

His, too, was very often the word in season fitly spoken, which healed the acrimony that sometimes creeps into debate even in the placid and dignified Red Chamber.

Another well-known name will soon disappear from the Senate Division list, where it often stood all alone on one side. Mr. Alexander, of Woodstock, has not been well enough to take his seat for two consecutive Sessions, and so, under the provisions of the B. N. A. Act, it has become vacant.

Mr. Tarte has not lost much time in bringing before Parliament his charges against Sir Hector Langevin and Mr. McGreevy, and he has done so in the most circumstantial manner, though, grave as they are, they do not contain all the allegations he was expected to make. The galleries were filled on Monday, and there was a suppressed excitement, an undefinable something in the air, which recalled the memorable days before the formulation of the accusations against the Ministry in 1873. Personally, Mr. Tarte, the "enfant terrible" of Quebec politics, is to those, who have not heard his fiery eloquence or read his denunciatory writing, the "mildest-mannered man that ever scuttled ship or cut a throat," and both his demeanour and language were fitting the serious occasions. He commenced with a few words in French, then changed to English, which he speaks fluently, and which, as in the case of so many Frenchmen who speak it well, seems to acquire emphasis from the slight tinge of foreign accent. His charges occupy four columns of very small print, but may be briefly summed up into an accusation that Mr. McGreevy and Sir Hector Langevin used their public influence and the latter's official position as Minister of Public Works to give undue information and advantage to certain contractors, shared with them the proceeds of contracts thus obtained, and contrived that these contracts should be given at exorbitant rates, the money coming from the public purse. It is also charged that they corrupted officials of the Department. Sir Hector confined himself to a dignified denial and an expression of complete willingness to have everything investigated, and he also defended his officers. Mr. McGreevy emphatically declared that the whole charge was false and untrue from beginning to end, was a foul conspiracy, and the letters were forgeries, and declared his readiness for an enquiry.

Mr. Tarte had moved for a small select Committee, but as the matter is one affecting the seats of all the members concerned it was thought better to send it before the larger tribunal of the Privileges and Elections Committee. So ends the formal prologue to one of the most serious political episodes of late years. It involves the political existence of the accused and may have far wider-reaching results. As usual there are all sorts of rumours flying about, some of very grave import, but distortion and exaggeration are the natural effects of the mirage from the heated air of this political furnace—the City of Ottawa—and, whether scandal or slander, the matter is now *sub judice* and premature report or comment would be as unfair as unbecoming.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

THIS paper is written upon the assumption that he whose name heads it, and whose works in some measure are reviewed, is a poet. Illogical as the course may be, there will be no definition attempted as to what poetry is. Life is real, and perhaps Spencer's cumbrous definition thereof is the best, but the best requires still further defining if not expanding, and even then we may find the definition only entangling, and our philosophy more misty than before. Yet life is, and we in general have no difficulty in recognizing its presence. Poetry is, and men own its charm. Whittier has written some charming poetry. The word "poet" traced to its source means one who creates. If that be the criterion of what constitutes poetry, the fingers of one hand would suffice to count the poets in the English tongue. Indeed it is doubtful if strictly another name than that of Shakespeare could be given. But when Homer—confessedly a *poëtes*—began his Iliad, he invoked the Muse with "Sing, O goddess." Whittier sings, and sings with sweetness; his singing is poetry. We would listen to his song.

It may be said that his poetry is essentially American, nay New England. True his speech and scenes are of New England cast, but then Shakespeare's Greeks and Romans talk in good Elizabethan English, and Tennyson is ever on English ground. But the poet's inspiration looks further, is, may we say, all embracing; and Whittier sings some all embracing truths.

Whittier is human, human in the best and kindest sense. True to his Quaker instincts he holds to the "inner light"—the consciousness of the metaphysician, the theologian's witness of the spirit—but he holds it for humanity, not for a class.

The word which the reason of Plato discerned,
The truth, as whose symbol the Mithra fire burned;
The soul of the world which the stoic but guessed,
In the light universal, the Quaker confessed.

The egoism of the philosopher, the exclusiveness of the dogmatist, the separateness of the Quaker, are all lost here in the sympathy of the man.

