

heroic attractiveness of Gladstone's character, for the author is known to be a Canadian Tory. In the volume before us we have nearly five hundred pages of worshipful narrative by a Conservative, while in the preface a representative member of the most pronounced wing of the Canadian Liberal party, burns incense made from all the sweet spices of adulation to the former hope of "stern, unbending Tories." The greatness of the man has long commanded varied homage and mocked even enemies into reverence of his splendid powers and strenuous nature. But though Mr. Hopkins is an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Gladstone, the narrative before us is not uncritical. He sees the spots in the sun, but this does not cool the ardour of his veneration any more than looking through the telescope at Kensington would damp the devotion of a fervid disciple of Zoroaster. Twenty-six years ago a young London journalist who had been brought up in a Tory house, but who having heard Gladstone in the House of Commons in 1867-8-9, wrote, shortly after the publication of "Juventus Mundi," an article for a London Liberal newspaper on the great parliamentary leader, who was then at the zenith of his power and greater than perhaps he ever showed afterwards. The next day the principal proprietor of the paper happened to call at the office and said to the editor that no doubt Gladstone was a very great man, but they did not think him a god. It was impossible for a generous nature to hear him speak in the House of Commons, and, as it turned out on the platform, without coming under a spell. Nor should one think well of the young man who could study his life without taking fire as the drama unfolded itself, illustrated by achievements so great and scenes so striking, its fatality touching to regret rather than stirring to indignation, and Achilles "swift of foot" dies from a wound in the heel. Mr. Gladstone's eulogists would claim for him special distinction as a high, moral statesman, yet the impartial historian in estimating his life as a public man may be forced to say that the only standpoint from which the shadow of failure falls on his great personality is that of ethics.

The mass of readers will not apply to a life so varied and successful a close analysis, while in private and public it affords what may honestly be held to be desirable instruction and example. Blameless in all relations, from youth to age, from schoolboy to Premier of the mightiest of empires, he shows what purpose and labour can do. His life especially teaches the valuable lesson—how usefully and with what profit to oneself and the State literary activity may be combined with politics. But its greatest value is that it is calculated to inspire—to excite to enthusiasm—which is the mainspring of great deeds.

This is not the place to discuss his changes of opinion, his extraordinary and convenient facility for conviction. Admit all the blemishes in his life, and yet it stands out that of the greatest politician of the nineteenth century, with which we ought all to be familiar and familiarity with which is calculated to make us better politicians and better men.

We were about to close here. But we have omitted one of the most interesting features in Gladstone's career. He is the vast link connecting the era of parliamentary rule with platform rule. Sir Edward Russell said to the writer in 1868, as we sat in the gallery of the House of Commons, that he thought Gladstone specially capable of swaying large masses of people from the stump—placing him above Bright in capacity in this direction, who, however, was certainly a greater orator. It turned out Sir Edward Russell was right. The Oxford Double First became a great Tribune, and easily foremost as a manager of large public meetings. He even helped to bring in the era of the stump which is now glorified in all Anglo-Saxon communities. He is to-day one of the last, if not the last, of a group of great men who illustrated parliamentary life in the stately days of Peel and Canning. He is the first and greatest of those who have ruled England and the Empire by means of the heated bema of the platform.

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

Letters to the Editor.

DELEND A EST CARTHAGO.

SIR,—In referring to an article which appeared in your issue of October 25, under the heading *Delenda est Carthago*, I do not wish to be understood as expressing any opinion as to whether or not the reasons there given for American hostility to things British are well or ill-founded, but I desire

to ask the question: Supposing them to be well-founded what practical object is there to be gained by, figuratively speaking, "jabbing one's finger" at the American Eagle? It may be taken for granted that the Americans will continue in the future, as in the past, to follow a policy looking towards what they conceive to be their own interests exclusively—in fact, a selfish policy; but is there anything surprising in this? are not all nations more or less selfish? It seems to me that other civilized nations owe a debt of gratitude to the United States. Have they not during the last fifty years swallowed an awful dose consisting of the dregs of surplus European humanity? Are they not to-day in the throes of acute indigestion as a consequence, struggling to assimilate these dregs and make good citizens out of the scum of Christendom? I think that the Americans deserve our sympathy and best wishes for their success in the contract they have undertaken. Without wishing to underestimate any danger there may be to the British Empire from the ill-will of the bad element amongst Americans, it seems to me that other dangers are much more imminent and that our time and surplus energy would be far better employed in devising means to meet the dangers with which we are actually face to face. If the British Empire is to be dismembered, it matters little who strikes the blow. That power, or combination of powers, only can strike the blow who can defeat us on the sea; the moment we are weaker at sea than any possible combination of our rivals, we may make up our minds that we shall be attacked. The safety not only of Great Britain, but of each and all of her dependencies is centred in the British navy, and in its ability to command the sea. Ironclads, nowadays, take a long time to build. It is next to impossible to build and equip a battleship in a less period than two years. The fate of nations, when an appeal is made to the sword under modern conditions of warfare, is settled in a much shorter time. Consequently, at any given time we must fight with whatever ships and guns we have at hand. It will be too late then to find out that our navy is not as powerful as we had imagined it to be. In 1897, unless Great Britain puts forward a tremendous effort in the meantime, the combined fleets of France and Russia will slightly preponderate. The points of friction between these powers and Great Britain are far more numerous and the defeats they have suffered at her hands far more galling than is the case with any other powers. How solicitous, then, from every motive, material as well as sentimental, should all her sons be for the maintenance of a British navy equal to any task it may have to perform. Do we, as Canadians, fully realize the importance of this question? The question of the food supply of Great Britain in case of war is attracting attention. The Dominion of Canada forms the natural base of supply for food, seeing that the North Atlantic route, of all the trade routes of the world, is the one which, by its shortness and situation, can be most easily defended. The establishment of a powerful fleet of mercantile cruisers between Canada and Great Britain, will secure Britain's food supply and at the same time develop the resources of Canada. To that policy should the statesmen of both countries address themselves. The branch of the Navy League now being formed in Toronto will perform the duty of calling public attention to the discussion of these vitally important matters. Branches of the same League are starting up all over the Empire.

H. J. WICKHAM,

Secretary pro tem.,

Navy League, Toronto Branch.

Toronto, Oct. 30th, 1895.

"AN ASSUMPTION OF THE OPPONENTS OF SEPARATE SCHOOLS" ANSWERED.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me space in your excellent paper to reply to the treatment of the above subject as it appears in a communication of your issue of the 11th inst.? One who signs himself "C." reviews the letters of Principal Grant recently published in the *Toronto Globe* on the Manitoba School Question, and finally deals with what he terms a "fundamental argument of the opponents of Separate Schools." "The denominational system of public education was entirely swept away," said Mr. Blake in his argument before the Privy Council. "Was it possible to say that rights or privileges of the Roman Catholic minority had not been interfered with or prejudiced by that change?" And yet Mr. Blake was not asking the court to say what the interference or prejudice was. When the Lord Chancellor declared what