

counter-cries. All these matters will only be settled when the allies, if they be allied, come to grips. To keep arming—safety only that way lies. That secured, go in for the civilizations.

Chemist Berthelot is a savant, but exploded when he took up politics. He has just published a work laying down that the scientific law is metamorphosing humanity; that science only can render definite services and make men and institutions possess authority and durability. All this is the old windbagism under a new name. The scientific law does not clear away that ironclad sinner, the Sultan, nor reduce taxes, nor cure toothache, nor guarantee morality in international treaties, nor make peace between mono and bi-metallists. Can science, can philosophy, make a Juliet? Then hang up philosophy. Science, it seems, instructs the good citizen not to refuse his help to every work and task of general interest. That science was founded on a Book, the oldest known, and destined to live the longest, that ignores systems of philosophy and science laws; it simply teaches men how to live and, better still, how to die.

Dr. Toulouse is a young physician who wants to ascertain in what the brains of men of genius differ from ordinary mortals. The old methods of volume and weight do not satisfy him, since idiots have the heaviest and most voluminous brains and skulls. He will make an encyclopædic inquiry, aided by all modern plans for revealing character. He will employ the Röntgen rays, examine the marks on the hands, colour of eyes—save when artificial, and the condition of the teeth, if they be natural. He will investigate the patients' private life and the characteristics of their ancestors—though the divine William says: "We are bastards all." The five senses will be tested. Zola has submitted to all the tests, and sends the doctor a present of a dozen bottles of his this season's gherkins, pickled by his old cook. It is a capital puff for his forthcoming work; as good as if he commanded stanzas from the poet laureate to hosanna his wares.

The postal authorities have reduced the commission for money orders to one sou per every 10 frs.; that is a boon and blessing. There is luck in one sou: that coin purchases a stamp that will give you an extension of 1½ hour to post letters. If only the inland postage was reduced to 2, instead of the 3 sous! We know France, like other countries, cannot exist without bloated armaments; now Deputy Berger asserts that French art cannot exist without its bloated budget; hence the 1½ million frs. will be continued to the four subsidized theatres. There is one new play nearly brought out in France daily, and two songs. But everything in France ends in song.

Edmund de Goncourt left his relatively large fortune to found an opposition French Academy, whose members, limited to ten, were each to receive a salary of 6,000 fr. a year, plus a monthly dinner at a crack restaurant. The "Forty Immortals" only receive 1,000 fr. each a year from the State, and that calculated on their weekly attendance. Goncourt's natural heirs have turned up, artisans and farmers, who oppose the testament. They have all the chances to win, as no second academy can exist without the permission of the State, and it considers one sun in the literary firmament sufficient.

The works of the 1900 Exhibition commence to be marked out. There is plenty of money, plenty of time, and plenty of hands. What will be the history of the world by 1900? Z.

Paris, November 4th, 1896.

### Canadian Literature.

THE question as to whether or not we have a Canadian literature has been vigorously and variously threshed out during the past four or five years. It is well that we understand at the outset, in the discussion of this subject, what is meant by literature. "It is," says a well-known writer, "the verbal expression of man's affections as acted upon in his relations with the material world, Society and his Creator." Literature can-

not, then, be made or unmade by favour or disfavour, nor by the *imprimatur* or condemnation of any personage or set of men. It has its immortal roots down deep in the nature of man. It is the product of the spiritual co-operating with the intellectual in man. It is very plain then that what is permanent and absolute in Canadian literature will survive though it be not praised and applauded by the literary critics of London or Boston, whose relationship with big publishing houses is so suspiciously close as to give them a right to the title of silent partners in the concerns. Yes, assuredly what is immortal in Canadian literature will live—and that is all which has a right to live—though no big drums proclaim its merits from the housetops. To say that to publish a Canadian book in London, England, will help its author financially is no doubt true, but to hold that such publication will help to establish a Canadian literature is simply absurd. Very little of the literature of to-day which is choking the shelves of our book stalls will have any permanency. Novels which deal with nothing permanent or absolute in life whose plot could be worked out in the back kitchen of any man's mind will not be known even in name twenty-five years hence. It is not necessary to mention their names in this article. Out of any twenty popular novelists of to-day you are sure to strike sixteen. Let me, however, for the purpose of continuing this point of discussion mention one. Take, for instance, the novels of E. P. Roe. How many, think you, will be elbowing their way into Public Libraries twenty-five years hence for the purpose of securing copies of the dead novelist's works? This is an age of literary madness and so universally has this *rabies* got into the blood of the people that with many so-called literary persons it is much more pardonable to be without a coat or shoes than to be without the latest ephemeral novel. "The public mind and current magazines are kept in a fever of excitement identifying and christening the offspring, now of Mrs. Humphrey Ward, now of Sara Grand, now of Mrs. Southworth. However faulty George Eliot may be regarded in her ethical teaching, the author of the "Mill on the Floss" had the merit of dealing in her novels with the permanent and absolute in life, with the eternities of things, as Carlyle would say; and though you cannot accept her altruism as the be-all and end-all of life, still you feel that you are reading the works of a woman remarkable for her profound scholarship, her psychological insight into life, her broad sympathies and sweet touches of humanity. So much for the permanent in literature.

I think it will be agreed that poetry is one of the highest co-efficients in literature. If, then, we have a Canadian literature, how large a co-efficient of it, think you, is Canadian poetry? It is true we have not yet grown any Shakespeares, any Miltons, any Spensers, any Tennysons, or any Brownings under Canadian skies. Neither have some other countries which have long since cast off their colonial apparel. If you take the poems which have been published in book form in Canada during the past five years and those which have been issued from the press of the United States during the same time I think you will find the Canadian contribution to the permanent in literature quite equal, if not greater, than that of our literary brethren across the line. The Chicago Inter-Ocean declared Campbell's "Mother" to be the best poem written in America during the past twenty years; the London Spectator placed the work of Lampman side by side with that of Longfellow; while Paul Flouret, of the Paris *Figaro*, stated in an interview in Toronto about a year ago, that the poems of several of the younger Canadian poets have been translated into French in Paris. Surely these are high tributes to the genius of Canadian literature. Still there are growlers and grumblers and pessimists because every sweet and tender lyric growing in the garden of Canadian poesy is not puffed and praised by the critics of foreign lands. Canada is all right, poetically as well as politically, if they only let her alone. A human-hearted man like the "Khan," glorifying the simple things around him, is doing more for Canadian literature than the fault-finding critics who, Cassandra-like, predict continually the passing away forever of the glory of the Maple Leaf. In literature, as in aught else, it should be ever enjoined upon Canadians:

"This above all—to thine own self be true;  
And it must follow as the night the day  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

THOMAS O'HAGAN.