

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

SONNET.

Who much hath suffered, nor hath pity learned
For pain and sorrow, hath a heart of stone;
For 'tis in suffering that the soul is turned
To the All-pitiful, to whom are known
All griefs. For us He bore them all, alone.
A very "Man of Sorrows." Oh! how sweet
His kindness who, with bleeding hands and feet,
Did pray for those who the dread deed had done.
"Father, forgive them;" and, in all His pain,
Was not unmindful of a mother's breast,
On which a cherished infant He had lain;
And made the dying penitent His guest.
Ah me! how often is the story told!
And yet how many hearts are hard and cold!

JOHN READE.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS'S "GRAND DICTIONNAIRE DE CUISINE."

Alexandre Dumas was a *belle fourchette* as well as an indefatigable writer, and therefore it is not astonishing that he should have kept a promise often made, and have written a cookery book ere his busy brain quite gave way. That his work was not brought out sooner was owing to a variety of accidents and to the fact that M. Vuillemot was charged with its correction. M. Vuillemot keeps "La Tête Noire" at St. Cloud, which was destroyed during the siege of Paris. He has since then run up a temporary hotel and even invented a new soup which he calls after his own name, so that his time has been much occupied, and he must be excused. The preface of the work in the shape of a letter from the author to M. Jules Janin is alive with gastronomical anecdotes, from the creation of the first man, who must have been nourished by a cow! the eating of the apple, Esau selling his birthright, the feast of Balthazar, and the orgies of the Roman Emperors, down to the latest suppers at the Café Anglais and the Maison Dorée before the German war. The end of this sparkling letter is tinged with sadness; the writer has lost his appetite and his fortune, and after working for fifteen years at the rate of three volumes a month he finds his imagination enervated, his head racked with pain, and, if without debts, he is completely without money, and sadly in want of repose and amusement. It was under these circumstances that he wrote his dictionary in a small village on the rude coast of Brittany, and had still spirits enough to string together a variety of amusing anecdotes, to a few of which we will refer.

Béquet was an incorrigible *vireur* as well as a wit, and one day his father, bitterly reproaching him with his vices, said that they would soon bring him to the grave. "I am thirty years older than you are," he added, "and you will die before me." "Of a truth, sir," answered the son, "you have always disagreeable things to say to me." On the day his father died Béquet went as usual to dine at the Café de Paris, and asked the waiter if *bordeaux* was mourning.

Napoleon, he says, who, like Byron, was haunted with the idea that he would get too stout, was irregular in his repasts, did not feed well, and too fast. "Far from enriching *le répertoire gastronomique*, we only owe to his victories one dish—the *poulet Marengo*!" This is all that remains of Napoleon to the epicure. Of Talleyrand the author speaks with greater respect, telling us that when eighty years of age, he passed an hour every morning with his chef discussing the dishes for dinner, which was his only meal, as in the morning before going to work he never took anything but two or three cups of camomile tea. His dinners at the Foreign Office, we are assured, have become "classic" and will be eternally imitated. Dumas had no great opinion of Brillat-Savarin, who was attached to two or three vulgar dishes. He was a large eater, and spoke but little and with difficulty; he had a heavy air, resembled a curé; "after dinner his digestion absorbed him, and I have seen him go to sleep," wrote the chef Carême.

There is a pleasant story about M. de Cussy and Louis XVIII. M. de Cussy had served Napoleon both before and after Elba, but on the return of the Bourbons, M. de Lauriston managed to get him named sub-prefect. The King, however, knowing that M. de Cussy had been prefect of the palace to Napoleon, refused at first to sign the appointment, and only changed his mind on learning that the *gourmet* in question had discovered the mixture of strawberries, cream, and champagne. All difficulties were then removed, and his Majesty with his royal hand wrote *accordée*. It is some consolation to be assured after this that "L'estomac ni l'esprit de M. de Cussy n'ont jamais bronché." With Louis XVIII. the reign of gastronomy was also restored, and Alexandre Dumas gives in detail the bill of fare of the first dinner set before the King at Compiègne. There were four soups, four removes of fish, four fish, thirty-two entrées, four *grosses pièces d'entremets*, four dishes of roast, thirty-two *entremets*, with sweets and desert. We are also informed that Louis XVIII. had a gentleman specially charged to taste the fruit intended for the Royal table, and that this post was filled by the librarian of the Institute—M. Petit Radet.

