

discourse was very simple, very fervent, in fine what a sermon should be—words addressed less to the head than to the heart.

In his learned article on the *Decline of Art*, Mr. J. T. Palgrave remarks the preference of modern amateurs for "Annual Exhibitions," and further asks us to contrast the animated throngs that frequent these, with the listless wanderers through museums and "national galleries." Though such is the state of affairs, are we so very much to blame for preferring to be talked to in our own modern tongue? We need not, I think, too deeply deplore the absence of hazy, grimy, "old masters" from our art gallery, seeing that our admiration for them would scarcely exceed the enthusiasm they inspire among people of more mature taste. *En revanche*, we can have a very fair collection of essentially modern works, true, honest pictures before which we may take refuge as at a shrine. Is art really only a luxury in these days? Truly, of preoccupied "madonnas," and unsympathetic saints there seems no need, but surely without the lovely human inspirations that come to us year by year, we should feel much poorer. There is a goodly number of "copies" adorning the lower hall of our gallery which one might wish to see exchanged for a work or two of greater interest. If we could boast an Uhde, or a Gabriel Max! I am sure the constant presence amongst us of the favourite figure of both these artists would do the work of many a clerical enthusiast. Uhde's Christ is neither the painted, purple-robed image we find throned for one portion of humanity to worship, nor the cold, serious spirit of less poetical imaginations, but an exquisitely sympathetic man, with wan, sad face illumined by strange wisdom and gentleness. Such a countenance must always be contemplated with profit—even on Sundays.

The next best exhibition to that in our art gallery is the small but select one in which Mr. Lawson's pictures were seen. This is a sort of New Bond Street Gallery, where one sees at times some really interesting work. At present among the canvasses, of more or less worth, we find two heads from Louis Boschamp. This artist scored a certain success in the French Salon some years ago with the most melancholy of pictures. Like Henner, he is haunted by a certain type of female—one can scarcely call it beauty in his case—so that his heads have always the same great, round, lustreless eyes, the same dishevelled hair, and altogether a foggy, tear-stained aspect.

A Dutch artist, Nahuys, gives us the most pathetically sweet little scene—the corner of a dark grimy room, where a poor washerwoman bends over her work. Everything in the picture is very black, everything except a cloud of pale gold curls that serves as an exquisite note of light.

Mr. Homer Watson's clouds are as lowering as ever in a small landscape. His pictures attract us by the same strange force as that of the coming storm he so delights to paint. In the one I speak of now you can already feel a cold, damp breath, and the first heavy drops falling from the steely clouds that are rolling and tumbling before the wind.

In my next letter I hope to be able to tell you something of Mr. Harris's work.

Talking of art leads us very naturally to speak of the death of the Hon. Robert Mackay. It is needless to say what a very great loss we have sustained. Men of culture are few enough in any portion of the globe, but more especially is the New World in need of them. Our artistic and literary life the late Judge did all he could to foster and encourage. He was for five years the President of our own Art Association, and to McGill College he presented his library. It is one thing to have wealth, it is another to have taste and discrimination; but we may safely say Judge Mackay had both.

The advantages and disadvantages of co-education, or perhaps what some would call merely the disadvantages under which McGill University is at present labouring, owing to the non-division of labour—that is to say, owing to the Professors' having to repeat their lectures every day—is greatly exercising the intellectual portion of our community. However, as matter now stand it is scarcely safe for the uninitiated to speak of the affair.

LOUIS LLOYD.

As we read the cabled extracts from the memorable speeches heard last week in the House of Commons, we cannot but look with doubt on the current assertion that the day of orators is over, and that votes no longer can be changed by eloquence. If we take into account the effect produced, not only on the immediate auditors, but on the immeasurably wider audience reached through the press, we should probably consider the speech delivered by Mr. Gladstone on Friday one of the most telling displays of oratorical ability ever made in the British Parliament. What casts suspicion on the notion that the art of oratory is moribund is the fact that precisely the same depreciatory comments have been heard from the extollers of times past on the speakers of their own day in every generation for the last two hundred years. Thus Canning used to be compared unfavourably with Burke; Burke was held inferior to Chatham; Chatham in turn was pronounced less persuasive than Bolingbroke, while St. John's extraordinary power to captivate an audience was deemed unequal to the species of mastery which had been shown by Pym. It is not surprising, therefore, that some of his coevals should dispute Mr. Gladstone's claim to rank in the very highest class of England's orators. Some of his detractors, as, for instance, Mr. Froude (who himself is nothing if not rhetorical), speak of him slightly as a mere rhetorician. But even his least friendly critics must acknowledge that no man by virtue of the spoken word has ever wielded a vast influence for so long a period as has Mr. Gladstone, or has at an age so advanced exhibited such boundless fertility and fervour.—*New York Sun*.

