

## MONTREAL LETTER.

ing, such could be put down by force. In France, the majority of workers are paid by piece-prices, and this takes away the sting from long hours of labour. But there are, not the less, trades where men paid by the day are over-worked, though often they have a profit-sharing interest in their labour. And there are other occupations where the men working at task-tariffs demand the fixation of the hours of labour. The new phase of strikes in England is closely watched and eagerly followed by the *ouvrier* class here.

Dauga's, who has been tried for one of four murders that he committed, was the most complicated of indictments. At one time the case seemed likely to collapse owing to the very multitude of circumstantial proofs. The accused was an ex-gendarme; compelled to leave the police force, he resumed his trade of printer; some of the crimes he committed while in the service, and it was this circumstance that roused Nancy to the verge of a revolution. Had Dauga been acquitted, he ran the chance of being lynched, despite the presence of a large military force in the town. The inhabitants waited up all the night, till nearly four o'clock in the morning, to know the verdict, and the night was severely inclement. Even when the wretch had been sentenced to be guillotined, the crowd nearly overpowered the cavalry to tear him to pieces. The culprit's manner was odiously irritating, and full of dexterity and tact during the trial. He was all but too much for the judge. It was the evidence of a little girl at the last moment that decided his fate. On the night of the crime, she said she saw him before its commission, sitting on a seat a little distance from where she was; he had a large iron hammer under his blouse and looked terribly at her. She described the hammer as if it had been photographed. A messenger was sent to the printing office where Dauga last worked—he preferred to live by housebreaking; one of the four hammers of the office—all of a like pattern—was missing; a second was sent to the court; it answered the little girl's description, and fitted into the wounds of the fractured skulls—four exhibited in court—of the victims like a sheath. At this conclusive proof the prisoner fainted.

One might conclude that the "murdering season" had opened in Paris, so numerous are the assassinations. Yet the assassins merit to be complimented on their suspension of work during the Exhibition. The most fearful of these crimes was by an ex-lover of a scavengeress. The latter had a beautiful illegitimate daughter, so talented, that the municipality was educating her free. She was thirteen, the ancient lover had become reconciled to the mother, and while the latter was at work, he violated the girl and strangled her. The mother, alarmed at her daughter not coming home from school, went to seek her, and was informed she had not been there. Accompanied by the lover, they went to the police office to signal the disappearance. Two days later, the mother on making the bed, heard something heavy fall on the ground; it was the corpse of her lovely child, that the lover had murdered and placed between the mattresses and at his side of the bed, where he slept upon it for two nights.

Public opinion a few months ago was actively calling for a new Parliament. Now that it has obtained its wishes it seems not to display the slightest interest in the deputies or their proceedings. The truth is, people are tired of politicians and their politics. The belief, too, is making way, that after all the Triple Alliance means peace. The occupation of Egypt by the English does not rouse the journals as formerly; some influential journals are preaching that, pressing England to quit the Nile Valley, she might propose to do so on conditions that France would regret, and raise at the same time the evacuation of Tunis. A great many people would like to see the wonderful Stanley set to work to open up Central Africa to the world's trade, by nominating him generalissimo of a volunteer army, equipped and paid by the British East African Chartered Company, and pushing inwards from Zanzibar, with a railway to follow its heels.

Some commotion is taking place respecting Zola's candidature for admission to the Academy. That he has as much talent as half a dozen Academicians is not denied; but his naturalistic school is not in the odour of sanctity. The "Infectionist" School is the name given to his followers by their adversaries.

A souvenir of bloated armaments; in the time of Henri II. of France, a cannon throwing a ball of 33 lbs., was drawn by 21 horses; while a one-pounder cannon exacted four horses.

M. Guerraz relates, that while Emperor William during his visit to Constantinople was attending the German Church on a Sunday, the English Ambassador, Sir William White and his lady, were returning from mass; the police refused to recognize the Ambassador and would not let him cross a road; so Sir William commenced vigorously whacking the police with his stick, till the German Consul arrived and explained.

Signor Crispi, the Italian Premier, was a political refugee in England; in 1857 he received a letter notifying his father's death, at the same time informing him, for the first time, that four years previously his mother died. He was frustrated in his attempt to commit suicide at this double grief. His father, fearing he might risk returning to Naples to the funeral, purposely concealed the mother's death, but informed his son in every letter he wrote during four years after her demise, that she sent him her blessing and her love.

