

"The Queen's generous heart was touched by this answer. She promised that she would attend to Made-moiselle Vauquelin's request. That very day she spoke to the King. Louis XVI., always sensible and inclined to be just, ordered M. de Sartines, then Minister of Marine, to institute an inquiry concerning Jean Vauquelin. Among the witnesses summoned were the celebrated La Brousse, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, and members of the Marquis de Montcalm's family. The verdict was favourable. It proved the glorious services Vauquelin had rendered his country, and the injustice of the accusations that had been made against him. Louis XVI. caused the son to be presented to him, and assured him that he would remember his father's services. Pierre Vauquelin presented the monarch with a copy of his 'Mémoire sur la Géographie de l'Afrique.' He was soon after sent by the Government on a mission to Morocco, and in 1777 was appointed consul to China, where his superior talents were of important benefit to France."

Montreal.

BLANCHE L. MACDONELL.

SONNET.

DOWERED with power, and diademed with grace,
Close-veiled meanings in her wondrous eyes,
She stands confessed—a soul that deifies.
The spirit, shining from this sovereign face,
Doth so inspire our fainting hearts to trace
The steep, untrodden ways and thorny heights
Of new To-morrows, that where'er it lights
Our path, our winged feet follow it apace.

And yet one pair of dimpled baby palms
Holds this great soul in thrall, and baby arms,
Outstretched on either side, a halo make
To crown her motherhood—for her sweet sake
May heaven this child-life spare to bless for aye
The morning and the evening of her day.

Port Hope.

KEN.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CANADIAN INDEPENDENCE.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—I have just read your able editorials bearing on the political future of Canada in your issue of August 3rd. I most heartily concur with you in all that you say. I am a firm believer in the independence of Canada as the only destiny which will satisfy the yearnings of her sons, and I believe, too, that the present juncture is a most opportune one for presenting the case of independence to the Canadian people. Although some of our foremost writers and scholars have expressed their faith in Independence and used their pens in its behalf, yet, I think, my experience justifies me in saying that the vast majority of Canadians have read or heard comparatively little on the subject, know nothing about it and have given it no serious consideration. The advocates of Independence are, to a large extent, isolated individuals, who but seldom have the privilege of exchanging sympathies with warm-hearted friends of the cause, and who, when they endeavour to promulgate their views, have to fight a very uphill fight indeed, being commonly met with derision or, at the best, doubt. The present time is a crisis in our history, and we now have the opportunity either to rise to the dignity of an independent State or to destroy forever our prospects of a distinct national existence. Our young men are ready to take hold of the cause (when they are made to properly understand things) with enthusiastic energy, and the minds of many of our older citizens have been so shaken from the political rut in which they have hitherto travelled that they are prepared to give the subject an impartial consideration. In fact everybody is looking for a way out of our difficulties. It rests with us to seize the opportunity. Shall we let it slip? Imperial Federationists have organized and have caused their dream to be talked of. They have disseminated federationist literature, and have in every way striven to bring it before the minds of the people and to keep it there, whilst Independents remain scattered, unorganized and almost inactive. Shall we allow this state of affairs to continue? No! Let influential Independents unite and decide upon a plan of action. If it is thought advisable to follow your suggestion, let Independence be presented to the Equal Rights Association in the best way possible, and let that Association be asked to make it a plank in their platform. If they refuse to do this then let an Independence Association be organized which shall be extended throughout Canada, and which shall work unceasingly and unflinchingly to advance the best interests of that cause to which every true Canadian possessing a genuine national sentiment, and high aspirations towards the ideal of national and private life in his native land, must give his firm adherence. You have my address, Mr. Editor, and I pledge myself to support and forward, to the best of my ability, the work of such an association as I propose.

A KANUCK.

Canada, August 5th, 1889.

DISCOVERY OF AN ASSYRIAN LIBRARY
3,500 YEARS OLD.

THE Victoria Institute of London held its annual meeting at Adelphi Terrace on July 1st. An immense audience crowded the Hall in every part, the President, Sir George Stokes, Bart., President of the Royal Society taking the chair.

