

when the horrors of an almost scientifically determined Day of Judgment could arouse poetic impulses, was indeed "more discouraging than it is in Canada to-day," with her half dozen names which might be given, beside those of Roberts and Carman.

The retort is well deserved. With their usual flippancy and shallowness, many of these pedagogues beyond the lines sneer at Canadian letters, and affect to ignore their very existence. Indeed, their ignorance is not simulated; it is real. If it comes to comparison between the two countries, the game of scoffing can be played by two. The United States have been an independent nation for more than a hundred years, with the enjoyment of every advantage which wealth and free institutions can impart, and yet it is not more than forty or fifty years since that they can lay claim to the merit of a national literature. A few of the fathers of this literature are still living—Bancroft, Whittier, Curtis and Lowell. While the literary activity is doubtless very great in all departments, especially in light novelettes and journalism, American critics are the first to complain that they have not yet produced a writer of creative genius, and very few that have reached the highest levels of excellence. We shall be more liberal than this. For us Longfellow is unsurpassed as a poet in modern times. Hawthorne is, doubtless, the *only* purely American novelist, although there are many story tellers. Webster and Calhoun were giants of oratory, such as Greece, Rome or Parliamentary England never excelled. All this is cheerfully admitted, but still American professors ought to be careful, and must admit that the literary and intellectual harvest is not in proportion with the opportunities which they have enjoyed.

Here in Canada, our nationality does not date back much above a score of years. We have not yet celebrated the first five and twenty years of our life as a nation. And still, within that brief span, within the bounds of one generation, under the eyes of middle-aged men, who, like the writer, have watched the young Confederacy from its cradle to its present majority, Canadian literature has grown into a living entity, a potential factor, and a future arbiter of the destinies of this youthful and buoyant Dominion. Every province, even the youngest, has furnished its contingent. The literary awakening, especially in the field of fancy and imagination, throughout the Maritime Provinces, rises to the dignity of a phenomenon, and we would not need to go out of the pages of the *DOMINION ILLUSTRATED* for examples of this poetic blossoming in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. In Quebec there has been a keen rivalry between the French and English speaking populations, with the result that our pen could write out, without stopping, over a dozen names, in this business city of Montreal, of men who have helped, by their writings, to mould, raise and establish the framework of a Canadian literature. The Ontario names could be written out with like ease, and the claims of Toronto to be called the Athens or Boston of Canada, cannot well be gainsaid. We shall strike a balance, however, and Montreal will be content to remain, in literature and business, the New York of the Dominion.

While we deprecate the system of wholesale praise for every little book of poems that pours out—as they have done latterly—there is no

doubt that much excellent work in verse has been done of late and, within the past five or six years, at least half a dozen names have sprung into fame. This is a satisfactory record, and on it we establish the solid claims of Canadian literature.

HERE AND THERE.

FR. VISSANI'S BEARD.—"Do you see that man across the street with the gray beard?" said a well known lawyer to a N.Y. *Sun* reporter. He is Very Rev. Charles A. Vissani, the commissariat of the Holy Land, and he is here making arrangements to lead the first American pilgrimage to Palestine next February. Six months ago his face was as smooth as my boy's, and the other day, when I met him on the street, I couldn't imagine what had induced him to grow a beard until I remembered the proposed pilgrimage to Palestine. The Turks, who rule there, respect a beard, and a clean-shaven man is looked upon as one who has undergone penance for his misdeeds. All the Franciscan fathers in the Holy Land wear beards.

TOAST.—Toasting bread destroys the yeast germs and converts the starch into a soluble substance which is incapable of fermentation. Dry toast will not sour the stomach, nor produce any discomfort, and is, therefore, more agreeable to a weak digestion than any other bread.

MISUSE OF WORDS.—A prominent example of a word that has been wrongly used by some one and taken up in its new sense by others, until its original meaning is nearly lost sight of, is the much used word "humanitarian," which is by the great majority of people supposed to refer to one who is interested in humane efforts, but the definition given by Webster and Worcester of this word is "one who denies the divinity of Christ." "Lurid" is another word commonly misused. The average newspaper reporter, who, in describing a fire, writes of "the lurid flames gleaming against the midnight sky," is evidently unaware that the dictionary definition of the word lurid is "pale, gloomy, dismal."

TORONTO IN 1805.—Mr. Patterson, an old Toronto man, called upon the Mayor of that city, and produced an official manuscript census of the town of York for 1805. This manuscript came to him from his grandfather. At that time the population was 473, made up as follows: Adult males, 119; adult females, 82; male children over 16, 8; female children over 16, 21; male children under 16, 108; female children under 16, 81; servants, 54.

MONEY IN FAUST.—Antoine de Choudens, the head of a well-known music-publishing firm in Paris, who died the other day, owed his fortune to his shrewdness and courage in publishing Gounod's "Faust." He invested all the money he possessed, \$2,000, in this enterprise, and in the course of his lifetime received at least \$500,000 as his share of the profits, to say nothing of the present value of the copyrights.

