

intellectuality, and a vague charm that was beyond his power to analyse or ours to conceive. The conduct of this young person was usually characterised by the wildest vagaries. She held communings with herself, which she reluctantly imparted to the interesting youth in whom she recognised her mental superior, and therefore her fate; and the sole end of her existence appeared to be to make his as wretched as possible. The plot, of which this ingenuous maid was the centre, usually turned upon a mood of hers—the various chapters, indeed, were chiefly given over to the elucidation of her moods, and their effect upon her unfortunate admirers.

Just about here, in the development of the heroine, do we begin to see that she is not a fixed quantity in the problems of the novelist, but varies with his day and generation. Araminta was the product of an age that demanded no more of femininity than unlimited affection and embroidery. The advent of the blue-stocking suggested the introduction of brains into her composition, though her personality was not seriously affected by them, as the blue-stocking was but a creature of report in the mind of the story-teller, the feminine intelligence not being popularly cultivated beyond the seminary limit. As dissatisfaction with her opportunities infected the modern young lady, her appearance in fiction with a turned-up nose and freckles, solely relying upon her yearnings after the infinite for popular appreciation, followed as a matter of course.

We are not talking, O captious soul—with a dozen notable heroines of the past at your fingers' ends!—of the great people in the world of fiction, but of the democracy of that populous literary sphere. We are discussing those short-lived Ethels and Irenees who have long since gone over, with their devoted Arthurs and Adolphuses, to that great majority whose fortunes are to be traced only at the second-hand book-stalls now; but whose afflictions formed the solace of many an hour in the dusty seclusion of the garret, while the rain pattered on the roof, and the mice adventured over the floor, and the garments of other days swayed to and fro in dishevelled remembrance of their departed possessors. Ah, Genevieve and Rosabel, Vivien and Belinda, how fare ye now whose yellow-bound vicissitudes were treasured so carefully from the fiery fate that awaited them at the hands of stern authorities diametrically opposed to "light reading!" By what black ingratitude are ye reduced, alas! to the pulp of the base material economy of the age on which, perhaps, the fortunes of damsels less worthy and less fair are typographically set forth for the fickle amusement of a later generation!

Hardly less complete is the evanishment of Rosabel and Belinda than that of their successors in fiction, and the time-honoured functions they performed. A novel without a heroine used to be as absurd an idea as the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. But the heroine of to-day's fiction is the exception, not the rule. The levelling process the age is undergoing has reduced women with their own knowledge and consent to very much the same plane of thought and action as men. It has also raised them to it, paradoxical though the statement be. The woman of to-day is no longer an exceptional being surrounded by exceptional circumstances. She bears a translatable relation to the world; and the novelists who translate it correctly have ceased to mark it by unduly exalting one woman by virtue of her sex to a position of interest in their books which dwarfs all the other characters. It has been found that successful novels can be written without her. The woman of to-day understands herself, and is understood in her present and possible worth. The novel of to-day is a reflection of our present social state. The women who enter into its composition are but intelligent agents in this reflection, and show themselves as they are, not as a false ideal would have them. SARA JEANNETTE DUNCAN.

AFTERNOON TEA.

How necessary and how dear a thing is sentiment, after all! We who have been born in this great unmellowed, unhallowed continent, and have lived in colourless dearth of history and tradition for more than two centuries, are prone to mock at Sentiment, to rob her of her celestial robes and dress her in the unmeaning garments of some Audrey whom fools trifle with. Yet despite our ill-usage she asserts her gentle supremacy again and again, to our half-ashamed delight and satisfaction. At the distribution of prizes in the public hall of Upper Canada College last Friday afternoon, for instance, how she possessed the place, and arose in the person of every distinguished occupant of the platform to sway us all with the magic of her retrospective wand! All about us, the youth of to-day, brimful of the possibilities of to-morrow; on the dais before us, men who represented the authority of government, the elevation of letters, and the dignity of the church. High over the door, the old colonial governor who founded the College looked down in his red coat and gold lace and wrinkled top-boots, upon his labours as half a century has affected them.

