

trees are budding everywhere, and the spring may be said to have fairly commenced. There has been no snow on the ground since the beginning of January. The winters here are almost without snow.

The Beacon Hill park, a favourite place of resort, is now again becoming crowded on Saturday afternoons. It is a delightful place, though rather spoiled, many think, by injudicious and expensive attempts at improvement. The surroundings in the way of sea, mountains and forests, are highly picturesque. Steamers and ships are constantly passing in the straits; some of the latter come from British ports round Cape Horn. It is quite a sight to see, on a fine summer afternoon, the innumerable army of baby-carriages (!), and the fair Victorians, in their quaint costume, watching the progress of a game of football or lacrosse. The latter game, I am happy to say, is gaining favour here, and on the mainland; and bids fair to banish that odious "base-ball," a mere resuscitation, I am told, of the "rounders" formerly played in the slums and by-places of London.

The town itself is certainly growing. Within the last few months an immense church has been completed for the Presbyterians; and buildings of equal size are contemplated for the Methodist and Romish sects. The Anglicans will no doubt follow suit, as their present cathedral is not over large. The leading denominations are all fairly well represented, and, none having any great preponderance in numbers, we all get along in peace and harmony. May it always be so!

*Apropos d'église* I would you were here to enjoy the superb rendition of the services in our English cathedral. The reading and intoning are alike excellent. One would say that the officiating priests had received a special training in this part of their duties. I have nowhere heard the sublime liturgy of the Church more impressively recited. For the rest, I confess that, here as elsewhere, we suffer under the infliction of a married clergy. We do not see much of these gentlemen outside the church walls. A great gulf seems to lie between the clergy and laity. Burdened as most of our presbyters are with wives and families, they cannot but be heavily handicapped in the performance of their pastoral functions.

Pleasant enough is the living in this little outpost of the Dominion, with its mixed Oriental and Caucasian population, and its white cottages embosomed in foliage. Of necessity, some things are wanting. The town is young. Books are scarce. Art is in its nadir. We miss the large libraries, the scientific and literary associations, and the art-galleries of the Eastern provinces; a contrast the more striking, as in the older French communities in the East, the literary aspirations are immense, and some one has said that almost every third man you meet in Quebec is either a poet or a historian. But these are the natural defects of a new colony, with a limited population. Time will cure all this. A facile communication with the East is now open. We receive from that side large and constant accessions to our numbers. We are part and parcel of a Dominion that bestrides the entire continent. The great centres of Canadian civilization, as Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa, are now easily accessible, and we cannot fail to profit by the connection.

*Laus Deo in excelsis*: the genial spring-time is already upon us. Let us walk out by the side of the "many sounding sea," with its oak-covered land-slopes on one side and the waters of the interminable Pacific on the other. What can be finer than this glow of the setting sun, reflected on a thousand ripples—the "innumerable laughter of the sea waves," as old Æschylus has it? So, too, the Roman Catullus, not insensible to these grand influences, has described the waves of a placid sea, "quæ leviter resonant plangore cachiini,"—"Which sound gently with a noise of laughter." Let us rest here; seated on a drifted pinestem, and bathed in a flood of sunshine. Who is it, Persius I think? who speaks of the "aprici senes"? A most happy epithet. "Old men that love the open sunshine." For what can be more pleasant, to those whose years are many than to bask in the sun, and feel one's energies revive under the kindly warmth, the blessed and healing influences of the Lord of light and life? They say that in the childhood of the world men worshipped the sun as a Deity. A noble and natural impulse; for surely it is His most glorious image.

March 16th, 1890.

#### A MONTREAL SALON.

THOSE who were acquainted with the society of Montreal twelve years ago could not have been so without knowing well the face of a certain lady. She was about thirty-eight, beautiful and wealthy; lived with her family in an elegant stone residence on Sherbrooke Street; drove in what were probably the finest equipages in the town, and entertained largely. Everybody was charmed with her simple kindness of manner and universal sympathy. For a number of years past the city has missed her, but her influence has formed so large a part of the better life of the place that I venture, as a tribute and for the example's sake, to say a few words about it.

One aspect in which she shone—without, however, seeking to do so—was the social. By nature endowed with great beauty, and delighting in seeing others enjoy themselves, she, on the one hand, attracted to her house the gay, fashionable element, especially its young portion, in whom she took great interest. Her brother-in-law was Vice-Consul of France, and his family were leaders in the

French society of the Province. Her parlours, always open, became by this means the meeting-ground of the two languages. Thither frequently came the *littérateurs*, lawyers, judges, and distinguished French strangers. On one occasion the Duc de Morny breakfasts with them, at another time an "At Home" is given to Chief Justice Bermudez, of Louisiana, and his daughter—said to have been the most beautiful woman in America. The Count and Countess de Sesmaisons, among others, were close and constant friends. Distinguished Americans and Englishmen and women likewise entered and became part of the circle from time to time. It seemed as if the hostess were enviable to the utmost, from the point of view of fashionable success.