In the body of the work not only are explanations given for the preparation of every known dish, but we find definitions, explanations, and biographies. A long account, for example, is given of the celebrated cook Carême; and under Carême, to Catholics are told how they may get through Lent without much mortification. Some of the explanations concerning English liquors and dishes, though not correct, are amusing, and therefore suggestive. For example, ale, we are assured, means *loud*, because it can replace all other drinks; "taken in reasonable doses, it is refreshing." There are many funny reflections over the *Biftek à l'Anglaise*, which was born in France after the campaign of 1815, and was introduced with a certain dread and slyly into the French cuisine. "However," adds Dumas, "as we are an eclectic people without prejudices we held out our plates, and accorded to the beefsteak the right of citizenship." Under the head of "Welch rabbit" (*lapin gallois*) (*sic*) we have a fair description of how cheese should be toasted on bread, and a little further on the author discourses about White-Bait which he tasted at "Greenisch," and which he says is called *yanchette* in Italy, *pontin* at Nice, and *poisson blanc* at Bordeaux.

To show how few things have escaped the observation of the writer, we may remark that he tells us even how wild animals should be dressed, even to the panther; but we are warned against the eagle, whose flesh it was forbidden to the Jews to taste. There is an instructive article about absinthe, in which we are told that this plant, which, if it inspired the pen of Alfred de Musset, carried him to an early grave, gives that pleasant flavour for which *pré-silé* mutton is famous. But for forty years the liquor distilled from it has played sad havoc among soldiers and poets of the Bohemian class. Alexandre Dumas lived just long enough to see a terrible rise

in the price of oysters. He says that the Greeks said, "the gods disappear," but lately a cry has been heard "oysters are disappearing." There is certainly no connection between a mollusc living at the bottom of the sea enveloped in his shell and eternally attached to a rock and the inhabitants of the venerable Olympus. Well! the famous cry of Bossuet, that famous cry of eloquence, "Madame se meurt! madame est morte!" did not produce a more terrible impression than this gastronomic voice in distress which shouted, "Oysters are disappearing, and have risen from 60 centimes to 1 franc 30 centimes a dozen." The sensation was profound, &c.

This huge dictionary—the last work of the popular novelist, dramatist, and boon companion—winds up with a series of *menus* for various sized dinner parties and various seasons. Of the real value of the work one may have some doubts. If no Spaniard could read Don Quixote without laughing, it may also be doubted whether any cook could take up Alexandre Dumas' dictionary without getting absorbed in its pages and keeping his master waiting for his dinner while chuckling over the escapades of Romieu or the gastronomical adventures and disquisitions of the author.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

QUEBEC, AS SEEN BY ENGLISH EYES.

(By a Correspondent of the "Queen.")

I found so many objects of interest in Quebec that I stayed longer than I had intended. On becoming better acquainted with the inhabitants I am inclined to think that there may be a considerable degree of bounce in the saying to which I referred in my last letter, that every "live man" has to carry a Frenchman on his back, for I find the majority of the French polite, well-instructed, and, in fact, pretty well qualified to hold their own in a mixed community. There are few very wealthy families among them; it is impossible that there should be many. The property of parents is very fairly divided, and the average number of children in a family is nine or ten; but it is not uncommon for the number to far exceed this. I am assured by one of his friends that the Attorney-General has twenty-five brothers and sisters older than himself, and he is not at all sure that there have not been others. This gentleman, himself a Frenchman, in a high position under the Government, tells me that he is one of thirteen, and that his father died when his mother was forty. Another gentleman, an eminent lawyer in the province, has mentioned to me an instance of nineteen brothers now living, all painters and carpenters; enough to build and adorn a little wooden city for themselves. But the most extraordinary part of it is that these brothers have, or had, seventeen sisters, making a total of thirty-six children of one father, who was married four times, and who, as I should think, could not have had long intervals of mourning. The people are both healthy and precocious; the girls very generally marry at sixteen, and the result is one which, from my knowledge of France, I never expected to find in a French community.

