

dant energy which will enable her to carry out to a successful issue any enterprise in which she may choose to engage." It was, in a word, the act of the private individual who is suspected to have been severely "bit" in some perilous speculation, and who seeks to convince his neighbours of his solvency, and even of his indifference to what has happened, by giving a dinner-party of a more than usually sumptuous character. Another might have been to amuse the people, to interest them in something which would divert their minds from embroiling party questions, and unite all classes in a centre of common interest. Perhaps, too, there was a desire to give the Republic a certain *éclat* and distinction by compelling the recognition of it by the crowned heads of the other nations of Europe in a marked and flattering manner. Some questions of the profit likely to accrue to the nation by the influx of strangers, and the impetus which would thereby be given to the trade of Paris, also lurked at the bottom of the whole as an unexpressed but distinctly recognized motive. Still another reason suggests itself, viz., a desire on the part of the Government to turn the mind of the people from military glory, to the results of solid industry.

All this is clear enough; the only curious thing about it is that France should have decided on trying an experiment in a direction in which it appeared impossible that anything new could be achieved, and by appealing to an already palled and jaded taste. It was, to say the least of it, a bold venture. People have grown sick of Exhibitions. To some it is a positive objection to visiting Paris this year, that the Exhibition is "on." It seemed, therefore, like taking great trouble and incurring vast expense with very doubtful results. Happily for France, there seems every prospect that the prognostications of those who foresaw failure will not be justified. There is every appearance of success. The audacity of the idea has created interest in it, and Europe, the United States and our own Canada have responded with enthusiasm to the invitation to take part in a "big" undertaking.

Looking at this superb "revival"—to use a stage phrase—which may possibly form the striking close of the Era of Exhibitions, it is natural that we should try to get at some estimate of the value of these national displays. To do this we must discard from the mind the popular notion of them as gigantic shows, or forms of entertainment for the public. That they have served this purpose among others is true, and the monetary success of an Exhibition must always depend on the power of attracting the masses. But that is not the main object. Very far from it. The mind of a nation is enlarged and refined by the contemplation of beautiful objects and interesting national products, and in that sense an Exhibition is educational. That is one object served. But the main purpose is to bring together the scientific and art products of many nations, so that one may learn from another, and, by comparison of the highest efforts of each in every branch of industry, all may attain to higher levels of perfection. When the English Great Exhibition was organized, this had to be insisted on as the great result which would attend it. People were incredulous. They thought it would be a "fine sight," but doubted if anything practical would come from it. An army of lecturers swarmed over the country talking a great deal of nonsense, as it was then thought, about the "good" to be achieved; but the success was, after all, due to an appeal to the organ of wonder. Every one was curious, and every one went. Perhaps ninety-nine out of every hundred came away satisfied with having seen the Show, but no better and no worse for it, any more than they would have been had they gone to a display of fireworks. Still, looking back over nearly thirty years, nothing is so clear as that the Great Exhibition exercised a wonderful influence over the whole world,—an influence which is felt to this day.

To understand this, it is necessary to realize the state of things in art and in manufacture a quarter of a century ago. Dickens has in one of his novels the incident of a room being locked up on a certain wedding day, and not disturbed for many years after. Now, supposing a room so closed—say, in 1851,—and opened in this present year of grace, what should we find? Why, that everything about it indicated a low state of the public taste. The paper on the walls, the pattern of the carpet, the style of the furniture, the ornaments on the mantelpiece, the articles of table use, the pictures and the picture-frames,—everything would tell the same tale. From the time of Queen Anne a steady deterioration in the arts set in. The Georges—from the one who hated "boetry and bainting," down to the "first gentleman of Europe"—did nothing to arrest it; the opening of the century found us grovelling in the lowest depths of culture,—poor in architecture, in painting, in sculpture; poor in all the arts of design. There was a slight stirring of the national intelligence in the early years of Victoria's reign; but we were still deplorably low in the intellectual scale for the first half of the century. With the Exhibition of 1851 came an absolute awakening. It gave a fresh impulse to invention, to enterprise, and to the arts, that has gone on increasing in force unto this day. What is the consequence? Why, that the homes of all classes have certainly been improved somewhat, and at any rate the hideously coloured plaster of Paris cats, cows, &c., have been banished. There is beauty in form, in colour and texture, in the commonest articles of household use. Ingenuity has been quickened, the world has been ransacked for objects to imitate or improve upon, and it is not too much to say that there is more pleasure and greater interest to be found in looking in a shop window now, than many a museum in the past had the capacity to afford.

I am not among those who insist on the identity between culture and morals. A good deal of "sweetness and light" may be found in connection with depravity. Still, it is well to refine. The tendency of culture is good, and the enjoyment of life is greatly heightened when you can surround it with what is beautiful and soul-satisfying. A beautiful thing may be just as cheap as an ugly one. It costs no more to give a jug the lines of beauty than those of deformity. Colours which blend harmoniously are as cheap as those which are hideous in association. The ingenious is not necessary more costly than that which is clumsy and inconvenient. All that was needed was that the world should be roused out of its apathy so as to use its wits, and educated sufficiently to prefer the beautiful to the repulsive, and to seize the best forms of production, instead of being content with those of a ruder and less cultivated time. The great value of every Exhibition is that it educates, and though its effects may not be so marked, much will be learned from the great gathering at Paris which will show us Art and Industry brought up to the latest point in the world's progress.