It was not her desire, however, to be a butterfly. Her heart was so good that social victories had not the slightest ill effect upon her judgment. She remained ever natural, cheerful, and overflowing with sympathy, invariably making a special effort to converse with the less notable of her company, and to set at ease the awkward, or bring out a hidden talent. It was with a view to knowing them, so that she might counsel and mould their characters, that she loved to attract the young. Scores on scores recall her as a real mother, who bettered their natures, and in some way decided their lives.

Her house was a *salon*, but so far as she had any desire for a *salon*, it was to collect, not primarily the pleasure-seeking, but such as had a talent or an aspiration for improvement. Her closest sympathies were with those who possessed earnest interest in art, music, literature, and philosophy, especially if any were poor or alone. It would be hard to estimate her influence in this respect. Among her visitors were to be seen John Reade, Talon-Lespérance, "Gowan Lea" (Mary Morgan), "Barry Dane," T. D. King, G. Mercer Adam, Dr. Sommer (a kind of Jean Paul Richter), John Lovell, the veteran publisher, Louis Honoré Fréchette, "Garth Grafton," "Louis Lloyd," and many others, besides English and Americans. I could name a poor, struggling painter whom she kept for years from sheer starvation in Europe, because she felt for him in his determination to develop at any cost the ability he undoubtedly possessed. One of the truest artists in the country gratefully thanks her to-day for success won chiefly by her faithful assistance, after a career of despair and poverty. Her house was a place of grateful rest—a "House Beautiful" in his "pilgrim's progress"—to that musical genius, wrecked by paralysis and sorrow, Heinrich Bohrer, who died not long ago in Victoria. She patronized the sculptor Bardolph, the representative of his art in the city, an art doomed then to struggle like the rest.

All who strove to intellectualize themselves or the public were objects of her special encouragement—an encouragement never made contemptible by any suggestion of patronage. Not only did she desire to make advance easy for them, but, with many-sided mind, she took a direct interest in the work of each. She formed, and for a number of years kept up at her house, a painting class of young lady friends, where art was studied in its true sense, with very appreciable results. It was her sympathy, too, which made possible the establishment of The Philosophy Club, a small circle which held its first meeting at her house and has continued for a number of years to afford to a changing *personnel* the only systematic opportunity for acquaintance with the subject included in its name. It will, perhaps, astonish the average reader to learn that this society lady read easily, and was deeply imbued with, the severe writings of Kant and Hegel. More than one other movement—especially of liberal thinking and advance, and of the higher education of women—owes a great deal to her influence; and several of the best of Canadian books would perhaps never have been written had it not been for the impulses received by the writers from the same source. In addition, she brought up a family of six children creditably and intellectually; while there is simply not room to mention her good acts and simple charities.

The immediate usefulness of her life to the community was brought gradually to an end some years ago by accumulating family misfortunes, which have impelled her to seek a residence for the present at a health resort in Switzerland. She there continues, in what measure is possible, the noble living which endeared her to so many here.

"I may at last," she writes in a letter, "pass over the Everlasting Hills and leave not a trace of any work done, not a particle of any achieved success; and yet I work on, perhaps grasping at shadows. I may be resting up in this quiet valley, recruiting my strength for some purpose which I cannot perceive now. I do not seek society, but a few sympathetic souls find me out; and it is as in the past, the young ever confide in me. I do not know why: either it is because I always keep the child-like heart, or it is because they confide in me as a true mother-friend. . . . We are responsible for ourselves, we are responsible for the influences we endeavour to give out, for the rays of light we shed from ourselves. We may be misunderstood by many, but how glorious if we do not misunderstand ourselves, but enjoy that perfected individuality—that ever anxiety for a completed mind and heart—that keen perception of what a perfect Being should consist of—that is the dignity of the True Life."

The name of this lady is Mrs. E. M. Tiffin. I do not think it is out of taste to render her this tribute in the name of many. There is no need of pointing the moral of such a life beyond suggesting the possibilities which might be within reach of any of our earnest women who possess a wealthy home.

ALCHEMIST.