## SOME RECENT FRENCH-CANADIAN BOOKS.

OUR French-Canadian friends, without stopping to enquire whether they have a literature of their own or not, have unconsciously answered the momentous question in the affirmative, within the last few weeks. Authorship with them has been unusually active, and each production of their press bears the unmistakable stamp of Canadian origin. Four volumes of respectable size, illustrative of the poetry, the historical romance, the essay, and the review of the country, lie on my table, the works mainly of Quebec authors. The first in importance perhaps, from a general point of view—since it appeals more directly to the popular taste—is the book entitled *La Canada Français*,—an elegantly printed quarterly of some two hundred and thirty pages. The staff of writers include such names as Dr. Chauveau, Judge Routhier, Napoleon Legendre, Abbé Casgrain, Laflamme, de Foville, Gosselin, Methot, and Hamel, and M. Thomas Chapais. The review is conducted by a committee of the professors belonging to Laval University, the Patron of which is his Eminence the Cardinal. From such an administration one would imagine that at least, ecclesiastically, the new magazine would possess no doubtful significance, and that in any Roman Catholic household it would prove a very welcome guest indeed. But there are wheels within wheels, and grades of Churchmen always, and so when this new candidate for public favour was announced, the Programists of the Church promptly condemned it. Their organs in the newspaper world impaled—metaphorically of course—the leading contributors, and showed cause why a magazine containing the writings of such men as Routhier, Chauveau, and one or two others whose names have escaped me, should not be encouraged by the faithful. The fact that the new serial would bear the *imprimatur* of the Faculty of Laval offered an additional reason why sentiments of condemnation instead of praise should be uttered. It proved the old story over again, and against the liberalism and theology of Laval, the captains of the ultramontanes arose as one man. But the Cardinal's hand has been given to the enterprise, and lovers of the best writing in French-Canada, by Churchmen of generous views, and by the most capable essayists and reviewers of the Province of Quebec, will find much to their liking in the initial issue of *La Canada Français*. As an experiment, it will be published quarterly, but as soon as practicable it is the intention of the proprietors to issue the magazine monthly. Religion, Philosophy, History, the Fine Arts, Science, and Literature are the themes to the elucidation of which the contributors will devote their pens. How well the programme has been fulfilled, a brief examination of the pages will prove. The administration and Judge Routhier explain the objects of the publication, its scope and purpose. M. Chapais writes intelligently of *La Bataille de Carillon*; a second historical paper is furnished by Abbé A. H. Gosselin, who discusses the *Rôle politique de Mgr. de Laval—le Conseil Souverain et les Gouverneurs du Canada*, while a third paper in the same class is supplied by Abbé Casgrain, who discusses Acadia before the dispersion. Each of these topics is ably treated, but those who have formed their impressions of the Acadians' expulsion from the writings of Francis Parkman and Sir Adams Archibald will do well to consider what Dr. Casgrain has to say on the other side. He has lately visited the land of Evangeline, where he investigated the subject by the light of historical documents and annals of the period. His presentation of the question is strong, and as he is the ablest questioner of the brilliant American historian on that phase of our history in the Dominion, his essay must not be thrown lightly aside. This number of the *Review* is also valuable on account of the historical papers which appear in print for the first time. Eight of these documents are given, all of them drawn from the archives of Canada and of France, and as each issue of the magazine will be enriched by similar papers, the student of our early history will in the course of a year's numbers find a veritable storehouse of facts hitherto inaccessible to his hand. The documents here presented treat principally of the closing days of French dominion in Canada, the description of Acadia in 1746 by Abbé de Loutre, missionary, and the declaration of war by the Micmacs against the Governor of Halifax in 1749 (the text being in Micmac with French translation) being especially interesting. No less striking is the memoir addressed to the Duc de Choiseul, in justification of the claim of France to the possession of Acadia. Among the other contents of *Canada Français* may be briefly mentioned Mgr. Methot's story of the Pope's Jubilee, M. de Foville's paper on the Faculty of Arts in the Catholic University, and Mr. Ernest Marceau's poem addressed to the founders of the *Review*. It is not every day that the editor is embalmed in lofty and stirring verse, nor would most editors care for such homage in the pages of his own magazine. But M. Marceau's work is patriotic and enthusiastic, and one may forgive much on the score of patriotism or enthusiasm. Of course, Dr. Chauveau is very much at home in his review of European current events—a task which he has accomplished in various publications since 1857. In his writings the ecclesiastical and literary flavours are always happily blended, and, naturally enough, in the review before us, he begins with the Pope and his jubilee. Judge Routhier's larger contribution is dated Paris, 28th November, and he chats delightfully of the gay city, in that charming form of composition which the French-Canadian has borrowed from France, the *chronique*. The scientific part of the *Review* is entrusted to the Abbé Laflamme, who in this number lets in some light on electrical metallurgy.

In noticing these French-Canadian books, I ought perhaps to have mentioned first Dr. Louis Frechette's *La Légende d'un Peuple*, which comes to us from the press of *La Librairie Illustrée*, Paris. The poet is now in