

An ingenious method of simplifying the sale of postage stamps is now proposed in Great Britain. A miniature "penny in the slot" affair has been devised for holding, and upon the penny being dropped, forwarding a stamp. The machine could be attached to the ordinary pillar boxes and would certainly be a great convenience.

Upper Canada is developing a large trade with Bermuda and the West Indies. One extensive flour mill has a standing order to forward five hundred barrels of flour by every steamer leaving Halifax. Freights of all kinds, (bacon, split peas, and carriages), are waiting for some means of transportation. The larger firms in the Islands declare their intention of sending buyers to Canada to obtain their stocks of winter clothing. So long as Halifax holds her place as the depository for West Indian shipments we shall not complain.

Prince Nikita is giving his undivided attention to benefitting his people, the Montenegrins. The natives of Montenegro have long been known as a most sturdy primitive race, and it is with surprise that we learn that insanity is their national curse. The proportion of insane people to the population is higher than in any European country except Switzerland. They are a most nervous and excitable people, and numerous instances are given of insanity arising from some trifling cause. The young Prince is trying to combat the prejudice against insane asylums.

What with the rapid speed of the Ocean Greyhounds, and the proposed inventions for ameliorating the discomforts of life on shipboard, a trip, even to Australia, should be a most enjoyable affair. The objectionable "rolling" is to be done away with by an automatic ballast, and the annoying vibrations will be remedied by changing the position of the engines. With these improvements, and the Philadelphia "fog-annihilator," which by an electric discharge at once (but, alas, not forever) disperses the fog, we can have no more objections to "a life on the ocean wave."

It is not exactly pleasing to hear that the Premier of Quebec has at last succeeded in closing the bar-room at the Quebec House of Parliament. The connection implied by the Montreal *Witness* between the misdeeds of the late regime, and the bountiful supply of liquor formerly on hand, is not creditable to the Province concerned. The Parliamentary restaurant is, as yet, not being run on temperance principles, but instructions have been given to sell no liquors except with meals. A good sweeping reformation in Quebec will do more to efface the late wrong-doing than any half measures.

We trust that the perusal of the touching story of "Black Beauty" will direct the attention of many owners of horses to the care necessary to the health and comfort of these noble animals. A Montreal horse-expert denounces most strongly the over-drawn check-rein. He states that its effect on the horse is injurious, as it forces his head into a most amazing position, and lessens the ease with which the animal can ascend hills. We hope soon to see the check-rein discarded from some of the stylish city turn-outs. The movement, if rightly begun, would be copied far and wide.

Since the primrose became a political posy in England, the lovely blossom has been hunted almost out of existence—many localities in which they were once plentiful showing now but few and poor plants. The wild daffodil, once the glory of the BASSES PYRENEES, has now disappeared before the ravages of root collectors. The edelweiss is vanishing from the Alps, and may be found pressed and labelled in the albums of travellers. Once upon a time, we Halifaxians were very proud of our historic patch of Scotch heather on a bank in the Park, but now, alas, the fuzzy pink blossoms, where are they?

We note the kindly spirit of some Montreal ladies which has led them to benefit the working girls of that city. The "Girls' Lunch Rooms" have been opened for a year, and, except for the initial cost of beginning work, the "Rooms" have been self-supporting. The object has been to supply the customers with comfortable, nourishing food at low prices, and through the "Girls' Social Club," to establish classes in dress-making and cooking, and to supply wholesome reading matter. Pleasant evening entertainments have been given once a month, when games, singing, or "talks" have been enjoyed and ample refreshments passed. There are numbers of hard-working girls in our own city, to whom such a club would be a constant source of pleasure and profit.

Already the Chicago Fair grounds are in order. Eleven of the larger buildings are roofed, the interior decorations begun, and now we hear that the dedicatory ceremonies are arranged. These will take place in the vast machinery hall, and will be most imposing. Famous orators and singers will take part—the architects and chiefs of construction will be formally presented to the President and people, and the President will declare the Exhibition open. A magnificent chorus will render Hayden's "The Heavens are Telling, after which Breckenbridge and others will give the opening orations. The orchestra of professionals will play the patriotic airs, "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "America," while the crowds, who will be unable to secure seats for these exercises, will be appeased by a torch and electric light "Procession of Centuries." It promises to be a world-famous day.

