

On the score of economics, the fisheries of the Island alone would be ground enough for a strong effort toward incorporation. Much as the Provincial Government have done for the development and protection of these fisheries, there is no question that they would acquire at once an international importance, which they have not now, when placed in the hands of Canada. The mineral wealth of the Island is also known to be very great, and only awaiting the inflow of capital to be worked with most important results. Something has been done in the way of opening the interior by means of a railway, and the effect has been such as to justify even more enterprise in the establishment of new lines.

It is untimely, of course, attempting a forecast of the upshot of the forthcoming negotiations. No intelligent opinion can be shaped until the preliminaries are laid down; until the official returns of the material resources of the island, its debts and assets, the value of its public works, the groundwork of its financial credit in foreign markets, with other official documents of a like business character, are set before the conference and published to the world. But, pending this publicity, there are two points which augur well from the start—the initiative, as we have said, of Newfoundland itself, and the favourable disposition of the Federal Government, as publicly foreshadowed by one of the chief members of the Cabinet, to meet the Island representatives at least half way. That the accession of a new province would be well received throughout the other provinces there is no doubt, and it is to be hoped that old Bonavista will not much longer keep her solitary watch on the vasty deep, but will nestle under the ample folds of the flag of our young Dominion.

### AN ENGLISHMAN IN CANADA.

It may not be amiss to see what an English traveller—clearly a man of observation and taste—has to say about Canada, after passing through it. His conclusions are set down in the *Westminster Review*. Quebec is the first stage of his journey, and he is outspoken at once. He finds that the people come to the front without their former elegance of manner, and are morose owing, no doubt, to the loss of their ascendancy. Among the few there is a wider culture than there used to be, but the majority are out of touch with modern progress. This, of course, is shallow and commonplace, betraying want of knowledge of a very peculiar people, who have had to struggle with exceptional difficulties, and who, upon the whole, have held their own well, in the universal march of human progress. A traveller of this kind, if he wants to judge fairly of French Canada, must do three things—go straight among the peasantry, on their farms, rich or poor; enter into personal contact with their priesthood, studying *in situ* the working of their ways and means; and make himself well acquainted with their literature—historical and imaginative. If he does so, he will be forced, at least, to render justice to a very worthy race.

Crossing the line into Ontario, the writer feels that he has entered into "another sphere of existence," and makes a host of observations, many of which are shrewd and to the point. He finds in the Empire Provinces that everything is well done, and that the go-ahead spirit of the New World is visible in all the walks of life. The

climate is good; the soil fruitful: the people thrifty and moved by the sturdy independence which animated their fathers, the first immigrants. He is loud in praise of the energy that cut out homes in the wild backwoods, and is proud, like your thorough Englishman, that none but an Anglo-Saxon could have done it, and maintained a foremost stand withal. If the Ontario people employ a certain grandiloquence of expression, with a conscious air of superiority, our traveller thinks it difficult to find fault therewith, as the feeling seems so genuine. One little weak point, however, did not escape him—a general envy of Montreal—which, he says, "continues to remain the largest and wealthiest city."

There are also some proper remarks about our social and political system. It is taken for granted that the most successful professional men in the country do not acquire capital, and that all the wealth is, therefore, in the hands of the merchants, who are the people of the land and the dispensers of patronage. Furthermore, the interests of bankers and brokers are so closely allied with those of the merchants, that the three may be classed as the mercantile community. This, of course, applies mostly to the towns, and not so much to the farmers, whose position is more or less isolated in so large a territory. If the writer were living in Ontario, however, he would speedily discover two things—that the farmers have more than the balance of power, and really rule the province, while the great bulk of public men, in Federal and Provincial political life, are drawn from the professional classes. The rest of the paper is of less interest, because cast in the *doctrinaire* groove of the Westminster school, and not founded on local facts, so that we need not go farther with it, after thanking our English friend for his generally favourable view of this young country, which, he may be sure, knows how and is able to take care of itself.

### POINTS.

By ACUS.

There was some unconscious philosophy when the lisping cherub, instead of saying that its father shot sparrows with a rifle, said by mistake that he "shot sorrows with a trifle."

During the vacation there is only one thing that there is very much of in the city. It is heat. In order to convey any adequate idea of it, it would be necessary to make it hot for the reader. Words are weak to express it. But they are not any weaker than the people, these days. Under the circumstances, about the only things that we can enjoy are fruit and iced drinks. Will you please touch the bell?