He can enter into the spirit of such movements as those which followed the preaching of Whitfield when

Through ceiled chambers of secret sin
Sudden and strong the light shone in;
A guilty sense of his neighbour's needs
Startled the man of title deeds;
The trembling hand of the worldling shook
The dust of years from the Holy Book,

And the psalms of David forgotten long,
Took the place of the scoffer's song.

Nevertheless

In silent protest of letting alone,
The Quaker kept the way of his own
A non-conductor among the wires.
With coat of asbestos, proof to fires.
And vague of creed and barren of rite,
But holding as in his master's sight
Act, thought, and deed to the inner light,
The round of his simple duties walked,
And strove to live what the others talked.

From the curse of African slavery America is now happily free. Whittier was in the thick of the struggles which culminated in the Civil War. No where is the intense earnestness of the man more seen than in his "Voices of Freedom." His whole soul is on fire; some of his pieces may be but editorials in verse, but they burn with righteous indignation, and they sing songs which have power. In the early Texas struggle hear his voice:—

Whoso shrinks or falters now,
Whoso to the yoke would bow,
Brand the craven on his brow!

We hear the echo of

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?

And there are few more pathetic threnodies than his when Webster threw himself into the arms of the slave interest,
Of all we loved and honoured, naught
Save power remains,—
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

There is a strong tendency in the thought of to-day towards pessimism. Under all the "larger hope" of Tennyson's "In Memoriam" is the sad strain: "We know not anything, we only trust." Whittier has faith, and faith is stronger than doubt; it gives substance to the things we hope for. The "though He slay me, yet will I trust Him" of the smitten patriarch of Uz is a higher plane than the half doubtful "it shall be well with them that fear God" of the writer of Ecclesiastes. Whittier has the "larger faith." As, by "the grave by the lake," where Melvin's stream laughs and ripples, his soul is disquieted "for the innumerable dead," he hears a voice spoken from the sunlit mountain and whispered by the trees:—

Cast on God thy care for these;
Trust Him if thy sight be dim;
Doubt for them is doubt of Him.
Never yet abyss was found
Deeper than that cross could sound.

Yet he realizes the dread mystery of a perverse human will. "No force divine can love compel," and though

For ever round the mercy seat
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what, if habit bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?

A deep question which each for himself must answer.

The moral of Leigh Hunt's "Abou Ben Adam" is reproduced with some quiet humour in "The Brother of Mercy," who, on his death-bed, denied the strength to perform his daily tasks of mercy and of service, is comforted by the monk who comes to shrive him by the teaching that his work is done and his rest is near when "no toil, no tears, no sorrow for the lost shall mar his perfect bliss." Piero feels "too poor for the grand company" and declines to

Sit among the lazy saints,
Turning a deaf ear to the sore complaints
Of souls that suffer.

Loving his fellow men, and willing to do good even to the worst, he does not desire the change that would make him less human to those who are in pain. In such lines as these our poet touches the very heart of humanity and the very spirit of the self-sacrificing Nazarene; and exposes that "other-worldliness" which curses so much of our religious life.

His narrative power may be seen in his "Mary Garvin" and "Maud Müller," from which we are sorely tempted to quote, but forbear. His sweetness may be seen in "My Namesake,"

Heaven make thee better than thy name
Child of my friends.

Whittier sings out of a full heart. We would sum up his characteristics briefly thus: His verses show purity, kindness, reality. Like "Home, sweet home," melody and song, which touches the heart where even Mozart's skill would fail, our poet awakens, enkindles the fires of man's best nature, and touches the soul with tender emotion. His words flow clear as a sparkling stream, eddying sometimes into dreamy shallows, even into reedy bays, always fresh as mountain air; not philosophical but human;

Never a man born who has more of the swing
Of the true liquid bard, and all that sort of thing.

How long his memory may remain green after his last lyric shall have been sung I venture not, but for me he has whiled away some weary moments, and cheered my spirit when days seemed dark. I am inclined to think that the world will not readily let die some of the stanzas found in "The Eternal Goodness" and "Our Master," breathing as they do the very tenderness of the heart of God.

Toronto, April, 1891.

JOHN BURTON.

