

justice and of moderation and fair play exert a strong effort to put this vexed question of Separate Schools into the limbo of dead and forgotten issues. There are so many much more serious matters to unite about that we must not allow our national strength and national good feeling to be dissipated in ungenerous sectarian disputes. If the energies and abilities of our people need exercise let our political leaders take up the question of the development of the North-West. How shall our millions of acres be brought into the market? How can our thousands of inhabitants be made millions? How can we put our militia force into proper condition? How are we to induce the English people to divert their investments from rotten South American securities into good Canadian bonds and mortgages? The English financial papers are openly declaring that English investments are leaving the United States, and they are looking for other fields in which to place their capital. We want that capital here badly. Every day this mischievous Separate School agitation is kept up damages our chances of getting any investment whatever made here. Our enemies take advantage of our dissensions—they even fan the flame. Candid friends who damn us with faint praise now point in the English papers to these troubles, and prophesy our inability to settle them. We suffer, therefore, very much financially, and will suffer much more without any counterbalancing advantage unless a period is at once put to the hypocritical made-to-order fervour of demagogic agitation. We appeal to business men, and men who have something to lose to interfere before it is too late and insist that their representatives give this question an immediate quietus.

* * *

Alexandre Dumas, Fils.

THE intimate friends of Alexandre Dumas, fils, were not ignorant of his failing brain-health, but were not prepared for his relatively sudden death. He was a natural child that his father legally recognized, so was legitimized. His mother was a sempstress and had a work-room attached to her residence, known to-day as No. 1. Place Boieldieu. That is the house where he was born and the municipality is preparing the customary mural slab, in black marble and gilt letters to record the birthplace of the deceased celebrity—"29th July, 1824." Dumas was sent to the ordinary preparatory schools and passed his holiday Thursdays with his mother; his father did not take any marked interest in him as a lad; after quitting college he shared the Bohemian life of his father. In 1845 he published his first volume of boyish poetry; "forty copies were struck off, and were sold." In 1865 he married the Russian princess Narischkine, who adored his genius, as did the Russian Madame Hauska that of Balzac. By this marriage he had two daughters, both married, but one is a *divorcée*. His wife died in April last. Six months later Dumas wed the daughter—a *divorcée*—of Régnier, the actor. She has been left a widow—her experiences of married life must be sad—very early.

Although he had a splendid town house, crowded like a museum—and so lacking taste—with *objets d'art*, he preferred his Villa Champflour, at Marly, contiguous to the palatial residence of Sardou. It is an old, two-storey house, but has a splendid park overlooking Bongirai, that Baden-Baden of France, and close to Paris. Some very old trees are in the park; there is a bench of some historical interest in the garden, that on which Madame de Staël stood and made a solemn oath to eternally love the assassin of Gustavus III. One day M. de Leuren, the director of Opéra Comique, a post he obtained through the influence of Dumas père, wrote to the latter's son to call on him. Complied with, M. de Leuren, handed him a bunch of keys, requested him to open a drawer, and to read his will. The document bequeathed to him the Villa Champflour, and 10,000 frs. a year to keep it up. Dumas fils protested against the generosity, but like the lady, vowing he would never consent, consented. The death chamber is plainly furnished, with family portraits and busts of his daughters. The bed, in citron wood, and the same used by his father, and on which

he died also, is very small. Thereupon reposed the body of the great dramatist; arms folded across his heart, his favourite attitude in life; naked feet, and his working costume—a wide pair of pantaloons and a white smock. And so he was interred. According to his will, no honours or oraisons will be delivered over his bier; no religious ceremony celebrated; he wants no crypt in the Panthéon, only a simple tomb in the cemetery of Père Lachaise or Montmartre.

He has left his wealth to his widow and two daughters, share and share alike; his splendid portrait by Meissonier, he bequeaths to the Louvre; but though reported to be charitable he has forgotten the, "Pray remember the poor." In the midst of eulogiums at boiling point, it is difficult to handle the personal character of Dumas; but as nothing should be extenuated, or ought set down in malice, outside his set, he was not a popular man. He had a jealous disposition and a hardness of character that displeased. His quarrels with all his play-collaborators are historical. He claimed to be the only man who understood the nature of woman; he alone could tame her. Yet, it was well known that if a favour was to be won from Dumas, the applicant should be prepared to secure the good opinion of Madame at first. Dumas was a passionate believer in chiromancy, and was the patron of the daughter of Desbarolles the great authority on palmistry. Recently Dumas called on the, now professional, lady; he complained that the central of the three large lines of his hand "did not go well"; that was "the line of the head," as it is called; "I feel some misfortune will arrive at the indicated side of my head." This was two months ago. Now, the eleven doctors called into consultation, have not been able to precise the malady Dumas died of, save that something was wrong with the brain. His valet is down with typhoid fever since several days. Dumas said he would like to catch that disease in order to experience the pleasure of convalescence.

As a playwright, Dumas fils will live—his romances do not count—just as will his father, that he always alluded to as the "Grand Dumas," also go down to posterity as a novelist; generations unborn will devour *Monte Cristo* and the *Trois Mousquetaires*. In point of work Dumas fils points a moral; he laboured as a galley slave over his productions; never did he "scamp" a line. His words, like his thoughts, were *accouchements*. For a twelvemonth he would write in his head the drama he would transcribe in three weeks, and if not satisfied with an act, or the entire work, would coolly set about rewriting all. Managers had to snatch his plays to stop that Penelope industry. *Denise* was the piece that caused him most thought. This labour was exhausting, for the social types created by Dumas were the result of profound observation and drafts on his inner consciousness. He was justly styled the father of contemporary drama; he revolutionized the stage: he fabricated new and original moulds for it, and showed how "casts" were to be made.

Like Byron, Dumas fils went to bed and awoke in the morning to find himself famous. After the first representation, February 2, 1852, *Dame aux Camélias*, he was a celebrity. He never surpassed that *chef d'œuvre*. His last piece was *Francillon*, produced in January, 1887. He has left three incomplete dramas, with directions never to be represented. Indeed Dumas was conscious of the setting of his genius and feared to risk a failure. For Dumas the character of woman was his specialty; she was either a fallen angel or a devil. For "Marguerite Gauthier" (*Dame aux Camélias*) he claimed a Magdalene pity—for "she loved much"; for the wife whose chastity had been ruined by a profligate tempter, he demanded the pardon of "the woman taken in adultery," for the spouse with angel mask and demoniac temperament—"kill her." From around these types, Dumas extracted his characters. He claimed to be a psychologist, a "soul doctor," the director of the consciences of both sexes—for man, as well as woman, came under his lash; or, rather, formed the subject of his theme, for the dramatist only composed those that provoked and forced attention solely among the middle and upper classes. He was unknown to the populace—but not so his father.

Was Dumas fils a moralist? Whether intentionally or not, he has exercised a deleterious influence on society. His first aim undoubtedly was to secure a good subject for the stage; to be dashed off in three acts, in sparkling dialogue and rapid action; and if a moral result flows from his san-