

This direct connection of the High Commissioner with one of Canada's leading institutions is regarded as an advantage to Canadian financial interests there.

The question of Houses of Industry has been occupying the attention of the Ontario Legislature. Mr. Meredith suggested a general adoption of the manual labour test in the case of those admitted, as statistics proved that such a test had the benefit of greatly reducing their numbers. He would, however, gladly endorse any project ameliorating the condition of the deserving poor. Hon. Mr. Hardy followed at some length, stating that wherever poorhouses had been established the general consensus of public opinion was that they had served a good end. He complained of a growing disposition upon the part of municipalities to shirk the responsibility by endeavouring to have their indigent supported at the expense of the province.

The economical reforms in the Queen's household, to which it is said the Prince of Wales has been decidedly opposed, have revealed a couple of queer facts. The custom has been to present Epiphany offerings of "gold, frankincense, and myrrh," on behalf of the sovereign, at the altar of the Chapel Royal of St. James's Palace. The offering was supposed to consist of fifty sovereigns, until Prince Albert, who had a keen scent for abuses, once went to the vestry before the services and opened the box, where he found ten shillings only. It was explained that an old habit gave the rest of the money to certain officials as perquisites. Another queer custom appropriated, at the beginning of each year, fifty-two bottles of royal Madeira, whereby the officiating clergy at St. James' were supposed to regale themselves each Sunday after morning service. Yet none of the clergy had ever seen a drop of it.

### THE GREAT LAKES OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

Under this title we have received a paper, reprinted from *The Canadian Record of Science*, for January, 1889, by A. T. Drummond, wherein that learned geologist discusses with learning and clearness the origin and formation of the great lakes that form the mighty chain of waterways which make the St. Lawrence the mightiest river in the world. The author distinguishes three centres of depression in the bygone history of these lakes, and, after a number of general considerations, he examines each lake in turn, giving due prominence to Lake Superior on account of its being so distinct from the others in its origin. He next examines Lakes Huron, Michigan and Ontario. Then he is very full on the Niagara Escarpment, which nearly fronts the southern side of Lake Ontario, passes around its immediate westerly end, and then, facing to the northeast, continues N.W. until it forms the features of the Bruce Peninsula between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron. The dip of the strata is from the Escarpment north of Hamilton, and on the Manitoulin Islands, to and under the waters of Lake Huron. This Niagara Escarpment, in its eastern course from the western end of Lake Ontario, lies parallel to the axis of that lake, while, in the other direction, it conforms generally to the outcrop that, more or less, characterizes the outcrops of all the formations which, as it were concentrically surround and underlie the coal measures of Michigan. Sir William Logan, in the *Geology of Canada*,

points out the resemblance of the Niagara Escarpment, in places, to an ancient sea cliff. He also shows that it would need only a depression of 442 feet to bring the ocean into Lake Ontario, by way of the Hudson River and the Mohawk Valley, as well as by the St. Lawrence, and to flood the whole of Central Ontario. After devoting a couple of learned pages to Lakes Erie and St. Clair, Mr. Drummond sums up the conclusions of his paper in this wise:

That glaciers, while contributing to the results, had not much effect in making the lake basin deeper, or in shaping the present general outlines. That the superficial deposits are the accumulations of denudation during immense periods of time since the Carboniferous and earlier eras, and are not to be specially credited to the operation of glaciers. That Lake Superior is the most ancient of the lakes, dating its origin as far back as Cambrian, Keweenawan and Huronian times; that it is, in part at least, a synclinal trough; that volcanic action has had most to do with its origin and the shaping of its coasts; that its early outlet was through the depression in Whitefish Bay and that its waters joined the great pre-glacial river system at or near the Straits of Mackinac. That Lakes Michigan, Huron and Ontario were originally the bed of a pre-glacial river which first crossed the Ontario Peninsula along the Niagara Escarpment, and afterward was diverted to a course by way of Long Point, on Lake Erie and the Dundas valley; that their basins were largely defined by the elevation of the Niagara and Hudson River Escarpments, and in more recent times by warping of the strata and deposit of superficial sands and clays which blocked the old river channels and resulted in the lake basins retaining their water on the final elevation of the land to its present general levels. That the Pre-glacial River System expanded in time into smaller lakes in each of the present basins of Lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario; that Lakes Erie and St. Clair are the most recent of the Lakes, and have at one time been more closely united, and that the formation of this united lake was due to the blocking of the old outlets both by superficial deposits and warping of the strata, and to the water being thus retained in the basin on the final elevation of the land to the levels of to-day. That great fractures at or near the outcrops of the strata occasioned by the directions of the forces which elevated the strata, originated, in many instances, the deep bays and inlets which indent the Niagara and Hudson River Escarpments and rocky coast lines of Lakes Michigan and Huron, these effects being afterward supplemented by the action of waves, currents, atmospheric causes and probably local glaciers. That since the elevation of the land to the levels of to-day, the action of waves and currents on the clay cliffs and sand deposit has, in many places, greatly rounded off the general outlines of the coast, and the material from this and other sources has been spread over the lakes, or has served to create new features in the coast line elsewhere.

