

MONTREAL LETTER.

THE "boodle investigation" is ended. I trust you know something about the matter, as it is quite beyond my capacity to give any information on the subject. Like that exasperating advertisement concerning innumerable miles of stovepolish, a constantly recurring "caption" has aggravated us during some weeks. Well, either the case proved over-puzzling, or the investigators over-wearied, for we no longer find precious columns in our dailies usurped by a seemingly interminable affair. However there are other investigations on the tapis. Fire brigade, Society, Sabbath breaking, nothing shall escape contumely—except perhaps our public thoroughfares. But alas! after the spirit of—interference has stalked about haunting lawyers "who straight dream on fees," with sepulchral voice rousing parsons to a sense of their duty—"what is it all when all is done?" The city "being thus frightened, starts and wakes, swears a prayer or two, and sleeps again." (Pardon my adapting Shakespeare after this fashion.)

THE French population, and a select number of English people too for that matter, were highly edified by the performances of Maurice Grau's Opera Company. Recruited from Parisian boulevard theatres, these lesser lights must have been not a little amused at the dazzling appearance they presented shining in our darker theatrical firmament. Furthermore it was very funny to see the good bourgeoisie of Montreal contemplating with benign and approving countenance operettas many Parisians prefer viewing from the sombre recesses of a discreet *baignoire*. The works given were mostly those we all know so well—*La Mascotte*, *La Fille de Madame Angot*, etc., etc. I assure you nothing was lost upon us, nor the exhilarating buffoonery of Monsieur Mezières, nor the shrill singing of the two prima donnas. Rather novel features enhanced the excitement during the first night's performance. Students who should never be beyond reach of a professional ruler made life miserable for more genteel auditors by hideous shouting between every act, and the throwing of fire crackers, in lieu of floral tributes, at the feet of the unhappy players. Afterwards, marching triumphantly home, these model youths were pounced upon by policemen who rightly or wrongly dispersed the concourse of window-breaking, peace-disturbing gentlemen.

"HAVE you seen Mrs. Langtry's frocks?"—that is what we have been asked here, and, in truth, there seemed little else to look at. The "Lily" and "her own company," it must be confessed, very often resembled animated fashion plates far more than feeling human beings. I remember Mrs. Langtry's first visit to Montreal, with the delicate odour of London drawing-rooms still about her; she was a fair apparition indeed. Fortunately we did not go to see an actress, but the most fascinating of women, and were consequently more than satisfied. Man, however, cannot live by soft glances alone, nor does Mrs. Langtry wish it; she has therefore put forth every effort to give to the public something besides pose and good looks. Unfortunately the actress was once a society belle, and this she never forgets. We have still, and I suppose always shall have, the impression that Mrs. Langtry deigned to tread the boards for any reason in the world rather than this one: That she thought the stage would lose much without her services. If she were once to toss her hair, to forget the whiteness of her shoulders, the blueness of her eyes, we might believe in her. Our English actresses greatly need some of the warm blood and nervous energy of the French. I could name more than one who would do much better as a sculptor's model than the hysterical heroine of modern plays. As for "her own company," it was really very funny. I shall not attempt to question our dear cousins' pronunciation of President's English, but I think one may doubt the propriety of putting it into the mouth of a British nobleman. *Le jeun premier*, Mr. Maurice Barrymore, has, I hear, some reputation; to criticise him, then, would be like assaulting a man with bulldogs at his back. This handsome young gentleman may act very well in other parts, but the Captain Bradford of *A Wife's Peril* was tame and preoccupied. Doubtless his eye-glass had something to do with it, for like him of "the beautiful white legs," neither love nor the prospect of death could part these friends.

THEY say the Salvation Army came to us from Toronto—thanks. While fully admitting the good these warriors have done, one cannot help regretting their establishment amongst us. However, the thing is accomplished now; last Saturday evening their gorgeous new barracks were opened. The building—a very substantial one of cut stone and red brick—includes a great hall capable of seating three thousand persons, training home, dormitories, and lecture, reading, and dining rooms. The former, flashily decorated, exhibits rather a peculiar feature in its moveable ceiling, which can be lowered at will. This is very brilliantly frescoed, and has a map of the world in the centre, surrounded by the motto, "The World from God."

LOUIS LLOYD.