The total number of the French emigrants to Canada never exceeded ten thousand souls; the first of whom arrived A.D. 1608, and the last about 1750. The descendants of these ten thousand now number quite one and a half millions, of whom about one million are now in the Canadas, and about half a million in the United States. This increase shows conclusively that the natural wealth of the country must be very great to enable working men to support such large families. Despite the severity of the Canadian winter, the climate is very favourable to health, and illness of any kind, except that arising from decided imprudence or old age, is comparatively unknown.

The French churches and chapels of Quebec and its neighbourhood contain some very beautiful paintings. I have never seen anywhere a collection of which the colouring pleased me so well as that in the Seminary Chapel. These works are from one to two hundred years old; their brightness is that of yesterday, and yet it seems to me that time has worked some magic by which their colours are far more perfectly blended than they could have been when they left the hand of the artist. There is also something in the casket which contains these gems. The chapel is as plain as it can well be, and the rich works of art, not overcrowded nor set in gaudy frames, show to far greater advantage than they might do with different surroundings. However objectionable may be to the Protestant the various ceremonies and relics to be found in a French church, it is undoubtedly the place to thoroughly enjoy and appreciate a beautiful picture.

Partly from my visit to the public institutions of Quebec, but mostly from the courtesies of the Premier of the Province, who is also Minister of Public Instruction, I am able to give some details of education which will be of interest to readers of *The Queen*.

The cost of instruction in the classical seminary, of which the chapel thus alluded to forms a part, is less than two guineas a year, and for pupils boarding in the institution, the cost of board, &c., less than sixteen guineas; and there are seventy-two pupils receiving gratuitous instruction. From this seminary, after a course of nine years' instruction, the pupils may proceed to the Laval University, which, in fact, was founded by the authorities of this seminary. This is an incorporated institution, enjoying privileges and immunities similar to those of the English universities. Here instruction, board, medical attendance, &c., amount to from thirty-eight to forty-eight pounds per year. Each student has two neatly-furnished rooms. There are rooms for clubs, &c. A very large hall is devoted to recreation, and there is every convenience which one could reasonably desire. The number of students is about four hundred. This institution, like many others in the Province, is the result of religious zeal and private liberality; and it refuses all assistance from the public funds. There are three Protestant and twelve Roman Catholic classical colleges in the Province. In the greater number of cases, the professors in these colleges are ecclesiastics, who follow their course of theology in the institution in which they act as teachers. These gentlemen are content to receive, as a remuneration, the slender sum of forty dollars—less than eight guineas per annum—besides their board and lodging. This explains how it is that the seminaries can exist, notwithstanding the low rates paid by pupils for tuition and board. As a general rule, the price for tuition and board in these colleges does not reach the sum of twenty pounds, and many young men who are devoid of means are educated gratuitously in them. It is not to be wondered at, with such facilities for obtaining classical attainments, that education of a very superior order should be widely extended in the Province. There are two incorporated Protestant Universities, with about 340 students. These derive some support from the

State, yet the Catholic University bears off the palm for the cheapness of its educational facilities. Female education receives a far greater share of public attention than with us. The annual revenues for the academies for girls are more than £40,000, and in them there are nearly 4,500 girls receiving gratuitous instruction, and about 400 receiving gratuitous board; while more than 400 others are receiving gratuitous board in part. Some other academies are for both sexes, as are also the normal schools for the education of teachers, and the model schools. In round numbers there are 3,500 primary schools for girls and boys, attended by 175,000 pupils, at a cost of as many pounds, defrayed in part by the parents, in part by local funds, and in part by the State. The parents, if able to do so, must pay the school fees whether their children attend or not; and to this extent there is compulsory education. There is also a species of concurrent endowment both of schools and charitable institutions. The Roman Catholics "drive their own team" with almost as much freedom as they wish to do in Ireland, and yet they receive the aid of the State; while the Protestants are placed on precisely the same footing.

The English cathedral, a large ugly stone edifice, is able to boast of several magnificent presents from George III.; it contains also a handsome white marble monument to the memory of the first Bishop of Quebec, and deposited beneath the altar are the remains of a former Governor-General, the unfortunate Duke of Richmond, who died of hydrophobia in 1819.