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Eighteen thousand Canadian women have petitioned for suffrage. A short time ago Mrs. McDonnell addressed Premier Abbott at Ottawa on the subject. She spoke ably of the development of women in Canada, of the now lively and intelligent interest taken by them in all matters political, and in their name she demanded the full privilege of citizens. Mr. Abbott is personally in sympathy with the movement, and considers that the longed-for liberty of the ballot will be achieved before long, but he could not promise that the Government would introduce a bill complying with the request during the present session.

Brocklyn is now to have a great public library, founded in a truly American spirit. The Mayor of this "City of Churches" lately called a public meeting and laid the matter fairly before the citizens. As he asked for an initial expenditure of half a million dollars and an endowment of forty thousand a year for this purpose, the request was not lightly agreed to. The city expenditures for paving, lighting, and street-cleaning, have been enormous of late, but the citizens have no hesitation about assuming a fresh charge. The library will be essentially a city undertaking under the control of the Civic authorities. This unique method of founding a library is approved of by many eminent men, among whom are Doctors Stores and Talmage.

A Parliamentary resolution, touching the welfare of life and property at sea, is being very favorably considered by the Government of Great Britain. It is proposed to connect all coast-guard stations and signal offices, both by telephone and telegraph, so that in cases of emergency, instant communication will be assured, and also that several lighthouses should be connected by cable with the mainland. Not long ago, owing to the lack of coast communication, no less than six (6) lifeboat crews set out in a furious gale to do work for which but one boat was required—an instance that could not but weigh with the Government. Sir Edward Birkbeck, the promoter of the resolution, points out that Denmark has a better system of protection to the mariners than any European nation. We consider that too much care cannot be taken of the salvors who face the dangers of the deep, and whose work, indirectly, is a distinct benefit to every member of the civilized world.

New and improved workingmen's institutions have been originated by Mr. P. R. Buchanan, and already seven clubs are in existence, with a membership of 5,000. The scheme is similar to the "tied house" principle between breweries and public houses under their control, and is known as the Tee-To-Tum movement. Each institution contains a cost-price restaurant (non-alcoholic) a more elegant café and lunch counters, and a club room for the workmen. A large hall is another necessity, and lectures, dramatic entertainments, concerts, and dances (if thought expedient) are provided by the management, who, of course, have the moral elevation of the members always in view. Reading rooms and libraries, billiard and bagatelle rooms are also provided, and one club, at Stamford Hill, Conn., which boasts a bicycle track, is especially popular. Wondrous to relate these clubs are self-supporting, and we await further information on the subject with great interest.

It is time the cause of Canadian literature was upheld against that of Australia, at least as far as poetry is concerned. We have, it must be conceded, no novelist, unless Miss Duncan's "American Girl in London" is regarded as a novel; but a critical comparison of Australian poetry with ours can leave no doubt in the mind of a reasonable observer that Canada deserves double the meed of praise which is now given to Australia. Even Douglas Sladen, who did not do Canada justice in his selections from her poets, has failed to compile a volume from the best work of his own people such as Canada could produce. To anyone who will read Adam Lindsay Gordon, Haloran, Horne, Shepard, indeed any Australian, and then will compare them with Bliss Carman, Roberts, Isabella Valancy Crawford, there can be no question as to whom the supremacy properly belongs. Kendall is the only Australian who can approach to Bliss Carman in felicity of expression, and even his work falls far below such poems as "Death in April" and the "Red Swan." If Mr. James Payn and other critics would search the Canadian literature as they search Australian for the blossom of genius in the colonies, their opinions might undergo a change.

Lady Henry Somerset has returned to England after a six months' tour in America, full of schemes for future temperance work. The first International Conference of the Women's Christian Temperance Union is now being held, and through the efforts of the noble lady, it is hoped that a broader spirit will be introduced in temperance organizations. She proposes to form a league in which all societies that teach temperance doctrines, such as the Salvation Army, the Missions to Soldiers, Sailors and Navvies and the Bar-Maids' Associations, will be included. Through the united efforts of this league she expects to rouse great enthusiasm throughout Great Britain. The military methods of the Salvation Army please her greatly, though to organize a similar system for the W. C. T. U. in conservative Britain will be a great undertaking. Another novel idea is the "School of Methods," which she proposes to found. In it, temperance lecturers, or workers, would be taught how to hold and control public meetings and the details of their chosen work. Such a school could not but be a benefit to the temperance cause, for it would quickly weed out the hysterical and fanatical women whose talk so often does more harm than good.

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