MR. HENRY GEORGE.*

"HE that goeth about," says the "judicious" Richard Hooker, "to persuade a multitude that they are not as well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers." Never were the words truer than in the present day. We do not mean to say that the agitators of the present time have no other basis for their power. Many of them are men of deep convictions, and of considerable intellectual ability; but these would go for little if they could not use the mighty lever of discontent. It is a strange thing—it would be amusing were not the case so serious—to see Mr. George discoursing to the inhabitants of New York on the right of the people to the possession of the land, when he and they know

* *Henry George vs. Henry George*. A Review. By R. C. Rutherford. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

quite well that there is no land in New York to be had, whereas they have only to go out into the Western States and get as much as they want. Indeed, we may well ask why the seemingly numerous believers in Mr. George's doctrines do not go *en masse* and get a large tract of land, and keep it as national property, and demonstrate that Mr. George's theory put into practice will make a prosperous and happy community. If they say that their object is to turn the whole world into such a community, and therefore they must remain in the midst of the ill-managed society to which they now belong, the reply is very simple: no argument that you can employ will conclusively prove the truth of your theory. Put it in practice; show that it will work, and that the results of its working are beneficial, and this will do more to convince others of its truth than any amount of speculative utterances on the subject.

Those who have attended Mr. George's meetings in New York, and have heard the speeches of himself and of Dr. McGlynn as supporters of the "Anti-Poverty Society," report that there is very little appearance of poverty among those who constitute the audience, and applaud to the echo the platitudes and fallacies of their popular orators.

It is quite evident, however, that Mr. George is not to be allowed to have things all his own way. Among others, he has been answered by Dr. Goldwin Smith, in his excellent little book on *False Hopes*, and here is a very good contribution on the same side by Mr. R. C. Rutherford.

One of the principal points to which Mr. Rutherford draws attention is Mr. George's opposition to the ordinary teaching of Political Economy, "that labour is maintained and paid out of existing capital before the product which constitutes the ultimate object is secured." One should have thought that this is quite a correct statement of the actual matter of fact, whatever may be the theory or the history of the relation between labour, wages, and capital. Mr. George, however, insists that "on the contrary, the maintenance and payment of labour do not even temporarily trench on capital, but are directly drawn from the product of the labour," and that, if this is true, "then all this vast superstructure is left without support, and must fall."

Mr. Rutherford examines these theories, not as a mere friend of capital, or as holding a brief for the capitalist, but in a simple scientific manner; and it is in this manner, as we believe, that the subject must be considered. No one now would argue that capital is to be respected to the injury of the community. If it could be proved that some of the revolutionary schemes now advocated would really promote the common prosperity and well-being, then, even if the capitalist should suffer, he could hardly wonder if the votes of the majority should make him suffer; nor, in that case, could we greatly blame the majority.

But this is by no means the judgment of the most philanthropic political economists. They profess to see clearly that any serious attack on capital and its rights would be most injurious to the working classes, whose interests (even their very existence) would be imperilled by such an attack.

To most persons, Mr. George's statement that wages, or, as he calls it, "the maintenance and payment of labour do not even temporarily trench on capital," must seem a very hard saying indeed. Who are the people who employ others and pay them for their labour? Certainly people who have capital. And who are the persons who never employ labourers, or who generally fail to pay them when they do employ them? Just as certainly those who have no capital. These are facts, and they are very easily formulated as principles.

Of course, no one thinks of denying that capital, or wealth, is the product of land and labour; and for the sake of the argument we may suppose that land is common or national property. But we have to go back a very long way before we can see men at work producing wealth by labour without having any capital to start with. We must go back to the time of unorganised, individual labour, to the time when man was not "a tool-using animal," or was using tools of a very primitive description; and such a time has little bearing upon the principles of production in our own days.

Most certainly "the maintenance and payment of labour" are not "directly drawn from the product of labour." They are drawn from capital which is the result of previous labour; and this alone is a proof that the attack on capital is an attack on labour—not perhaps direct, but quite as real as though it were; and further, it reminds us that the labourer would be in a very sad position if he depended for his wages upon the product of his own labour. These and other points are fully illustrated in Mr. Rutherford's book by instances giving the working of the principles in concrete forms. We believe that the circulation of this book is very likely to do good.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

INGLESIDE RHAIMS. Verses in the dialect of Burns. J. E. Rankin. New York: John B. Alden.

That every one can sympathise with the author's fondness for the Scots tongue to the extent of calling it "the sweetest, simplest, and most pathetic dialect ever used by mortals" the author himself will surely not expect. The Scots with many is an acquired taste, although with others it does certainly outlive admiration of the adopted English. Dr. Rankin is not a Scotchman by birth, but most essentially one in feeling and his poems are duly weighted with Scotch sentiments expressed in the traditional Scotch manner. In a narrative strain he has few equals, while his poems on childhood are really beautiful and full of tenderest images. They are well known and always favourably received in the United States, and even if we have occasionally to use a glossary the subject-matter is quite interesting enough to allow us to do so without a hint of impatience. We believe that Dr. Rankin is also a writer of strong, fluent, and original English verse.