H. M.

MONTREAL HARBOUR, TRADE, AND SHIPPING.

The stranger on a visit to our City, who has admired from the deck of the steamboat which carries him to our wharves, the noble river front, should not neglect to give up a portion at least of one day to the inspection of the harbour; and we believe no sight to be seen in Montreal will better repay the time expended than such an inspection. Montreal can boast such specimens of naval architecture, in the noble steam and sailing ships which make their regular voyages to our City, as cannot be compared, we believe, in any other port in the world, and much time can be profitably passed in their examination, and also in noting the great despatch given these craft in discharging their inward cargoes, and in loading them for their homeward voyage with the many products which Canada exports so largely, in payment for the merchandize she does not produce nor manufacture, but is obliged to import from abroad.

We shall attempt a description of the Montreal wharves as they appeared a quarter of a century since, and as they now are, and also attempt to show by comparison how much the shipping, and the facilities offered the shipping trade here have improved and increased.

In 1854 the bulk of the sea-going vessels was berthed at piers extending from a point opposite the old Custom House to another nearly abreast the store lately occupied by Messrs. Lord, Magor & Munn, and about one hundred yards below the office of the Allan line of steamers. The wharves at that date were not the solid looking structures they now are, yet were backed by the noble revetment walls which were built about the year 1840, and which still look as if they would grace the river front for many a year. The class of ships in those days was small in size, compared with the floating palaces which now come to us, but this diminished tonnage was not owing to want of energy in those controlling the trade, but to the fact that the small depth of water in the channel of Lake St. Peter did not admit of the passage through it of larger vessels, and it was not considered necessary then to go the expense of having deeper water in the harbour of Montreal than was to be found in the new cut on Lake St. Peter.

The late Honourable John Young, to whom our City owes much of her present prosperity, had for some years previous to the date of which we write, devoted much of his time and untiring energy to the successful prosecution of this pet scheme of his; the making and deepening of a straight channel through Lake St. Peter, and although continually sneered at and told frequently that the current would fill each winter with deposits the small cut made during each summer, he persevered with the defective appliances then at the disposal of the Board of Harbour Commissioners and their Engineers, and had, by the season of 1854, succeeded in deepening a channel so that vessels drawing about sixteen feet could come with comparative safety to our port. When we stop to consider that the straight channel was cut in the bottom of the Lake for a distance of over twenty miles, we can realize the energy of the man who could plan out such an undertaking, and afterwards carry it through so successfully. Yet, even in 1854, with the wonderful improvements which had been effected, the new channel was very far from what it is at the present date, and the vessels then employed in our regular trade, small tonnage as they were, comparatively speaking, were obliged to discharge at Quebec into lighters a considerable part of their cargoes when bound for this port, and also had to take a portion of their outward cargoes for shipment in river craft so soon as the Lake was safely passed through.

A brisk business was thus done by the river craft, at rates much higher, per ton and barrel, than those paid at present, and even with the assistance thus rendered, ships very frequently grounded, or sheered athwart the channel, causing thereby a heavy bill of expense to their owners, and giving Montreal the reputation of being a very expensive port.

But gradually the channel was dredged deeper, under the skilful superintendence of the late Captain Bell, so well known and respected at that time, and with the deepened channel and the larger class of ships using it, came the necessity for an extension of the wharves, and the deepening of the water alongside them. In 1852 an attempt had been made to establish a line of steamships to run between our port and that of Liverpool, and several steamships were placed on the berth for that purpose, and a contract for carrying the mails was entered into by the Government at Quebec. But unfortunately for themselves, as well as for the Canadian public of that day, the contracting Liverpool house, instead of building steamships suitable for the trade, which would be likely to attract a passenger and freight traffic and foster it when once secured, did not realize the magnitude of the great prize in their grasp, but chartered small powered steamships, which made slow voyages, and did not offer such advantages as would make them compete successfully with the long established and popular Cunard line, whose vessels sailed at that time weekly, and alternately from Boston and New York.

The names of these steamers first placed on the St. Lawrence route were the "Sarah Sands," "Genova," "Charity," and some others whose names we have forgotten. The first of these, the "Sarah Sands," had been in the Pacific trade, having taken out passengers to San Francisco in 1849, was never a fast vessel, and was with the others quite unfitted to inaugurate a trade which promised so fairly as did that in which they were employed by their charterers, and the consequence naturally was, that in spite of all the exertions made by the popular and well-known agent, the late David Bethune, Esq., the new line of old vessels did not satisfy the travelling public, nor the Government, and finally after an existence, as a line, of some three years, the owners threw up the contract, and new tenders were asked for the more efficient carrying out of the contract of carrying the mails, by full-powered steamships. For many years previous to this time the carrying trade here had been virtually controlled by the large shipping firm of Edmiston, Allan & Co., the managing partner of which firm, Mr. Hugh Allan, had often differed with the Honourable John Young, as to the advisability or thoroughness of the scheme of the latter to deepen the Lake St. Peter channel. But, though he thus differed with him, he was not slow to take advantages offered by the deepened channel, and had, as the increasing trade demanded, increased the size of the new vessels added to his line of sailing ships, although he was at all times slow to admit the truth of