

the antitheses of nature, evolution and the worm. Grant Allen stands cheek by jowl with Maurice Thompson in the corner. Hard by, William Hamilton Gibson fraternizes with Abbott, and Burroughs stretches hand of fellowship to Ruskin—how would these latter agree in real life we wonder?—neath the shadows of the shelves. We can almost fancy the ghosts of these celebrities taking shape in the gloom and kneeling by our side at the easement to drink in the soft fragrance of the Canadian evening, and offer at the shrine of the universal Father tributes of praise and generous acknowledgment for the beauty that dwells in nature and in the epitome of nature, the human mind, which, after all, is the seat of all beauty, the lens which magnifies the microscopic possibilities of contentment in a world and state of society dubbed by the pessimist flat, stale and unprofitable. We turn from the window at last, for the air even at this season becomes chilly after nightfall, and now,—for the other day. Come, shades of the immortals, and we will choose one for our evening fellow. What shall it be? "The Complete Angler," or Selborne, or "Happy Hunting Grounds: Upland and Meadow," or "By-ways and Bird Notes," or "Locusts and Wild Honey"? Well, to-night, as we feel in a pre-eminently American state of mind, and have been visiting all day with the bees and are therefore presumably in a bee humour, we make up our minds to wind up the evening in the same company, on the principle, perchance, that we cannot have too much of a good thing. So we decide upon Burroughs, and are soon lost in his suggestively picturesque pages, reclining upon the thymy slopes of Hymettus, drowsing on Hybla and Ida, and hobnobbing with the goat herds of Syracusan Theocritus, soothed by the humming melody of "The Pastoral Bees."

A. H. MORRISON.

IN MUSSELBURGH, SCOTLAND.

Musselburgh was a burgh
When Edinbro' was nane;
Musselburgh'll be a burgh
When Edinbro' is dune.

SO runs the old rhyme regarding this ancient town in which I had the good fortune to spend a couple of days this Spring. Whether this prophecy will be fulfilled or not may possibly become known to the toothless, hairless, one-armed individual, who, say the scientists, is to be the coming man of the future. Musselburgh is about six miles from Edinburgh, and is situated on the Esk, a tributary of the Liddel, which forms the boundary between England and Scotland on the west. That river is thus celebrated, as what geographical point is not, in characteristic Scottish song:

Oh, the Esk was swollen sae red an' sae deep,
But shouter to shouter the brave lads keep,
Twa thoosan' swam ower to fell English ground
An' danced themselves dry to the pibroch sound:
Dumfooned the English saw, they saw,
Dumfooned they heard the blaw, the blaw,
Dumfooned they a' ran awa, awa,
Frae the hundred pipers an' a' an' a'.

The town itself is quiet, wide streeted, well kept, and has about it an air of solemn, self-conscious respectability as becomes one who was well known in the list of towns, long before that upstart Edinburgh had begun to spread herself round the foot of the castle rock, or about the knees of the couchant lion; or to assume to herself the title of the Modern Athens, forsooth!

Here in a field, named Pinkie-cleugh, a Scottish army was strongly posted to protect Edinburgh when Somerset the Protector marched into Scotland with an army of eighteen thousand men, to compel the Scots to wed their little girl queen to Edward VI.; a rough, if royal way of wooing. But though the Scots in their impatience to be up and at 'em, left their strong position at Pinkie, and paid for this blunder by being routed; and though Somerset wreaked his rage on the church of the Abbey of Holyrood, destroying it, and laying waste the country side, he did not succeed in his purpose, for the youthful Mary was removed to the priory at Inchmahome, and subsequently to France for safety.

Pinkie House is an old and interesting mansion standing in fine grounds just within the old town gates; and not far from it is Loreto College, one of the best Scotch schools, which is reported, however, to turn out more athletes than scholars.

On a hill above the town stands a grim, unprepossessing, old structure, as unlovely within as without, the ancient church of Inveresk. It is not without historic interest, however (I have yet to see the place that is), for in the churchyard here Cromwell planted his cannon; to bombard what, my informant could not tell—Edinburgh probably.

