

but solely from a disbelief in the efficacy of the rhetoric indulged in by the screeching sisterhood members. Practically, the best plan is, to take one grievance at a time, slap-bang the legislature with it, and when carried, take up another. Such is the way concessions so far have been scored. This session the legislature will alter the code by repealing the clause, which gives the husband the right to kill his wife if he takes her in adultery. The Congress objects to "Christian" ladies joining the body; ladies must be emancipated first from religion, be "free thinkers," ere they be allowed to work out their salvation—here below. Imagine woman-kind without religion!

Z.

Paris, April 7, 1896

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At the House of Commons.

THE last days are dragging drearily away up in the buildings on the hill. Speculations are scarcely worth speculating upon. The vainest member in the House has forgotten his vanity, the fiery member has lost his fire, the quizzical member, the man who wants to know the wag of the House, the prince of obstructionists, and the gentleman who has a temper are all longing to be out of the frying-pan and into the fire. The whole House is in a turmoil of impatience to be off. The elections are engaging the attention which the dying old Parliament now fails to hold. Members are collecting material for use "on the stump." They are sorting out their chances, and the queer thing is, that in spite of their long face and uncertain words, they, one and all, expect to come back. In many respects the new Parliament that is to be is of far more interest than that which will soon be "laid out" with the other dead of history, where few honest men will care to take a fair look at its corpse.

The leadership of the Conservative party is no longer a myth. There is a leader, though he may be blind, and the party may be blind, and there may be a ditch ahead. To all intents and purposes Sir Charles is the head of the Conservatives; though, literally, the fact is that Sir Mackenzie has not yet handed in his resignation. It was expected to-day. The prophets promised it as the political tid-bit for this afternoon. Now they say to-morrow, on the next day or the next.

The social balloon has been punctured. The coming and going of sessional people, the packing, the home-going, the farewelling, has tamed down the fervid gaiety, and so far, indeed, as the Parliamentary papa and his wife and daughters go the week has been dull.

Excitement ate itself out, in the long days of that long week, when tired, stubborn men slept and ate and—so say the gentlemen themselves—drank, according to rule. Relays slept while others held the fort and popped the guns of everlasting twaddle from one side or another of the House. Nothing more dreary could be imagined than the droning of the men who stood up and held the floor. The floor was all they did hold. Attention was never with them, save when someone was very angry or very cross. During the day, and until three a.m., a certain amount of business was, in the nature of things, disposed of, but through the dead hours, through the dawn hours, and the early breakfast hours, there was little, save an occasional joke or a passage-at-arms between two unusually frisky honourable gentlemen.

When the people rose in the morning they looked up to the tower. There were the lights still burning as they had burned Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

"Is the House still sitting?" one asked another in place of good morning.

"At it yet," was the answer—good for five mornings.

"Will it never end?" thought the wives of men who worked. "How long can they stand it?" people said, as they looked at the Hansard men.

The clocks measured out the minutes; suns rose and set; men passed in and out, and still, back and forth, to and fro, wagged the unceasing tongues, until twelve o'clock on Saturday night. Then the lights were put out and the men went home, because this country has yet left to it enough decency to observe its Sunday.

Down in the Rideau River Valley there is a wide, muddy lake and trees are standing in it, houses too, and barns and sheds, while roads are under its waters. Many houses were quite inaccessible save by boat, the other day. The one double plank footway leading beyond Cummings' Bridge was the only dry walk in the little settlement. A fine strong stream with a ripple in its current ran over the road, under the footway, through a garden or two, over the flats beyond, and then, crowding between the river banks, fell over the precipice down into the Ottawa below. Quite like a curtain the Rideau Falls look in summer, as the water streams over in a limpid arch, foaming a little and then losing itself in the River Ottawa. Now it frets long before it reaches the bridges, storms over the rocks, churns itself into an agony of foam and whitens the strong dark current far below the Point. The Gatineau river is rising too. The houses are built on a curving ridge of land. Behind stretches, in summer, a luxuriant green meadow and swamp, in winter a vast snow-field, in spring a lake. They are busily getting their moveables out of the river's reach. Yesterday the water was encroaching on the doorsteps, to-day many of the ground floors are flooded. To-morrow, the poor inhabitants may be making speedy journeys through the upper windows or from the house tops. They do not expect it, though. The Gatineau does not usually treat them so badly. They prepare for the flood, and, when it is not too bad, take it as it comes, somewhat as the house-mothers amongst us, take spring housecleaning and unforeseen company.

Ottawa, April 21st, 1896.

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Art Notes.

CHARLES DANA GIBSON has been known to the American public for several years, but it is only within the last few months that his work has been properly appreciated by the art-world of England. The American magazines have a good many readers in the old world, and through this medium Gibson has gradually become recognized on the other side of the Atlantic as a force in art. But the exhibition of the artist's work which is being held in London has introduced him to a much wider circle than heretofore; and, from all accounts, he is winning laurels.

There is a great temptation to compare him to Du Maurier because both men are the illustrators of the comedy "high life." Both, moreover, are possessors of a mortgage on a particular type of beauty. Any signs of disloyalty to his chosen type of pretty women, on the part of either artist, would be looked upon with suspicion by the artist's admirers; and it would be felt that he was not living up to his principles nor acting in a becoming manner as the exponent of the class of beauty which he had originally discovered, and for which, by constantly delineating it, he had won a host of admirers besides himself.

In point of unmistakable good breeding Du Maurier's "beauty lady" is superior to Mr. Gibson's. She has that indefinable aristocratic air which, amongst the human species, is as closely associated with a reputable genealogy as is the case amongst horses. That this type may be present in America is, I think, eminently possible, but Mr. Gibson has not discovered it. His lady is the pretty, vivacious representation of a family whose fortunes (probably huge) were built up by some sturdy plebeian of Dutch origin. She is splendidly dressed. Unlike Du Maurier's lady, she knows it. The young men of both these artists may be criticised on almost the same line as the women; but, in the case of the men, Gibson's trick of giving them large heads and small legs tapering to a patent-leather vanishing point has created a type in marked contrast to the languid young Apollos of Du Maurier.

Looked at from a purely artistic standpoint, however, it must be conceded that the delightful pictures which are so forcibly suggested by the masterly pen of Gibson are on a much higher plane of pictorial art than the flimsy compositions of the Englishman. Gibson's pictures would paint—to use the studio phrase; indeed they frequently suggest the idea that they were originally drawn as studies for an oil picture. The masses of light and shade are well studied and consistently realized. In his more elaborate drawings