In midsummer, anything relating to winter is refreshing to hear. The rough winter coats, made of coon-skin, sometimes create curious impressions upon people who are not accustomed to them. A prominent Canadian lumberman once wore one of these coats to New York. Upon his arrival, an urchin called out to a young comrade, "Say Bill, here's the devil." A prettier impression was made by this kind of coat when a little boy said to an elderly gentleman thus clad, "Well, Santa Claus, my little brover's waitin' for you." These are actual incidents. It seems rather contradictory, however, that a coon-skin coat will cause a man either to look like Santa Claus, or else make him look like the devil.

A recent critic has ventured to question whether Ruskin is really an ultimate authority on questions of art. To be learned in precept and deficient in practice is possible in the world of art no less than in that of morals. Is it merely that he has a fine critical faculty, or may he be followed as a practical teacher? We have not heard of any

great picture that he has ever painted. Perhaps what Ruskin knows about art, is something after the fashion of "What Horace Greeley knows about Farming." It is well known that the latter is clearly a matter of theory. If with Ruskin it is theory, it is chaste and beautiful theory. If it is visionary, it is with visions celestial. His style is truly charming; but to the practical American mind, his ideas do seem rather airy and unsubstantial. It is not without diffidence that I venture to express the opinion, but I think that it is only as a teacher of the ethics of art that Ruskin really rises into greatness.

If one is at all interested in physiognomy, there are few places which it may be studied with greater facility than in the street-car. The company is so assorted and cosmopolitan in its nature. Of course, you cannot study the face of the man with the newspaper, because you cannot see anything of him from his knees up. There is the fresh young girl with cheeks like a peach, sitting beside an old hag, wrinkled and rheumy. Observe the placid expression on the face of the woman with the bundles, and the pained expression worn by the man who has to stand up. And the stout negress is crowding the slender blonde. It would be hard to find anywhere else such a row of faces.

Some fastidious persons object to the word *American* to designate our friends across the border. Well, it is impossible for the name United States to have a cognate adjective. France has its adjective, French; and Germany, its German. But what is one to call the people of the United States. We might call them United Statesmen, but that would be ambiguous. During the present electoral campaign, I think they could hardly be called united statesmen. Disunited statesmen would be nearer the mark. Seriously, however, perhaps the easiest way out of the difficulty is, if possible, to take the name of the state or of the city; and say Vermonter or Bostonian, or whatever it may be. But much of the geographic nomenclature will not permit of this, and so we have no choice but to fall back upon the word *American*. At the same time it may be admitted that, in the strict sense of the word, the Canadian is as much an American as are his friends across the borders.

As Mr. W. C. Van Horne is now the subject of no little comment, one or two reminiscences of him may not be untimely or uninteresting. Through ability of a high order and untiring industry, it is well known that he has risen from the ranks. His wonderful memory was first developed by the systematic exercise of observing and retaining the numbers upon the various cars as they passed through. Although Mr. Van Horne is a man of great research, he had no school training whatever after his thirteenth year. Still he is an authority upon the sciences of geology and botany, and upon the arts of architecture and painting. In reference to his painting, I remember one evening at his house on Dorchester street, his coming down from his study with a little water-colour portrait of Sir Donald A. Smith which he had done from memory. Sir Donald was then in England. The likeness is excellent, and the picture is now, I believe, in the possession of Lady Smith. In addition to the subjects I have mentioned, I am sure Mr. Van Horne will forgive me if I add that he is also an authority on—on *poker*! He is very fond of practical jokes, and relates them with quite a boyish enjoyment. I might mention his youthful prank played upon an unpopular and abnormally conceited engineer, when coarse chalk was substituted for tooth-powder, kerosene for perfume, and white lead for pomade. There was once also an ingenious arrangement of a hole, a pin, a spring and a string, for the benefit of a bore who used occasionally to sit upon a certain desk and talk. Mr. Van. Horne tells of some cigars he obtained from the neighbourhood of Hudson's Bay. They were (if I may use the expression in connection with a cigar) as strong as an ox. They were reserved for reporters who came to interview him. Naturally the interviews were of brief duration. My space will not permit me to enlarge upon numerous other amusing incidents of this kind.