And the reverend gentleman who first assumed the arduous task of instructing the young idea, as it was subjected to him in this honourable seat, gazed benignly over his cravat at some of the very boys upon whom his eye was sterner once—gray-headed boys now, but full of vigour and enthusiasm for the halls of their youthful correction still. And the sun, slanting through the green blinds, fell upon and glorified the gilt-lettered scroll of head boys' names for years and years—names, some of them, of Canada's bravest and best. The years have done their best to tarnish them on the walls where their fame began; but they are lettered in history by an undiscoverable alchemic process that brightens them with time. Names, some of them, eminent in professional, or weighty in business life; names, some of them, that stand for brilliant failures; names, some of them, alas! to be found elsewhere only in a faithful heart or two, and on some churchyard slab. Truly, one thought, as one listened to the words of approbation that must have thrilled the boyish hearers, and heard the hearty enthusiasm of Lieutenant-Governor Robinson, and mentally congratulated young Macdonald, the bright-faced victor of the year,—if Upper Canada College continues to exist but by grace of sentiment its lease of life will be long.

THE drawing-room at the Government House was the scene of rather a novel phase of gubernatorial hospitality last Friday afternoon, when Lieut.-Colonel Macdonald, Indian Agent and Interpreter, and his Cree Chiefs, called to pay their respects to His Honour and Mrs. Robinson. According to the urbane introduction of their guide, philosopher, and friend, the visitors from the far Saskatchewan were Oh-tah-ta-coop, which being interpreted, is Star Blanket, Kah-wis-ta-haw, or Flying-in-a-circle, Osoup, which is more euphonious than Black-fat, and Mis-ta-was-sis, who, though the smallest of all, was Big-Child. Mis-ta-was-sis must have disappointed the promise of his early infancy.

Considering their doctrinal differences—for one was a Methodist, one a Presbyterian, one a Catholic, and one a Pagan—the most remarkable unanimity appeared to prevail among them. The Pagan wore his hair in ringlets, but his ancestral faith did not distinguish him otherwise. He was dressed like his fellow chiefs, in somewhat antiquated red military coat and trousers, of Saskatchewan conventionality; and he was as silent, as dignified, as unabashed as they.

After the exchange of necessarily somewhat limited civilities with Mrs. Robinson, His Honour took his Indian guests to the hall, dining-room, and ball-room, where hangs the very admirable and perfect collection of portraits of former colonial dignitaries, for which Government House is justly noted. Their interest in these was very apparent, and several times when their genial host audaciously joked his painted predecessors, their dark faces relaxed into a grin of appreciation. Returning to the drawing-room, the orator of the party, Kah-tee-wis-ta-haw, presented his compliments to Lieut.-Governor and Mrs. Robinson in a manner that left nothing to be desired but a knowledge of Cree, and this deficiency was entirely supplied by Col. Macdonald. One is struck by the simplicity, the directness, the poetry of the Indian, when he aspires to rhetoric. Living as he does in constant contact with primeval nature, intimately familiar with her every mood, and blissfully unaware of the necessity for originality in interpreting her, the beauty of the red man's metaphors is not hard to account for. Among these painted people of the forest many a Cædmon must have lived and died. Pointing to a little granddaughter of Mrs. Robinson, a fairy-like little creature with long floating fair hair and blue eyes, Kah-tee-wis-ta-haw called her "The Star Child," and wished for her that the days that had passed since his name had been given him might be added to hers. No poet laureate could have named her more appropriately. Kah-tee-wis-ta-haw, though apparently unimpressed by the splendour of Government House, was of the opinion that had his brother Indians known before what he would tell them on his return, there would have been no war, in which he was gutturally endorsed by his companions. His Honour then expressed, in his own unmistakable way, the sincerity of his good will, "as Chief of this great Province," toward his distinguished visitors and the people they represented. Mrs. Robinson delighted their aboriginal hearts by presenting them with pretty silver brooches and bangles for their respective squaws, and pipes for themselves. Col. Macdonald was also honoured by a remembrance of the occasion in the shape of a handsome meerschaum. Whereupon the Crees testified to their progress in civilisation by gravely presenting their cards! and after shaking hands with great ceremony with every one present, disappeared down the drive with a farewell whoop—a social observance that had the merit of originality in Toronto, the impressions of our friends in England to the contrary notwithstanding.

Rose Coghlan laid siege to the heart of Toronto's theatre-going public last week, first in the character of *Lady Teazle*. As might have been