On the west side of the Esk, which runs through the town, the fisher part of the population are located in a lesser town of their own called Fisherrow; and there, un-influenced by the changes going on in the fashionable world at twenty minutes' railway distance from them, they work their own work and live their own simple lives, from generation to generation.

Musselburgh is a town of literary as well as historic interest. Here Dr. Moir, the gentle "Delta" of *Blackwood's Magazine*, author of many touching poems and the inimitable "Mansie Wauch," practised for many years as a physician, a "beloved physician" indeed; for he is remembered yet with reverential affection, and his self-denying labours in the old cholera times will never be forgotten. His grandson still practises in the town, and still occupies the old house in the High Street, with the beautiful garden

sloping down to the Esk. Here were wont to foregather in genial conclave the choice spirits of the day:—Christopher North, De Quincy, who lived at Lasswade, and many other intellectual and kindred souls. Tom Hood once came here to visit "Delta" and the happy children in the house, who were all alert to see the man who wrote such funny things, were lost in wonder to see him so sad, a man who never smiled.

At Wallyford Farm, about two miles east from Musselburgh, Mrs. Oliphant, the well-known authoress, was born. On the occasion of a visit to "Delta" she revisited her native place with great interest and enjoyment.

Victoria Terrace is the name of a handsome row of houses, overlooking the Links and the blue river beyond, with its infinite variety of moods and of seagoing craft. In one of these houses, as happy as "twa doos in a doocot," live Annie S. Swan, the popular Scotch authoress, and her husband, Mr. Burnett Smith, a young physician.

This lady is, beyond a doubt, the most popular author of Scotch fiction, of a certain class, at the present day. Her popularity, indeed, is phenomenal; for the last few years the demand for her books has been steady and ever increasing, and her latest novel, "Over the Hills and Far Away"—a Crofter story, which is now appearing in serial form in the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*—has done much to increase the circulation of that paper.

Her stories are neither clap-trap nor sensational; they are quiet, faithful pictures of everyday, middle-class life, and they are painted with a sweetness and simplicity almost idyllic. No greater praise can be bestowed on her work than a statement of the fact that, at a time when newspapers hire, at high prices, literary hacks to resurrect from infamous graves the long-buried carrion of detective murder trials, wherewith to supply a morbid appetite for sensational reading, such pure and wholesome stories have not only held their own in the literary market, but have actually created a demand for a further supply from the same source.

During her recent visit to America and Canada, Mrs. Burnett Smith was in a state of profound wonder, from which she has not yet recovered, at the sublimity of *sang-froid* displayed in the appropriation of other people's literary property, and the earnest, business-like way in which trans-Atlantic newspaper folks set to work to make money out of what one has created and another paid for, but which they have simply laid their tarry fingers on. This system of condoned wholesale robbery is one of the things people here cannot understand, and the only way they account for it is that the standard of commercial morality in America must be very low indeed to permit such cribbing. You will see I have unwittingly in this manuscript written "condemned," instead of "condoned," and have drawn my pen through the former in order to cancel the word. I am not sure now that I ought to have done so. I feel that while the word "condoned" is true as regards the mild way in which such steps are indicated, still the other is the only proper way in which to indicate them; in fact, the briefer and more emphatic monosyllabic pronunciation of the adjective would better represent the feeling regarding such transactions in the literary world.

JESSIE KERR LAWSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROPOSED IMPERIAL CONGRESS.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—There is a general feeling that some form of Confederation between Great Britain and her Colonies and dependencies is not only "a consummation devoutly to be wished," but that it is the most probable outcome of the present agitation in men's minds. I am convinced, moreover, that the Federal idea only lacks definiteness of development in order to be at once practically considered—and probably accepted by all the scattered interests of the Empire. Allow me to present an outline of a scheme which seems to conserve every vested interest, while, at the same time, it makes room for a new legislative body to consist of representatives of every existing local Legislature. The governing powers would include:

1. The Crown; The Crown Delegates [local Governments].
2. The Cabinets [advisory and executive ministers].
3. The Imperial Congress.
4. The National Senates.
5. The National Parliaments.