### POINTS.

BY ACUS.

"To point a moral and adorn a tale."  
—*Johnson's Vanity of Human Wishes.*

What we may call audience-manners is a neglected branch of etiquette. Allusion was made in a former letter to the persecution of artists by thoughtless and persistent *encores*. At present I desire to protest against whispering at concerts.

In the midst of one's enjoyment of a brilliant passage, to be disturbed by whispering jars painfully upon every nerve. Such conduct is in utter disregard of the pleasure of such as would like to enjoy the music, to say nothing of the poor compliment it is to the performers. Under the circumstances, the audience probably cares very little as to whether Mrs. Catnip's children have the measles, or whether she uses lard in frying. Even music hath not charms to soothe my savage breast when thus disturbed. At a recent concert I did myself the pleasure of staring one conversational female out of countenance several times.

I think an act of uniformity ought to be passed with reference to that very perplexing dance, the Lancers. As with the "seven wonders of the world," no two persons know it the same way. Probably the best rule, in cases of uncertainty, is to keep one's eyes open and one's joints limber, and go through it with a stiff upper lip. The lancers is very pretty to look at, but it is not much to dance. What whist is to cards generally, so is the lancers to dancing. Each is a ceremony of more or less solemnity, to which the terms game in the one case, and dance in the other, have been indecorously and disrespectfully applied.

The gentleman who recently lectured on Fools, ought next to turn his attention to Bores. There is a wide field open to him. The place of honour would probably be given to the egotist, with his everlasting "I," who (according to his own account) has never failed, in all his experience, to "bring down the house." Sometimes we almost wish he would—about his ears. Then there is the man who interrupts—the individual who strikes into the conversation like a clock. But these are not the only bulls in the conversational chinchashop. There is the well-meaning but absent-minded person, who cannot, for the life of him, recall the exact word he wants, while his hearers wait painfully, sympathizing with his mental throes. There is the conversational clown, at whom one smiles as often in commiseration as in amusement. And, finally, there is the man whose voice is like the sound of many waters, and who talks so loudly as to drown all minor attempts at conversation in a perfect avalanche of sound.

For a long time the better class of actors have borne the accusations and denunciations of the pulpit silently. But they are beginning to assert, with no uncertain sound, that they (no less than their accusers) value their good name. There have recently occurred several instances in point. It is to be presumed that theatrical dignitaries are as much opposed to "scenes" as to theatres. At all events, we read, not long ago, of a scene enacted in a church, where a distinguished actress (Clara Morris, I think it was), rose to the defence of her profession, and contradicted the preacher's accusations on the spot. The tendency of human nature to "backslide" is shown, no doubt, by the fact that the majority of the congregation sided with the attractive actress. And it was only the other day we read that the new Actors' Club in New York had refused to receive Col. Robert Ingersoll, on the ground that he is irreligious. Without going so far as to say, with certain philosophers, "whatever is, is right," I am, nevertheless, inclined to believe that whatever is *necessary* is right. All art, I think, is necessary to what Matthew Arnold used to call "the life of the spirit." Like other institutions that are good in themselves, the theatre may, of course, be perverted, but in itself, I think, it is good, necessary and right.

Out of respect to the commercial metropolis of our good land, I shall conclude with a little acrostic upon the Carnival:

Canada's gala, hither and behold!  
Arrayed she gleams in silver touched with gold:  
Rifling her treasures from the silvery skies,  
Nightly the while the golden rockets rise.  
In other lands dim winter lowers drear,  
Varied and many are her beauties here.  
Ascribe with shout and bells metallic chime,  
Loudly, the praises of our festal time.

It is proposed to establish shortly a Royal Military College *Gazette*, to be edited by a committee.