Z.

TEN years younger and twenty years wiser the municipal magnates have returned from their trip to the West. The magnitude of our proposed harbour improvement and Hochelaga dock scheme has taken a back seat. Montreal is now to be the port of the continent. The council and the harbour commissioners must work in harmony. The steamship and railway companies must no longer stand idly by. All will strike when the iron is hot. Meantime an official report of the trip is being prepared, which will be duly submitted to the public. We need enlarged canals and locks for the vessels now built. Our tonnage must be doubled, trebled. If our protective duties have decreased our importations and rendered return freights from Europe unstable and unprofitable, and our through freight trade is being thereby tapped, we must—what? At least thanks were recorded and transmitted to the Canadian Pacific Railway for their munificent invitation and courtesy, and for the cordial reception and hospitality which the magnates received from municipal and commercial corporations, especially from St. Paul, Duluth, Minneapolis, West Superior and Winnipeg, from the Eastern Railway Company of Minnesota, the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway Company, the Chambers of Commerce of St. Paul, Minneapolis and Duluth, and from the Winnipeg Board of Trade.

In the absence of His Worship some things went right, others went wrong. The gentleman at whose mercy we are for our scavenging contracts became wearied of by-laws and their petty annoyances. Securing at a low price some lots of land which had the misfortune to lie a little lower than their neighbours, he is said to have dumped into them some two thousand loads of vegetable matter, discarded bones, antiquated fish and dismembered poultry, with the intention of levelling up for a high price of exchange. But it is evident that what is the finished product of one manufacturer may be the raw material of another. The following morning saw a score and a half of men of an inventive turn scraping, picking and appropriating the rags, bones, and nondescript sundries which go to make the stock-in-trade of a large and important substratum of our commercial fabric. The neighbours met and resolved that Monsieur the lot manufacturer must be compelled to remove his nuisance at his own expense. But they were too tardy.

The management of our incorrigible and irrepressible Street Railway Company has passed from the hands of the city scavenger into those of the chief of police (!), and merchants who have been in the habit of keeping us waiting four hours have been requested to reduce the blockade of the footpath to one hour. Nothing, however has been done in the direction of a shelter with Johnston's Fluid Beef.

The Colonial House, long celebrated for the quality of the dry goods retailed under its auspices, has given evidence of its business acumen by purchasing a large block on St. Catharine Street, where a mammoth establishment is being constructed with modern adaptations and increased facilities for the westward tendency of its trade. The eligibility of the old site, with a frontage on St. James Street and on Victoria Square, has set our architectural ambition on fire. We have, not very long ago, erected a most extravagant post office, but the chance of eclipsing it must not be lost, and a new post office must stand upon the envied site vacated by the Colonial. As effect follows cause, the French element is on the *tapis* to ensure that the English receive no "better terms," and comes immediately into the field with a counter suggestion, the property known as Mussen's, on the corner of Notre Dame and St. Lambert's Hill. "A shell for thee, and a shell for thee; the oyster is the third man's fee." It is proposed to please both English and French—i.e., to please neither—by setting the new post office of the commercial capital of the Dominion on the corner of Craig and Coté Streets. Nobody ever seems to dream that our post office service is of more consequence than our buildings—our poor, miserable, begrudged three deliveries in a day, the first at any odd mark between ten and twelve, and the last at four, which few ever think of using when there is speed in the question, and none when there is certainty, a fact which is receiving humiliating proof in the increasing and efficient, though expensive messenger services which are daily starting among us.

The Dominion Grey Cotton Association, with a dozen of mills represented, has held a meeting, at which the president reported the state of trade satisfactory, i.e., that the stock of cotton on hand is less than the production of six weeks (5,000 bales), that in order to prevent over-production it is necessary to insist upon strict conformity to the rules of combines as to the number of looms in operation. The price was reserved for future consideration.

In curious coincidence with this action of the Cotton Association comes an appeal from the Board of Outdoor Relief in connection with the Protestant House of Industry, asking for an unusually generous support in donations for the relief of an unusually great demand of suffering from want. That is, when we purchase a yard of cotton we perform two actions: we pay the combine for restricting the production of cotton, and we support the men who are thrown idle by it. The first we call National Policy, and the second, National Philanthropy.