#### PARIS LETTER.

THE peculiarity about the ousting of Premier Tirard, and the incoming of M. de Freycinet, is the profound indifference with which the public view the transformation. Cabinet changes are commencing to be looked forward to, as annual events, about as regular as a Fourteenth of July. Since 1871, France has had no less than sixteen ministries, and as Goethe observes, to pleasures oft repeated we become indifferent. The several cabinets present a common family likeness. It is to be hoped that the average duration of a ministry will not descend below the twelve-month. One extraordinary circumstance connected with this governmental instability is, there have been no less than nineteen Ministers of War since 1871, and the army has been well organized notwithstanding. England owes a debt of gratitude to M. de Freycinet; it was during his administration that France scuttled out of Egypt, and thus enabled her to make herself at home in the Land of Goshen, and to put up the sign-board—*j'y suis, j'y reste*.

French Parliamentarians being in a state of flux, it is to be feared that the absence of stiffness will still be a marked feature in the constitution of the ministry. M. Constans, however, is a grit, and may thus overcome any gelatinous tendencies on the part of his colleagues. If the budget can be squared without dipping too deeply into the tax-payer's pocket, and all expenditure faithfully included in a single budget, such as other nations practise, the ministers might hold on till the adoption of the income tax be made a cabinet question, and the separation of Church and State be brought within the sphere of practical politics.

The most melancholy characteristic about the Franco-Russian alliance is the *mot d'ordre*, silence, observed by the journals here upon the Siberian atrocities. The union of the carp and rabbit, a favourite illustration with the French of the impossible, is not more unnatural than historically liberal France marching arm in arm with Muscovite autocracy. Oh! for the days of 1854 and 1863, when Europe rang with denunciations of Russian misgovernment; when Prince Jerome Napoleon represented the Polish question in the Senate; when aid to Polish refugees and schools figured in the French budget; when France and England expostulated with the Czars on their blood and iron policy, to crush the last sigh of Freedom out of their subjects, and when also Prince Jerome Napoleon was booked as the future sovereign of the to-be-resuscitated Polish kingdom, as the European boulevard against Russian advance.

One Paris journal having alluded with a cat-like caution to Madame Tsherbrikova's letter, that has continental publicity, to the Czar, on his being kept in the dark respecting the doings of his subordinate representatives, an official communication, doubtless from the Russian Embassy, was sent to the journal, asserting that the letter by that lady was compiled twelve months ago, with the aid of revolutionary pamphlets published in Geneva. The lady is an accomplished writer, and so able to tell her own story. It is further alleged that it was Nemesis Stepniak put the letter in circulation. It is not a question when the letter was written, or how composed and distributed, but, are its contents true? The official Cato asserts that Madame Tsherbrikova is not in a Russian prison, but resides in Paris. It is to be hoped so, as she can thus avoid a "Hunger Strike." The official note does not allude to another lady, Madame Sikida—who is beyond all surgery.

Although the French Press—for political reasons—and which, like charity, would seem to cover a multitude of sins—abstains from touching on these subjects, they are not the less much talked about in society, and the apprehension is entertained that to escape from the home dilemma, the Czar may rush into a European war, and in Bulgaria, where events are rapidly approaching an explosive point, he can open the ball when he pleases.

Americans here state they will "stand no more stuff and nonsense" from the Portuguese, respecting the settlement of over three-quarters of a million sterling—known as the MacMurdo claim—for compensation on account of the tricky seizure of the Delagoa Railway. That claim interests many American families in Paris. England, whose claim for compensation is about one million sterling, is severely criticised for her "masterly inactivity" in the matter. America is likely to send her fleet to the Tagus, while Lord Salisbury is dreaming of upholding the House of Braganza, and insist on being paid forthwith. She acted in June, 1850, in that style, and nothing succeeds like success. It is rumoured that the English cabinet is waiting the decision of King Carlos respecting the deputation of the students—with whose "patriotic" pranks he cordially sympathises—demanding to cancel the *exequatur* of the English Consul at Oporto. Then she will take over Delagoa Bay. As for Portuguese republicanism, the article is not even passable Brummagem; the French joke about it, and the Spaniards ridicule it. Having been found out the Portuguese have lost all continental sympathy.

The Berlin Labour Conference is mentioned only with a concealed smile. Purely technical, and devoid of all obligatory vote, its meeting can only have negative result. As the programme of the conference is now well grasped, the practical judgment is that it will be a comedy to which Europe has been convoked, and where Germany naturally pays the expenses. The *invites* accepted because they could not well do otherwise, and none desired—France above all—to afford Germany the pretext of saying, the reunion fell through owing to their absence. It is clear that Prince Bismarck sees nothing practical in the illumi-