[1] The Crown and the Crown Delegates would remain as now.

[2] The Cabinets would remain as now, but with the addition to the British Cabinet of a new Imperial Minister to preside over the Imperial Congress.

[3] The Imperial Congress would be made up of Representatives elected by—but not necessarily from—each National Senate and Parliament. The number of members contributed by each of these bodies would be three—with the view of representing the two leading Parties and also the non-Partisans.

[4] The National Senates would remain as now, including the House of Lords as the British Senate.

[5] The National Parliaments would remain as now, including the House of Commons as the British Parliament.

All measures, in order to become law, would have to pass through the National Parliament, the National Sen-

ate, and the Imperial Congress, and would also have, thereafter, to obtain the Royal assent.

This scheme places the Federal idea in a concrete form before the mind and therefore enables it to be intelligently judged. THE WEEK will, I trust, elicit the views of Canadians, and also commend the scheme to critical consideration in the other colonies and at home. A.M.B.

FLEMING—IN MARCH.

(A FRAGMENT.)

HERE on the wet waste lands,
Take—child—these trembling hands,
Though my life be as blank and waste,
My days as surely ungraced
By glimmer of green on the rim
Of a sunless wilderness dim,
As the wet fields barren and brown,
As the fork of each sterile limb
Shorn of its lustrous crown.

See—how vacant and flat
The landscape—empty and dull,
Scared by an ominous lull
Into a trance—we have sat
This hour on the edge of a broken, a gray snake-fence.
And nothing that lives has flown,
Or crept, or leapt, or been blown
To our feet or past our faces—
So desolate, child—the place is!
It strikes, does it not, a chill,
Like that other upon the hill,
We felt one bleak October?
See—the gray wood still sober
'Ere it be drunk with glee,
With growth, with an ecstasy
Of fruition born of desire,
The marigold's yellow fire
Doth not yet in the sun burn to leap, to aspire;
Its myriad spotted spears
No erythronium rears;
We cannot see
Anemone,
Or heart-lobed brown hepatica;
There doth not fly,
Low under sky,
One kingfisher—dipping and darting
From reedy shallows where reds are starting,
Pale pink tips that shall burst into bloom,
Not in one night's mid-April gloom,
But inch by inch, till ripening tint,
And feathery plume and emerald glint
Proclaim the waters are open.

All this will come,
The panting hum
Of the life that will stir
Glance and glide, and whistle and whir,
Chatter and crow, and perch and pry,
Crawl and leap and dart and fly,
Things of feather and things of fur,
Under the blue of an April sky.
Shall speak, the dumb,
Shall leap, the numb,
All this will come,
It never misses,
Failure, yet—
Never was set
In the sure spring's calendar,
Wherefore—Pet—
Give me one of your springtime kisses!
While you plant some hope in my cold man's breast—
Ah! How welcome the strange flower-guest—
Water it softly with maiden tears,
Go to it early—and late—with fears,
Guard it, and watch it, and give it time
For the holy dews to moisten the rime—
Make of it some green gracious thing.
Such as the Heavens shall make of the Spring!
SERANUS.

THE HISTORY OF PROFESSOR PAUL.

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VII.—(Continued.)

"WE were obliged to make our descent to the plain below very slowly and cautiously, and the last gleam of light had for some time vanished from the hills, before we at length drew up in front of the village inn. We alighted, and my companion, finding his horses very much heated, remarked to me that he would water them when he came out.

"How distinctly I remember each trivial circumstance of that awful night!

"We entered the inn, and finding no one there, I called loudly for the host. A young girl, whom I knew to be his daughter, answered my summons, and told us her father had been called away suddenly by one of the villagers shortly after the noon hour, and had not yet returned. She added however, that she was expecting him every moment, and would if we wished it, herself attend to our wants until he came, to which we gladly assented.

"We took seats at the table, and she left the room to execute our orders.