SCOTCH PEASEMEAL.—The Scotch are large consumers of peasemeal, which they make into bannocks or brose, good for hungry people and racy to the taste. When the wheat crop is short and flour is dear, both oatmeal and peasemeal might be used to advantage in more Canadian families than have ever tried them.

ALPHABETS.—The Sandwich Island alphabet has only 12 letters; the Burmese, 19; the Italian, 20; the Bengalese, 21; the Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, Samaritan and Latin, 22 each; the French, 23; the Greek, 24; the German and Dutch, 26 each; the Spanish and Slavonic, 27 each; the Arabic has 28; the Persian and Coptic, 32; the Georgian, 35; the Armenian, 38; the Russian, 41; the Muscovite, 43; the Sanscrit and Japanese, 50; the Ethiopic and Tartaric, 202.

It is reported that Adelina Patti has purchased the chateau of Chenonceaux, and that she is going to live there after leaving her Welsh castle. The chateau is the most romantic and picturesque spot in all Touraine. The castle itself is of Gothic architecture, and is perched right on the bridge over the Cher River. It was until recently owned by Mme. Pelouze, the sister of M. Daniel Wilson, ex-President Grévy's notorious son-in-law.

THE HEAVY AND LIGHT BRIGADES.

Mr. H. J. Woodside, of Portage la Prairie, writes as follows of the day of Balaklava: If I remember Kinglake rightly, Lord Lucan who commanded the cavalry, directed Scarlett's charge of the Heavy Brigade or Scots' Dragoons and Enniskilleners in the forenoon, against the Russian squadrons of cavalry, which was supplemented by a charge from the Royal Irish and Regiments of cavalry. It was during this inaction of the Light Brigade that Lord Cardigan "was damning the Heavies," and chafing to take part in the fray. His time came in the afternoon, when Lord Lucan sent Captain Nolan with the order over which so much controversy has arisen, but which appears to have been an order for the Light Brigade to charge or threaten some Russian batteries on one side of the valley. It was only when Lord Lucan, with feelings of dismay, saw the Light Brigade sweep forward in magnificent array, and disappear into the Valley of Death, that he comprehended the terrible mistake, and advanced his heavy squadrons to their support as far as he dare, even until they came under the fire of some of the Russian guns, on the crest of the banks of the valley, which had just been firing on the Light Brigade, until they were past them, and poured like a lava tide between the guns in front of them. So great was the effect of this splendid charge upon the Russians, that infantry battalions, a mile and a quarter away, on the slopes, were thrown into square to receive cavalry, and their cavalry and Cossacks, massed a short distance behind the guns assaulted, were apparently afraid to break their formation to capture the fragments of the Light Brigade, or to intercept stragglers on their return to where the Heavy Brigade was awaiting them. Kinglake gives great credit to the French Chasseurs d'Afrique for a brilliant charge which "crumpled" up all the Russian batteries on one side of the valley. The French advance causing all these batteries to limber and move off, thereby secured immunity from that quarter for what was left of the Light Brigade on its return. Kinglake, I believe, argues that this was the charge which the latter should have made, and the French officer quickly saw the blunder, and did what he could to avert some of the consequences.

In conclusion I must congratulate the publishers of the *DOMINION ILLUSTRATED* on the excellent paper they publish. I have been a subscriber from the first number and would not be without it now. Wishing you every success as a Canadian enterprise, etc.

LITERARY NOTES.

Doctor John G. Bourinot, clerk of the House of Commons of Canada, will read a paper on "The Federal Experiment in Canada," before the American Historical Association at Washington.

Mr. Douglas Brymer, the Dominion Government archivist, passed through Montreal, the other day, on his way to Washington, where he will read a paper on the Archives, before the American Historical Society.

In the October number of the *King's College Record*, the editor, Goodridge B. Roberts, begins a series of studies on "Canadian Poets," and takes up Heavysage first, as quite fitting. The chief facts are given, and the appreciation of a man of genius is fitting.

Mr. John A. Dales, Walkerton, has been appointed modern language master at the Collegiate Institute, at a salary of \$1,000. He is a graduate of Toronto University. Mr. Brough, Ottawa, undergraduate of Queen's, has been appointed English master; salary, \$750.

Jno. G. Whittier, the venerable poet, has reached his 81st birthday at his winter home at Oak Knoll, one of his favourite resorts, near Danvers, Mass. The day was observed in the poet's customary quiet and modest way, receiving friends and neighbours and other callers.

At the last meeting of the Montreal Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, a Chrysler's farm silver medal and a Wicksteed gold medal of McGill College were exhibited by Messrs. Henri and Patrice Guy, as also, by the chairman, a series of most interesting photographs of various things in the old Hudson's Bay territories, including the ruins of Fort Churchill as destroyed by d'Iberville, and a group of buffalo, instantaneously photographed while feeding in the prairie grass. Mr. DeLery Macdonald read a paper on "Fort de Callieres," the old fort just eastward of the site of which the present Custom House is built. The members then partook of one of those pleasant suppers, which are a frequent feature of the gatherings of this old society.