

of the books sold in Canadian book-stores are Canadian books."

"ANNALES RÉVOLUTION-NAIRES, OCTOBRE, 1923."

(Bi-monthly review edited by Professor Albert Mathiez, Professor of History, in University of Paris.)

Nous avons grand plaisir à signaler le parallèle pénétrant et nuancé que Mack Eastman, professeur à l'Université de Vancouver, a consacré à la Révolution française et à la Révolution bolchévique.

Les ressemblances et les différences des deux grandes crises sont passées en revue avec un grand sens historique. C'est une excellente application de cette méthode comparative que le professeur Henri Pirenne recommandait avec tant de raison à ses auditeurs du dernier Congrès international de Bruxelles.

"Jacobinism and Bolshevism" — extrait de la "Queen's Quarterly, 1923. L'étude a fait l'objet d'une lecture devant la Royal Society of Canada, à Ottawa, en mai, 1923.

LITERARY NOTES.

(By Roderick Random.)

Apropos of Canadian Book Week, I have jotted down a few ideas along the line of the value of books in life and the pleasures and benefits to be derived from them. This is, of course, a very old subject, and I am not likely to say anything particularly new on it, but it is one that in these ultra modern days can hardly be too much emphasized.

I shall not dwell on the material advancement towards which reading may well prove a means, as the great gateway to knowledge. It was well said long ago that "knowledge is power," but as Lord Disraeli once pointed out in an address in Manchester "On the Value of Literature to Men of Business," Bacon has not only said that "knowledge is power," but, living one century after the discovery of the printing press, he has also announced to the world that "knowledge is pleasure."

"Knowledge," said Disraeli, "is like the mystic ladder in the patriarch's dream. Its base rests on the primeval earth, its crest is lost in the shadowy splendour of the empyrean; while the great authors who for traditionary ages have held the chain of science and philosophy, of poesy and erudition, are the angels ascending and descending the sacred scale, and maintaining, as it were, the communication between man and heaven."

This is, indeed, a striking and illuminative simile, showing literature as a great spiritualizing influence in life, keeping man in touch with the highest and helping him to look up-

ward, away from the base and the mean and the transitory.

We have all experienced this uplifting power, this healing virtue. We have found it in the greatest degree, no doubt, in the sacred literature in the Bible, and more especially in some of those wonderful passages of tenderness and beauty, sayings of Jesus or the aspirations of the Psalmist that are apt, if we know them well enough, to come into our minds unbidden in moments of danger or difficulty or depression.

I remember staying in a country town hotel a year or two ago, and taking up the Bible with which the room was supplied. I found that it had been placed there by the Christian Association of Commercial Travellers — or some such name — as a guide and a help to the craft. Pasted in the inside of the front cover there was a little printed sheet of paper which directed the reader to passages that would be suitable and appropriate for the mood or circumstances in which he might find himself. I copied them down at the time and have them somewhere, but the captions were something like these: When Trade is Bad; When Trade is Good and Everything Goes Well; When Perplexed and Anxious; and so forth. I looked up the selections and noted how splendidly they were fitted for comfort and encouragement and guidance for the various circumstances that might affect the reader, and I thought what a fine thing this was. A country hotel can be about the most dismal place on earth for a man who is down on his luck; but here was this message of cheer in the little black book for anyone who would look for it.

Now in a different and a lesser degree is there a healing influence in good literature. We hear a great deal about chiropractics in these days, and not so very long ago there were some lively tilts in the courts between them and the medical doctors. Then there are the sanipractics and other professors with high sounding names. I sometimes think with all those healing cults that we might have one of booki-practic, where the doctor might prescribe for the mind diseased, such books as would provide the remedy desired. I throw out the suggestion without charge for the benefit of anyone who is looking for a vocation. I hardly think the Medical Association would put you in gaol either if you took it up. However, I would only warn you this, that while I believe it takes but a year or so for a chiropractic to graduate, I fear it would be about twenty-five before the booki-practic

would be fit to practise his profession.

I remember as a small boy finding Sir Walter Scott's "Quentin Durward," one of the great romances, to be a most effective antidote for the toothache. I am not, of course, citing this as a mental disease, but it usually has a decided mental reaction, as you may find in Burns' famous "Address to the Toothache" where the poet places this as the worst of all the diseases that plague mankind and denounces it in most emphatic language:

"My curse upon thy venom'd stang,
That shoots my tortured gums
amang;
An' through my lugs gies mony a
twang;

Wi' gnawing vengeance;
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang;
Like rackin' engines!"

It is easy, however, to mention famous instances where books have been a great resource in cases of mental stress when the strain had become almost too great for human endurance. There is that of Carlyle, when the MSS. of "The French Revolution," that great work on which he had lavished almost incredible pains and labour, was destroyed by accident. We are told that for about a month after it happened he found distraction and relief in reading the novels of Captain Marryat. Or there is the instance, of General Gordon at Khartoum, how in those last dreadful hours in which he waited for the end, he was able to find some measure of forgetfulness of the grim tragedy of which he was the centre, in reading a book of fiction.

Of course, in these cases, the prescription was analagous to the physician's opiate or morphia injection for the relief of terrible pain. In less desperate cases, the wise booki-practic would prescribe remedies of more tonic and constructive properties. Besides fiction, what an inexhaustible pharmacopia of history, biography, philosophy and religion he would have to draw upon!

I am a great believer in every man owning his own library, not to confine himself to it at all, but to have a treasure chest all his own, a treasure chest containing the best — or some of the best books that have been written from Homer's time until to-day. I have called it a treasure chest. Another man, Alfred H. Miles, in a very beautiful sonnet, which I shall quote to you, has called it a gallery:—

"I have a golden gallery where wait
The royalty of ages, at my will
The feast to spread, the goblet to
fulfil,