The Medical Faculty of McGill College has received an addition to its force in the faculty of Comparative Medicine and Veterinary Science. The official inauguration of the new faculty and the installation of the professors took

place in the medical library, when the Principal of the University and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine presided. The following is the professoriate of the new school: Dr. McEachran, F.R.C.S., V.S., Edinburgh, Dean of the Faculty and Professor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery; Malcolm C. Baker, V.S., Professor of Veterinary Anatomy; Charles McEachran, V.S., Veterinary Obstetrics and Diseases of Cattle; Gilbert P. Girdwood, M.D., Chemistry; T. Wesley Mills, M.A., M.D., George Wilkins, M.D., Histology; D. P. Renhallow, B.Sc., Botany; Jas. Stewart, M.D., Materia Medica; W. G. Johnston, M.D., Pathology.

The taste for an improved architecture is growing. Following in the steps of the New York and Imperial Assurance Companies, the Sun Company has asked for designs from Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton architects, and has awarded four prizes to the best plans submitted to their referee. The building is to cost \$100,000, and is to be erected on the corner of Notre Dame, Alexis and Hospital Streets.

On dit that Mark Twain's new book, "The Yankee at the Court of King Arthur," has received so many cold shoulders from scrupulous publishers in England that its distinguished author proposes to make a sojourn among us in order to secure copyright.

VILLE MARIE.

## MUSINGS.

WHEN we recall the pleasant Past,  
The Present to beguile,  
How oft the intervening years  
Will check our joy the while.

They stand like champions clad in mail,  
Their gauntlets on the ground,  
In challenge to the roving mind,  
Before it quits their bound.

With sorrows, cares, for swords and spears,  
They guard the enchanted way  
To the lost Eden of our youth,  
Where we would fondly stray.

And when they do not smite they frown  
On Memory passing by,  
Demanding in a trumpet tone  
The tribute of a sigh.

And thus the questions of to-day,  
In varied cloud and sheen,  
Yield as much joy as by-gone bliss,  
With such stern guards between.

WILLIAM MCGILL.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE SONNET.

"UPON a day Apollo met the Muses and the Graces in sweet sport mixed with earnest. Memory, the grave and noble mother of the Muses, was also present. Each of the fourteen spoke a line of verse. Apollo began; then each of the nine Muses sang her part; then the three Graces warbled each in turn; and finally a low sweet strain from Memory made a harmonious close. This was the first sonnet."

So wrote a contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*, in August, 1880, and so far as tangible evidence can state to the contrary this pretty conceit may be true, for the real origin of the sonnet is not at present known.

The derivation of the term itself has been a matter of dispute. The generally accepted etymology is the Italian *sonetto*, a little sound or tune, the diminutive of *suono*, a sound or tune: the Italian verb *suonare* or *sonare* signifies to sound or make a sound; to play upon an instrument or to ring a bell. The latter meaning is curiously connected with another derivation, first offered by Henry Kirke White, who wrote: "The name bears evident affinity to the Italian *sonaire*—to resound, sing around, which originated in the Latin *sonans*—sounding, jingling, ringing; or indeed it may come immediately from the French *sonner*—to sound or ring, in which language it is observable we first meet with the word *sonnette*, where it signifies a little bell, and *sonnetier*, a maker of little bells; and this derivation affords a presumption, almost amounting to a certainty, that the conjecture, before advanced, that the sonnet originated with the Provençals, is well-founded. It is somewhat strange that these contending derivations have not been before observed, as they tend to settle a question which, however intrinsically unimportant, is curious and has been much agitated."

On the above curious hit of Kirke White, Mr. Samuel Waddington has the following remark: "We may observe that the derivation assigned to it by Henry Kirke White, who suggested that it was a modification of *sonnette*—a sheep bell, cannot be received as correct, as there is little doubt that the derivation generally accepted gives the true meaning of the word, and that it is not to *sonette*, but to *suono* or *sonetto*—a little sound or strain, that the term owes its origin." Mr. William Sharp dismisses the matter thus: "It ought to be mentioned, also, that another origin has been claimed for the word, viz., that it is the French *sonnette*, and that its parentage may be primarily ascribed to the tinkling sheep-bells of Provençal days."

It is generally accepted that the word owes its origin to the Italian diminutive *sonetto*; but, another suggestion has been made. Warton says: "The oldest Italian poetry seems to be founded on that of Provence. The word *son-*