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To our Readers.

With this number we commence our sixth volume, and our readers will notice a substantial increase in the size of this issue—an increase from 16 to 24 pages. This, together with a marked improvement in the quality of the paper, will show that our efforts to maintain a high-class illustrated weekly, thoroughly national in every way, are meeting with practical appreciation. Much, however, has still to be gained in this direction, and we trust that our subscribers and readers will bear in mind the mutual relations between them and the publishers, both having the same object—the success of Canadian literature—and will do their utmost to extend the circulation of our journal. It should be found in the house of every intelligent family in the Dominion. The space gained by the enlargement will enable us to devote more attention to fiction and similar articles of a thoroughly popular character, while fully maintaining the literary and artistic features to which we have in the past devoted special care. To this end we have purchased the exclusive right for Canada for the publication of a series of new and brilliant serial stories, by leading English authors, to be continued throughout the year. Robert Buchanan, Hawley Smart, W. Clark Russell, Geo. Manville Fenn, who, with other prominent writers, will contribute serials to our columns, are known all over the English-speaking world as being in the front rank of novelists; and we feel sure our readers will cordially welcome the weekly contributions which will appear from such able pens.

The Grand Trunk Railway.

The *Gazette* of Monday announced the resignation of Sir Joseph Hickson as General Manager of the Grand Trunk Railway. Sir Joseph has been connected with the Railway for the past 30 years, and its success under his sole management has been uniform and marked, both as to its great extension and the improvement in its condition in all respects. Sir Joseph Hickson will be succeeded by Mr. L. J. Seargent, who has filled the important position on the Grand Trunk of Traffic Manager since 1874, giving him a familiarity with the workings of the road.

Thoughts for the New Year.

A new year is upon us. To most persons the habit of a certain amount of retrospect of the one just closed, and a set of more or less faintly-outlined resolutions for the future, are indulged in, not as a mere venture, but as the natural sequence of a sharply defined division in time. With the past nothing can be done. Its deeds are irrevocably stamped on our life-histories. But the lessons that may be drawn from them by every thoughtful mind can, if rightly used, so temper and influence our future, that a habit of quiet and earnest effort towards personal and family improvement should result from the study of the old year's direct effects on each of us.

It has been the fashion of late to caricature and decry New Year's resolutions; but such is mere flippancy, and a result of the prevalent rivalry in the manufacture of so-called "comic" articles. In a national sense, the review of the year shows our steady growth in every vigorous function. It is impossible to overlook the fact that the colonial feeling is largely a thing of the past—replaced, more especially in the minds of our young men, by a strong sense of nationality—using that word in its widest and most elevated sense. Every year of late has added to this sentiment; it is now deep-rooted, and we firmly believe will abide as the slowly-formed but permanent conviction of the great majority. God grant that it may be so. With the pride we should have in acknowledging to all that we are Canadians nothing is detracted from our more honourable birthright as British subjects; and no more decided proof of the compatibility of the two can be found than in the growth side-by-side in the inner hearts of our people of the two sentiments—Canadian and British. The strongly marked feeling of pride in Canada has grown up almost entirely within the last twenty or twenty-five years, the last ten of which have especially contributed to its present status. Truly, we have much of which to be proud, and it requires but a slight mental stock-taking to make this evident to even our most lugubrious pessimist. The advantages of our natural position in the hardy north, with the finest water privileges on the continent; a magnificent diversity of prairie and woodland; a soil fertile to a great degree; forests, unequalled on the continent; a system of public works covering every part of the country and of the most substantial nature; railways, excelled by none, and fast becoming the popular link between Britain and Asia; banking institutions and a merchant marine which would be creditable to a nation of three times our population: all these should make our people a proud and patriotic race. Descended from men who sacrificed all their worldly goods for honour and principle, the spirit of true liberty is our heritage, and with a system of government combining substantial freedom with an orderly and constitutional administration, we have nothing to wish towards bettering the system by which we are ruled. We can thus not only look back with pride to the year just closed, but can look forward to 1891 with confidence, if we are true to ourselves and do not permit the words of a few unpatriotic croakers to turn us aside from the honourable road to national greatness.

In Darker Africa.