The adoption of the report was moved by Sir Henry Barkley, G.C.B., F.R.S., and seconded by Admiral Sir Leopold McClintock, F.R.S., after which it was announced that family matters, consequent on the death of his father, prevented Professor Sayce's presence, and he had chosen the Rev. Dr. Wright, author of "The Hittites," to read the address. It gave an historical description of what has become known in regard to the conquests of Amenophis III., as shown by the archives of his palace, which have only lately been discovered, and which the professor went last winter to investigate on the spot before writing the address for the Victoria Institute. Of the tablets and inscriptions, he said:—"From them we learn that in the fifteenth century before our era,—a century before the Exodus,—active literary intercourse was going on throughout the civilized world of Western Asia, between Babylon and Egypt and the smaller states of Palestine, of Syria, of Mesopotamia, and even of Eastern Kappadokia. And this intercourse was carried on by means of the Babylonian language, and the complicated Babylonian script. This implies that, all over the civilized East, there were libraries and schools where the Babylonian language and literature were taught and learned. Babylonian appeared to have been as much the language of diplomacy and cultivated society as French has become in modern times, with the difference that, whereas it does not take long to learn to read French, the cuneiform syllabary required years of hard labour and attention before it could be acquired.

We can now understand the meaning of the name of the Canaanitish city which stood near Hebron, and which seems to have been one of the most important of the towns of Southern Palestine. Kirjath-Sepher, or "Book-town," must have been the seat of a famous library, consisting mainly, if not altogether, as the Tel el-Amarna tablets inform us, of clay tablets inscribed with cuneiform characters. As the city also bore the name of Debir, or "Sanctuary," we may conclude that the tablets were stored in its chief temple, like the libraries of Assyria and Babylonia. It may be that they are still lying under the soil, awaiting the day when the spade of the excavator shall restore them to the light. The literary influence of Babylonia in the age before the Israelitish conquest of Palestine explains the occurrence of the names of Babylonian deities among the inhabitants of the West. Moses died on the summit of Mount Nebo, which received its name from the Babylonian god of literature, to whom the great temple of Borsippa was dedicated; and Sinai itself, the mountain "of Sin," testifies to a worship of the Babylonian Moon-god, Sin, amid the solitudes of the desert. Moloch or Malik, was a Babylonian divinity like Rimmon, the Air-god, after whom more than one locality in Palestine was named, and Anat, the wife of Anu, the Sky-god, gave her name to the Palestinian Anah, as well as to Anathoth, the city of "the Anat-goddesses."

In a careful reading of the tablets Canon Sayce came upon many ancient names and incidents known up to the present only from their appearance in the Bible. All these he carefully described, as well as several references in the tablets to the Hittites.

In regard to another point, he said:

"Ever since the progress of Egyptology made it clear that Rameses II. was the Pharaoh of the oppression, it was difficult to understand how so long an interval of time as the whole period of the 18th Dynasty could lie between him and the 'new king' whose rise seems to have been followed almost immediately by the servitude and oppression of the Hebrews. The tablets of Tel el-Amarna now show that the difficulty does not exist. Up to the death of Khu-en-Aten, the Semite had greater influence than the native in the land of Mizraim."

Referring to those who have formed opinions as to the non-historical character of the Pentateuch, Professor Sayce said:—"The Tel el-Amarna tablets have already overthrown the primary foundation on which much of this criticism has been built."

Professor Sayce closed his paper with a peroration of passing eloquence as to the duty of searching for the rich libraries that must lie buried beneath the sands of Syria and Palestine, a matter the importance of which has been urged in the Victoria Institute's *Journal* more than once, especially in the last volume, presented to all its supporters. A vote of thanks was passed to Professor Sayce for his splendid address, and to Dr. Wright for reading it. This was moved by the Lord Chancellor in a speech of great interest, in which he said there was nothing more interesting in the literary history of mankind than such discoveries as those alluded to in the address, which he considered a perfect mine of wealth.

ART NOTES.

VASSILI VERESTSCHAGIN is not the only artist of to-day who is advocating a change in Art aims and art methods. There seems to be a general tendency towards light and cheerful outdoor effects instead of the wonderful old-master gloom and tone and stereotyped treatment, but the English school of water-colour painting has long been supposed to be without fear (of change) and without reproach: nothing however is so sacred nowadays, but that there will be found innovators who will want to improve it. This is what the *July Magazine of Art* says about it: "It is a constant boast that in water colour at least the English school of to-day is independent of foreign influence, and has achieved a success which may be regarded as a national triumph. So often has this boast been expressed that it may be heretical to doubt whether it be justified. But the exhibition of the Old Water-Colour

