be specifically criticised; they reach in various passages the high-water mark of modern poetry. The three poems on "Yarrow" are simply perfection in rhyme, sentiment and language. Let us finish by quoting some verses that have lingered long, long in the ears of a great many tender-hearted readers of poetry, and have perhaps been thought, though not written, by millions of young people in all corners of the world and all languages that civilized men speak:—

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place,
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pierce into her soul."

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give,
When she and I together live,
Here in this happy dell."

It is a matter for congratulation that Mr. Matthew Arnold has taken up the cause of Wordsworth in a skillful and practical manner. He may succeed better in this undertaking than in his new theory concerning historians. He may not be able to "organize the theatre." He may, however, re-establish a poet.
Ottawa, Nov. 22nd. M. J. G.

FASHION NOTES.

THROATLETS of pearl are now very fashionable. At first they were finished with tassels at the ends; now they are clasped round the throat. The Princess of Wales wears hers with a magnificent diamond clasp.
DRESSY shoes are now made to match the toilet, and are embroidered to correspond with the gloves worn at the same time. Dark black kid shoes look best embroidered with gold darts, while silver threads are most effective on pale blue, pink, or white shoes. Some ladies embroider their own chausseurs.