The Stanley controversy still drags along, and each work or speech on the subject throws into greater obscurity the question of responsibility for the blunders committed. With the recently published vindication of Major Bartellot by his brother, the publication of Mr. Jameson's diary in London last week, and Mr. Stanley's counter-statements, the whole matter appears to be in a hopeless muddle. No doubt there are exaggerations on both sides, but the charges of cruelty laid against the two dead subordinates and gross mis-management against the chief have certainly tarnished the effect of the great journey. The extracts telegraphed from Mr. Jameson's diary and correspondence show Mr. Stanley's management of the expedition in anything but a favourable light, and appear to thoroughly answer the charges he made against his two dead lieutenants. It is well, however, to bear in mind while criticising the means, that the results have been of great value and added very materially to our knowledge of the great continent traversed.

Newfoundland.

The present position of matters with regard to the French Shore trouble in Newfoundland is anything but satisfactory. Lord Knutsford's recent despatch gives practically no consolation whatever to the justly-incensed Islanders; for, while he informs them that negotiations with France have been opened, he lets them know plainly that the matter will be settled—if settled at all—by the Imperial Government without any dictation or instruction from the colonists. While the whole question in its general bearing can, it is true, be only settled

through the regular diplomatic channels—the French having legal rights which cannot be ignored—there can be only one result, be it quick or slow in coming: the foreign rights on the Island must be entirely wiped out, and the colonists have exclusive control in every nook and corner of the land. If this finale comes soon and be the result of the energy and diplomatic skill of Her Majesty's Government, the people of Newfoundland will welcome it as a proof that the Mother Country is still determined to protect and foster her smaller colonies and to see that every injustice and impediment to their progress is removed; the feeling of attachment to Britain, now, we fear, at a very low ebb, will fast revive and swell into a flood of loyalty. Should the Imperial authorities require to be goaded into arranging the wished-for removal of French rights, and its consummation be delayed, the present dormant state of their loyalty cannot be expected to flash out bright and clear when each concession is wrung out in the slowest and most laborious manner. A revival of the spirit which actuated the immortal Chatham and his equally great son is wanted in Downing-street. Manifest injustice to the smallest colony under the Union Jack would be quickly remedied, no matter whether its application meant vast sums from the wealth of the Empire or even more decisive and practical measures. It is highly probable that had Newfoundland's manifest destiny in becoming one of the British North American confederation been carried out ten years ago the whole trouble would have been quietly and quickly settled. The eldest and biggest son in a family would generally have something decided and vigorous to say if an ulcer had to be removed from one of his limbs; the same happening to a smaller brother, the big boy might be told by the stern parent that he had no right to interfere. With Canada's extent, population and influence, and with her very able representation in London, the interests of any of her members would be morally certain to receive a degree of swift and practical attention, never accorded (unfortunately) to the smaller crown colonies. It is not likely that the addition of Newfoundland to the confederation would be a source of gain—on the contrary, it is extremely possible that financially we would be heavy losers—but it would be the realization of what our highest statesmen in days gone by long looked for—the welding of all the scattered British colonies north of line 45 into one compact nation.

Mr. Parnell.

In the overwhelming defeat administered to Mr. Scully on the 22nd December, Mr. Parnell has met with such a sharp check that the result must be a most decided damper to his hopes of recovering the leadership of the Home Rule party, as many voters throughout the island, undecided or indifferent as to which leader to follow, will be apt to cast their ballots for Mr. McCarthy's candidates in coming elections on the principle of wishing to be on the winning side. To the large number in Canada and elsewhere who care but little whether Home Rule be granted or not, the struggle between the two factions has but little interest apart from the aggressive picturesqueness which so vividly marked most of the incidents of the contest. Many who were not by any means in accord with Mr. Parnell's actions in Irish matters have warmly admired the persistence he has recently shown in refusing to acquiesce in his deposition from the leadership of his party, and his plucky fight all along the line. He will, however, rapidly lose sympathy if he adheres to the startlingly radical measure of Home Rule he has recently promulgated—radical to a degree which cannot but meet the emphatic disapproval of all advocates of Imperial unity. The action of one of his lieutenants in waving an American flag at a recent meeting—thus pandering to the disloyal element in the audience—cannot be too strongly condemned. What the British people (we use the word in its broadest sense) wish is to see Ireland prosperous, contented and loyal to the Crown; and to attain these conditions moderate men will look with great favour on any plan acceptable to the Irish people.