A CLERGYMAN, who did not get on well with his congregation, was appointed chaplain of a penitentiary, and preached a farewell sermon to his congregation. There was nothing in the sermon at which anybody could take offence, but some of the members did not like the text, which was: "I go to prepare a place for you, so that where I am ye may be also."

THE GOVERNMENT AND INDIAN EDUCATION.

THAT the Indian problem is difficult of solution no one doubts, and it will perhaps aid many Canadians to form a clearer conception of the question to know what the Dominion Government is doing in regard to the education of Indian youth.

In the first place the Government has placed day schools on most of the reserves and tries to give through these a public school education in English. Even were these as fully successful as white public schools they would not do all that is required, for the Indian boy has no means of learning a trade nor the Indian girl a chance of learning housework. There are also good and sufficient reasons why these schools cannot be as successful as white schools. As on most Canadian reserves the Indians are allowed to add to the products of their small farms by going on fishing and hunting excursions, and their children most naturally miss a great deal of schooling. Then the salary of \$300 per annum which the Government allows such teachers is not sufficient to induce good men to go out and endure the hardships, privations and lack of congenial society incidental to our western reserves. It is not sufficient to induce anyone not of a missionary spirit, and such men gravitate naturally into the missionary work of the church to which they happen to belong, and are thus lost to the Government.

So that the work accomplished by reserve day schools has not been up to what one might expect, even considering the short time the pupils are at school. Far be it from the writer to detract from these teachers or belittle their work. Across the record of many might be written "he did what he could," and this is saying a good deal considering his generally bachelor life with its diet of rabbit and fish, and his unfloored, unfurnished domain called a schoolhouse, with its one window (sometimes of oiled paper) and its lack of equipment. Nevertheless the Government has felt that if the Indian is to be raised it must be through a more powerful lever than the reserve day school; water and soap, hand training and morality must go hand in hand with mere mind training before the Indian can become truly a Canadian citizen. How can he become civilized unless he work and how can he work unless he be taught?

The Government has therefore established a number of industrial schools at various suitable points and the children are brought to these, are clothed, fed, taught and given some handicraft. To some this may seem an unnatural system. It takes a child from his home and parents and forces him suddenly into unaccustomed ways. But let us look at some of the overruling advantages of a boarding industrial school. In the first place the children are always present; they get their lessons every day, not once or twice a month; they are taught to love cleanliness and punctuality, things impossible in their own homes. They have a constant example of the unremitting work with which the white man purchases his success. They are given sound constitutions by good food and sufficient clothing, bathing and ventilation. They are given a good practical knowledge of that great civilizer the English tongue, and with this and the bringing together of various tribes in one school, the old tribal enmities are broken up and the child that came into the school a filthy, ignorant little Cree or Ojibway or Sioux, thinking his language, his village, his tribe, the perfection of all creation, is sent out an English-speaking Canadian. Besides this he has the benefit of the example of good living set before him by Christian men and women and his mind is still further braced by the hand training which he receives.

That these schools have been successful in Canada cannot be doubted. In all directions we see evidences of the good work done by them, and they have aided and are aiding in the peaceful settlement of the Indian problem. Government Indian schools in the United States have not been, as a rule, successful educational institutions; at least, looking at it as impartially as possible, they do not come up to the average of our Canadian schools. There is, however, this to be said about it, that the Canadian Government has had three very important advantages over the United States in the management of its schools.

The first advantage is that for the last sixty years a private Indian school has stood as a constant example to the Government of how such schools could be economically and efficiently managed. The industrial school of the New England Corporation at Brantford, which receives no Government aid or private donations but derives its income from long-invested funds, is one of the most successful on the continent, and it would appear that our Government in trying to work on the same line have been as successful as they have.

The second advantage is, that our Government officials do not change with every breath of air as do their United States brethren. Whatever may be said about civil service reform in Canada there is no doubt that the Indian service of the United States would rise up into a position of respectability and honour if the terms of the officers were longer. To-day it is simply looked upon as a fair field for the most audacious and skilful manipulator. Our agents and other officers are not as well paid, but the permanency of the position has given us better men than the best average men of the higher paid U. S. Service. Since this question of officers extends to the schools the Canadian schools have the decided advantage.

The third advantage is that in Canada religion has not