The old residence of the Governor-General for a couple of centuries has been destroyed by fire, and its extensive site is now a handsome public promenade, with a reasonable proportion of ruins. It is on the brink of a precipice, and commands magnificent views of the St. Lawrence and the opposite hills and distant mountains.

At a little distance from the town are several round towers, erected for military purposes. The city walls are about three miles long, inclosing the old town, but portions of the city extend a considerable distance beyond them. They are now worth, for military or any other purposes than those of the sight-seer, just nothing at all. The citadel was formerly the great fortress of Quebec. Built on the point of Cape Diamond, a great portion of it is protected by perpendicular rocks 30 feet high; even here there is a wall for the protection of guns, and to make assurance doubly sure; the rear, nearly level with the plains, is protected by walls and ditches of such massive construction that it was called the Gibraltar of America, and was supposed to be impregnable. In the American revolution it alone successfully resisted the army of Montgomery, and served to retain the Canadas for the Crown. Its complement of men is ten thousand; there are now one hundred and fifty playing at soldiers within its walls.

Within a few hours' drive of Quebec are more than a dozen lakes and several falls, and other things worth seeing. I should like to describe the Falls of Chaudière, or those of Lorette and the Indian village of that name; but the Falls of Montmorency bear the palm, and I shall try to give some faint idea of them before closing this letter. A drive of about eight miles takes us to the place, and, in going and coming, that English barbarism the tollgate stops our carriage three times, and exacts some three or four shillings. The road is passably good, the views are beautiful, and the land shows signs of high cultivation. When we arrive at the falls we alight, pass within a gate, paying a toll of one shilling for each person, and then wander at will. One of the best views is obtained from a balcony fixed on a projecting rock about 200 feet from the gulf below, and reached by a narrow, crooked flight of wooden stairs, with two rails between us and eternity on either side. A trembling knee, or a false step, might cause one to slide beneath the rail and over the precipice. The water is seen from the balcony, a mingled steam and shower of foam, about seventy-five feet wide, and one hundred and fifty feet in height. At the outer parts there are some few detached jets, whose fall is broken by the rocks, and whose waters, instead of being shivered into foam, become tens of thousands of beautiful opals and pearls of all possible sizes. We pass down the zig-zag path, cross below the falls, the rays of the sun light up the waters, and we see beautiful irises disporting in the mist. In one season of the year a wonderful magician takes possession of the whole neighbourhood. He clothes the precipice for long distances on either side with robes of white and millions of jewels of many-coloured crystals. The gulf becomes a sea of glass, and man acquires the power of ascending a hundred feet into the air, with no other support than the accumulated mist which has risen from the mighty concession of waters.

There would appear to be room for improvement, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in the present method of hanging telegraph wires. The experience of the late storms in the north shows that it is positively dangerous to place telegraph poles as at present fashioned on railway lines. The snow accumulates on the wires, one pole gives way and drags others after it, the wires fall across the rails and become entangled with passing trains, thus adding another to the long list of causes of accidents to which railway passengers are liable. On the Great Northern Railway the other night a fish train from the north to London, near Bawtry station, actually became so entangled in wires that it was brought to a standstill. Moreover, the unhappy train in its struggles knocked a number of telegraph posts on to the down line, and thus blocked the path of a goods train approaching from Doncaster. To add to the confusion, the through mail from Edinburgh to London, being turned on to the down line, caught up the goods train, "tipped" over the guard's van, and threw three trucks one upon the other, but for a wonder killed nobody. This is all very well once in a way, but it should not be repeated, and some means ought to be devised of so fixing telegraph posts that they can do no injury when they assume a recumbent posture.

OUR DIGESTIVE ORGANS.—The result of much scientific research and experiment has within the last few years enabled the medical profession to supply to the human system, where impaired or ineffective, the power which assimilates our food. This is now known as "Morson's Pepsine," and is prescribed as wine, globules, and lozenges, with full directions. The careful and regular use of this valuable medicine restores the natural functions of the stomach, giving once more strength to the body. There are many imitations, but Morson and Son, the original manufacturers, are practical chemists, and the "Pepsine" prepared by them is warranted, and bears their labels and trade-mark. It is sold by all chemists in bottles 3s., and boxes from 2s. 6d., but purchasers should see the name
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