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THE TIMES.

SIR,—My first opponent has ridden from the field declining further combat unless I lift my visor up. Another champion however, caparisoned upon the prancing steed of a new Commissionership, has entered the lists and "feels constrained to break a lance" with me. Let me assure you that under ordinary circumstances, nothing would give me greater pleasure. I am no stranger to

"The stern joy that warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel."

But unfortunately, Canon Norman, impelled by the weakness of his cause, stoops to employ a method of warfare to which I confess myself unaccustomed—of which indeed I would be ashamed, and in which I readily admit my inferiority. When a discussion such as this degenerates into mud-flinging, he who has the largest quantity of that cheap material on hand is sure to be the victor. I am sorry that my opponent has soiled his canonical hands in this manner; and although it might be pardonable in me to follow the example of so illustrious a man, I shall nevertheless not venture to do so. To turn aside from the real question of controversy, to exchange compliments of which "anonymous scribbler" "contemptible cowardice" and "impertinence" are specimens, would be, however pleasant to the refined taste of Canon Norman, neither congenial to myself nor edifying to the public.

But if Canon Norman had emulated the "refined courtesy" of Dr. Stevenson, which he lauds indeed, but does not imitate—if he had refrained from twisting and distorting my sentences in a vain endeavour to glorify himself—if he had shown any desire to discuss the real points at issue, instead of indulging in that personal vituperation of which, and of other arts, he is, it seems, a master, I would have been ready in "all love and sincerity" to have broken any number of lances with him. As matters stand, however, I must request this gentleman to lay aside his violent anger and passion, and discuss the matter in a proper way.

Let Canon Norman observe that I still maintain the statements in my recent article to be true; none of them have been disproved; none of them have even been directly denied. The Canon states that I wonder at the silence of the Oxford nominees. He is mistaken; I do not wonder at it in the least. Again, he remarks "one of these gentlemen has been for so short a time in our employ that to pass a definitive judgment on his results would be premature." Here is damning without even faint praise! It is not even known whether the gentleman is likely to be successful or not! Of the other, Dr. Norman asserts what I never denied, viz., "that his power of imparting knowledge to those who chose to learn, was as great as that knowledge itself." What I do assert is, that in this gentleman's presence very few chose to learn, owing to the wretched, or want of, proper discipline that was maintained. And I further assert that it is most unfair that the efforts of other tutors, able, zealous and efficient, should be hampered and hindered by the incompetence of Dr. Norman's protégés.

The worthy Canon's letter is certainly not deficient in vigour of a certain kind; nor is there any lack of vindictiveness. In these respects he has

surprised his friends not less than his foes. Towards the close of his epistle the Canon grows dramatic, and exclaims, in his most lofty and grandiose manner, "Let 'Nihil Verius' return into well-deserved obscurity!" I admit that it is here my duty to feel crushed, to hide my diminished head, and to cry for gracious pardon. But this I cannot do, and instead I reply: Let Canon Norman exult if he will in the fame which an angry epistle has added to his pompous mediocrity, but let him never attempt by such anger and violence to stifle the free discussion of vital questions! *Nihil Verius.*

SIR,—In your issue of November 13th Canon Norman, in a very undignified tone, takes exception to an article written by "Nihil Verius." Though I am unwilling to appear as the champion of "Nihil Verius," I may say that it is hardly fair that two "big guns" of such great calibre as Canon Norman and the Rev. J. F. Stevenson, D.D., should discharge their missiles upon an anonymous correspondent; therefore I would, as quietly as possible, notice a few discrepancies in the letter of Canon Norman. He writes as follows:—

"Nihil Verius says: 'I hope that very few will deny that, other qualifications being equal, the preference should be given to a Canadian graduate.' I beg leave to think that many will hold exactly the opposite view. In the first place, entire equality in intellectual qualifications among candidates for educational appointments is one of the rarest of phenomena. Again, something besides book-learning is required in a teacher, knowledge of the world in a good sense, geniality of temperament, sympathy with the young, a high estimate of education as a calling, should (apart from good moral principle, an essential requisite in all) be taken into account; and these might be found more readily among University men from the old country than among Canadian graduates. This is entirely distinct from any mere arrogant assumption that Oxford metal is always pure gold, and Canadian currency dross."

These statements or deductions of Canon Norman are not logical. "Nihil Verius" speaks of "qualifications being equal," and makes his deduction—the Canon speaks of "qualifications being unequal," and makes his deduction, fancying that he has proved "Nihil Verius" to be in error. Shades of Locke!

I have no acquaintance with any of the Commissioners, nor do I know how the appointments are made by them, but I am sure that if Canon Norman makes the appointments in the same manner as he reasons in answer to "Nihil Verius," there must be some faulty appointments.

Another statement made by Canon Norman with regard to one of the nominees, is that "his power of imparting knowledge to those who chose to learn was and is as great as that knowledge itself." What a wonderful educational luminary this nominee must have been! and in what an extraordinary degree he must have transcended all former educators, and how the Canon and his colleagues must have hugged themselves with delight at having secured this *rara avis*, who succeeded in "imparting knowledge to those who chose to learn." Is this "damning with faint praise"? And further, as to the power of imparting knowledge being as great as that knowledge itself, the statement is an absurdity, and even if it were not, the fact that this knowledge was only imparted to schoolboys who chose to learn, shows that the appointment could not have been a very good one.

The Canon says that the grammar and taste of "Nihil Verius's" article are eminently bad. I will say nothing of the Canon's taste in calling a person "pusillanimous," accusing him of "contemptible cowardice," &c. &c. I wish to say a few words regarding Canon Norman's English, and I am glad that he acknowledges having been a graduate for twenty-eight years, as the fact that he graduated so many years ago will account for his errors. Here are a few: "I might appear in the light of one," "qualifications among candidates," "sandwiched into the middle," "two gentlemen far his superior" (the Canon is superior to writing superiors). The relative pronoun "who" in the phrase "who is morally" should be preceded by the conjunction "and." I would also ask the Canon what he means by the phrase "behind a pseudonym rather than a *nom de plume*." Is there a hidden meaning here? Are not the terms convertible? I also question the construction of the following sentence:—

"I should then counsel him to abstain from rushing into print until he has learnt something of the art of reasoning, that conclusions must have premisses, and till he has at all events attained some mastery over the English language."

And I conclude with the Canon's conclusion, bidding him "in the interim, farewell."
On-looker.

["On-looker" might also have pointed out that "essential requisite" in the first quotation is not particularly good English.—ED.]