

transactions prove abundantly that a man may know something of Science and yet be unable to write English. In the days when Sir Hans Sloane was the secretary, he and most of his correspondents wrote so badly that the witty Dr. King, in noticing their account "of a child born without a brain," caustically remarked that, "had it lived long enough, it would have made an excellent publisher of philosophical transactions." Other papers were merely condensations of blue-books, or compilations of statistics, without an illuminating point. Casual coincidences, again, that proved nothing, were adduced as "interesting," though only *dilettanti* can see interest where there is no rational connection. However, from the ordinary point of view of the Association, the papers were as a rule unusually good. What makes this all the more satisfactory is that the principal officials had hardly expected it, just on account of the new departure, which made it impossible for many eminent members to be present. Canadians and Americans made up for the absence, and the fact of their taking part freely gave to the meeting a pleasant international character. The Presidents of Sections at the closing meeting lavished praise all round, though when they condescended to particularize, it was difficult to repress a smile. It seems that what will make the Montreal sessions memorable for ever is a cable-gram from Australia announcing that the duck-billed platypus is oviparous. The importance of a fact indicating such a link between mammals and birds is undeniable, though the wife of one of the Presidents thought that news about the young of marsupials was of small consequence compared to news about her own children. But, literary men who aim to develop the power of thinking, philosophers who desire light on the fundamental problems of thought and life, statesmen who have great social and political difficulties pressing upon them, or the masses whose one care is how to get their daily bread, will hardly become excited over this new fact concerning the ornithorynchus. The raptures of scientific men sometimes appear as excessive to outsiders as their limitations are undeniable. When Sprat, in his dedication of the History of the Royal Society to the King, said, that "Its establishment was an enterprise equal to the most renowned actions of the best princes," the learned physician, Stubbe, answered, "Never prince acquired the fame of the great and good by any knick-knacks," and "the increase of the powers of mankind by a pendulum watch, or spectacles whereby divers may see under water, or the new ingenuity of apple-roasters, or every petty discovery or instrument must not be put in comparison, much less preferred before the protection and enlargement of empires." We have an illustration of the narrow range of even distinguished specialists in the severe denunciations by Tylor and Boyd Dawkins of Canadian intellectual indolence, simply because we had done little or nothing compared to Americans in investigating Indian languages or customs. Doubtless philological studies are important, and it is well to know about wampum, pipes of peace, and everything concerning the aborigines of the continent, from the Zunis of New Mexico to the Esquimaux. All truth is important. It is much better, too, that we should be told our shortcomings than always be praised, as if we were spoiled children who could eat nothing but sweetmeats. But it might have occurred to the distinguished anthropologists that Boston was a comparatively old city more than a century ago, yet that not very long since a common expression in England was, "Who reads an American book?" Whereas, at the beginning of this century Toronto could hardly be said to exist, and the greater part of Ontario was unbroken forest. Give us a little time. After all, we have done better by the Indians than treat them as old curiosity shops. We have made it possible for Englishmen and Americans to live in their villages, and examine their ceremonial at leisure. And, when it is necessary to frame a bill of indictment against us because of our intellectual indolence, something much more formidable than the neglect referred to can easily be cited.

But while, as Lord Rayleigh so admirably pointed out in his inaugural address, science does not deal with the fundamental problems of thought, or the great questions of existence, and while the range of its students is thus necessarily limited, with the effect too often of narrowing and hardening their conceptions, it was impossible to come in contact with the members of the Association generally without being profoundly impressed with the vast and varied intellectual wealth that has been brought together. Canada never had so many great men within her borders, and we owe them gratitude for coming to us in such numbers, notwithstanding the expense, fatigue, and loss of time involved. They came from colleges all over England—from London, Cambridge, Oxford, Durham, Bradford, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, Woolwich; from Wales and the Scottish and Irish universities and educational institutes; from the army and the navy, and from homes where original research is prosecuted as diligently as in public laboratories. This great representation of so many phases of English thought gave me a more vivid conception of the intellectual re-

