

Or stand again, at the set of sun,
As the light in the west grows dim;
While the blue gray clouds with crimson lined,
Lie low on the prairie's rim;

Till the coulee waters reflect at last
The clouds, and the dying light;
And the stately form of the wild duck sails
Dark over the surface bright.

Would you learn the spell of the prairie land?
Then follow the winds at play,
As the long grass waves, and the flowers toss,
In their scattered colours gay.

Those prairie flowers! What else may grow
Such hosts of anemones rare?
Broad mounds of roses, interspersed
With the blue-eyed flax so fair?

O, the prairie land is a fairy land!
But where do the fairies hide?
Not in rocks or trees, as in olden lands,
None are here on the prairies wide.

The broad disc of green 'neath the deep blue sky,
The miles of grass with its bloom,
The horizon, dotted with settlers' shacks,
The wind with its soft perfume—

These held the charm of the prairie land,
And, when summer comes again,
The winds blow over the lakes to us
The lure of the Western plain.

—Varsity.

"Obstinacy of British Postmasters-General"

By SIR HUGH GILZEAN-REID, L.L.D., F.J.I.

THE article under the above heading in the Courier of Feb. 23rd has been read with interest on both sides of the water. It is unfortunately true that our Postmasters have ignored or disregarded all appeals made to them to consider reducing the postage on British periodicals and newspapers mailed to the Colonies. A few years ago an influential deputation waited upon Lord Stanley, who utterly failed to comprehend the situation, and only trifled about the alleged loss in the United States of America on like publications circulated in that country! The deputation represented the owners of magazines and other serials estimated to be worth millions sterling, all practically prohibited from being generally circulated in parts of the British Empire. But we have never despaired of success, and an even more powerful combination is in process of formation with a view to immediate and decisive action.

We have been moved and stimulated by the initiative of the Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, who, since becoming Postmaster-General, has taken up this vital question of postage with practical knowledge and genuine enthusiasm. To win in this prolonged conflict, the co-operation of both sides is essential. And it is hopeful that the first step has been taken on the Canadian side. I well remember that in the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, when a similar issue came before the Colonial Conference in London, it was Sir William Mulock, then Postmaster-General, who first and promptly said, "Yes" to the Colonial Secretary's inquiry as to the attitude of the Premiers and Postmasters-General in respect to the adoption of Imperial Penny Postage. "Yes," was Sir William's quick response, "we are ready to adopt it"—a decisive and deciding voice; and the formal adoption of the beneficent proposal took place on Christmas Day, 1899, to be followed—let us hope—by Universal Penny Postage, which, after fifty years of agitation, it is significant to know will be one of the subjects for discussion at the Colonial Conference in April this year; all surely calculated to give us courage.

As to our Postal "heads," it ought to be noted, that the present occupier of the seat of honour—the Right Hon. Sidney Buxton—has not yet been approached publicly from either side, and has therefore not had an opportunity of stating his views or declaring his policy. The psychological moment has come, and the whole question will be placed before him at no distant date. During his brief reign at the Post Office, Mr. Buxton has displayed an enlightened spirit, and a prudent desire to advance, irrespective of so-called precedents. Our commercial and literary organisations, as well as the House of Commons, are heartily in favour of largely reduced postal charges on publications intended for the Colonies; we have the assurance that they will continue their help; and that, united, we shall go forward to victory.

Canadians, we trust, will not consider the renewal of the Postal Convention with the United States to the exclusion of Great Britain, for the popular literature of which, it is believed, they have a wholesome preference. It is reported that Mr. Lemieux is to visit London in May and that the whole question will then be thoroughly discussed, with a view to an early and satisfactory settlement. "Imperial" Penny Postage has come; "International" is being seriously dealt with, and a reduction in the now prohibitive rates on periodicals cannot long be delayed.

A Japanese Opera

THE kingdom of the chrysanthemum has been a popular background for modern drama. But no daintier little figure than that of the child-wife, "Cho-Cho-San," has flitted across the stage. The story told by John Luther Long has been given a setting of Italian music and has appealed to New York and London as a work of delicate charm. The quaint loveliness of Japanese gardens and temples has been used as the scene of a tragedy as old as the first broken heart. In the "Mikado" Gilbert and Sullivan gave the world of a generation ago a comedy of the awakening Orient. In "Madame Butterfly," an Anglo-Saxon writer and an Italian musician give the theatre-goers of to-day a drama of the darker side of the mingling of East and West.

Whatever may be the theories with regard to the setting of Elizabethan plays, a modern composition such as "Madame Butterfly" demands all the accessories of scenic art. Mr. Henry W. Savage has brought to the presentation of this Japanese production the resources of picturesque and poetic environment which made an appropriate setting for so rare a gem.

There are two Canadian members of the cast—Miss Florence Easton and Mr. Francis MacLennan.



Miss Easton and her husband, Mr. Francis MacLennan, in "Madame Butterfly."



Miss Florence Easton as "Madame Butterfly," in the opera of that name.