Society certainly gives us some ground for taking a gloomy view of the case. Every year the same men send the same pictures until we confess ourselves a little wearied with the monotonous prettiness and uniform smoothness of the exhibition. Besides, the collection of Dutch water colours which has been recently seen in London has proved that much more may be accomplished in this delightful medium if it is only handled with vigour and freshness. In the present exhibition there is very little that we have not seen before, if we look for freshness of treatment and fine pictorial effect it is only in a very few drawings that we shall find it." This is plain speaking, but it will do good; art cannot afford to stand still, it must progress with the rest of human affairs. Again we read, "They must return once more to the study of nature and must learn if the modern schools of Holland and France have nothing to teach them." Here in Canada our artists may take a lesson from these remarks. Study from nature is the great lever that moves the art world up the path of progress; not looking backwards, but forwards, is the proper position. Let our artists go out in the new field around them and paint what they see, and paint it as they see it, not as some one else used to see or to imagine he saw. We have skilled artists and good subjects, why can we not have a Canadian school of painting? can we not do as well as such a small northern country as Norway, with its climate so like our own—and its scenery like our own St. Lawrence? It appears not, but we shall when our people take more interest both in our country and our art, and insist upon originality, not led away either by "finish" or impressionism, but letting each artist have his own manner without mannerism.

In this connection it is well to consider whether or to what extent the constant practice of almost all our younger artists of studying in Paris exclusively French Art, and of coming back so thoroughly Frenchified that as to their pictures all trace of the Canadian is lost, destroys originality and has the reverse effect from that intended, for there is not only no reason why Canadians should paint like Frenchmen, but the result of the practice is to fill the Exhibition with pictures which, after all, possess more of the faults and foibles of the French than their merits. In looking back through the history of art we find that not only were the greatest painters men of great power and originality, but intensely national in their manner of painting. For instance, Raphael was as thoroughly Italian as Teniers and Ostade or Rembrandt were Dutch, and Titian was as Venetian as Hogarth or Constable were English, but standing in our R.C.A. or O.S.A. exhibitions the Canadian element appears chiefly in landscape, while our characteristic lumber camps, raising bees, or equally characteristic Toronto market in winter cannot be found. It is not so with the before-mentioned Norwegian school; the pictures bring Norway, its manners and customs, as well as its landscapes, fiords and rugged coast, before us. As time goes on it is to be hoped that we shall have other Canadian pictures beside Mower-Martin's and Bell-Smith's Rocky Mountain and Muskoka scenes, and O'Brien's coast scenes and waterfalls: those who remember Cruickshank's "Hauling out a Mast," must wish he had continued on that line. Let us have Canada for the Canadians in art, for it is not wanting in interest, but in its great diversity is a grand heritage for our artists.

Of our scattered artists T. Mower-Martin has returned from his first sketching tour and is now again off to the Rockies in company with M. Matthews, where they will devote themselves chiefly to the canyons of the Kicking-Horse and Fraser Rivers.

TEMPLAR.

THE Vancouver Art Association held a Loan Exhibition, opened by His Honour, Lieut.-Governor Nelson, on the 28th of June, which justified the courage of its founders by the unexpected degree of success crowning it. The contributions filled almost to overflowing the room engaged for their display, and much surprise was expressed that a town in such an early stage of its development could boast not only of possessing such artistic treasures, but of people with sufficient energy and ambition to inaugurate and successfully carry through an affair which would not have done discredit to a place three times its size. An At-Home brought to a close the first Art Exhibition held in British Columbia.

MUSIC AND THE DRAMA.

MR WILLIAM S. WALSH has an interesting page and a-half in the August issue of *Lippincott's* upon the subject of "footlights." The theatrical performance in Queen Elizabeth's time began at three o'clock in the afternoon, no artificial light being necessary. In one addition of Shakespeare the stage is described as being lighted by means of two large branches "of a form similar to those hung in churches," a species of candle abraham in fact. A book published in 1749 upon the stage, shows it lighted by candles suspended from the proscenium, with no footlights between the actors and the musicians in the orchestra, while the body of the house was lighted by cressets or large open lanterns of nearly the same size as those which are fixed in the poop of a ship. This use of candles, however, involved the employment of a candle-snuffer, who came on at certain pauses of the performance to tend and rectify the lighting of the stage. His appearance was usually greeted with the same derision which now marks the entrance of the "supe" who carries chairs on or off the stage, spreads or removes a carpet, etc.—the