sources of England than ever I had had before. One does not see its full power while attending any one of the sections. Perhaps nowhere is a better idea of it obtained than at the dinner of "the Red Lions," a kind of "*ordre du bon temps*," founded many years ago by Edward Forbes. At first it consisted only of a few choice spirits, who wished to kick up their heels and have a little fun after the fatigues of a week's meetings, but it includes now a large number of the younger members of the Association. Its name, probably derived from the inn at which they first met, suggested the form that the fun assumes. The chairman is the lion-king, and must not be addressed in any other character. The members are lions, the associates cubs, and the stewards jackals. They do not dine at an hotel, but feed at a menagerie. The jackals make the arrangements, and take the credit of providing even the jokes of his majesty the lion-king. Instead of cheering, the beasts roar or howl and wag their coat-tails. Every toast and speech and illustration must be in character, the chief toast, of course, being the B.A.A.S., appropriately shortened into the British Ass. The great philosophers are seen at play at such a gathering, merry as school-boys, and noisy as students. The rapid succession of witticisms, mock harangues, lecturettes, in which different distinguished members, who are supposed to be self-conscious, are quietly caricatured, without any name being mentioned, overpowers an ordinary observer. There is a nimbleness of intellect and an overflowing humour that indicates the astonishing reserve power that there is in the Association, while the average physique shows a more robust life than we usually associate on this continent with celebrated professors and authors.

The evening lectures, the conversaciones and the garden parties, are the most popular features of the Association. Dr. Lodge's and Dr. Ball's lectures were all that could have been desired, but by general consent they were fairly eclipsed by the Rev. Dr. Dollinger on microscopic researches into the least and lowest forms of life. His word painting and the splendid illustrations thrown on the screen made up a scientific lecture that was simply "fascinating," to use Lord Rayleigh's word; and the general verdict was that Tyndall could not have done better. Dr. Dollinger gave another lecture to the public on Sunday afternoon, in the interest of the Methodist Theological College, and in its line it was equally brilliant. Speaking as a scientific authority, and making no departure from scientific positions or methods from beginning to end of the lecture, he proved that, granting that evolution is the means by which God works, there have been miracles or direct interpositions by an unseen inscrutable power outside of and above matter. Why then should there not be another appropriate miracle? Why should God not interpose again, especially when we can see that interposition is needed? The facts of the constitution of atoms and of force, of the advent of life, and the advent of man, all scientific facts, make probable then the advent of Christ.

The Montreal meeting of the Association has been a great success, socially as well as scientifically. The hosts did their duty well, and the guests were willing to be pleased. Such reunions give an impulse to all concerned, enlarging the horizon and the views of members of the Association, and quickening the life of the whole community. They are signs of the times that no far-seeing statesman will under-estimate. Now that the ice has been broken, a visit will probably be made to Sydney or Melbourne within the next decade; and then Halifax or Toronto will be thought not very much farther away than Dublin or Belfast. Whatever the results may be, however, and they can only be good, it was impossible for any intelligent being to attend the meetings without being benefited. Therefore, we owe a debt of gratitude to all who conceived the brilliant idea and who had to do with bringing them to the point of consenting to come, to Bishop Lewis, and to Captain Bedford Pim, as well as to Sir William Dawson. Sir William wears modestly the honours which he might well accept from our great fountain of honour. He is the legitimate successor of Sir William Logan, and doubtless considered that there is sometimes more pride in refusing than in accepting what is offered from a legitimate source. "Thus I tread upon Plato's pride," said Diogenes, as he rubbed his dirty feet on the soft mats in the great philosopher's house. "And with a pride greater than Plato's," was the calm reply.

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*The News and Eastern Townships' Advocate*, lately published in Montreal, has the following announcement in the issue of Sept. 6: "After this week *The News* will be issued from St. Johns and the headquarters of the paper re-established in that town. The force of public opinion in this district and throughout the townships has proved too strong for us, and we yield with all the grace possible to the inevitable. We defer to the will of the friends who have generously helped to make *The News* what it is to-day, and return to our native heath, even before we have been enabled to get our business fairly launched in Montreal."