

more familiar she may be with the "ways of the world" the better. Let her be made to appreciate Zola so thoroughly that, when asked her opinion of "Nana" she may hiss through her clinched teeth her expression of full realization of its disgusting fidelity to truth, as did a "professionally improper" not long since. If, on the other hand, a girl is to lead a life of virtue, such knowledge will advantage her not one jot, and make herself unhappy. What man would prefer to marry a girl who knew as much of the world as he did, even though her knowledge were gleaned from books? Show me such a man, and I will show you the lowest type of man. Need it be said that this is no argument for the exclusion of the immoral from fiction. It is the abuse, not the use, that is prescribed here. We want none of the licentiousness of "Ouida" in our fiction, and none of the libidinous latitude which is the logical outcome of the "freedom" of "Vernon Lee." In justice to the latter we would say that her convictions are obviously honest, and if the world were composed of such brilliant and highly-cultured intellects as hers, we might give it pabulum highly "spiced," but upon the stomachs of the mass of novel readers it would lie an *indigesta moles*, sure to produce a moral dyspepsia. What the novel readers of to-day want is not an amalgamation of the good with the bad, requiring mercurial analysis. The moral purpose must be so obvious as to subordinate all considerations of a contrary nature. The *raison d'être* of all "improprieties" of plot or incident must appear at once. Immorality should never be allowed to prosper for more than a short time, and then its downfall should be greatly emphasized. Moreover, it should never be described in luxurious surroundings, except to serve an ultimate and distinct purpose. Finally, the immoral in fiction should never be taken as a matter of course, and acquiesced in as a mere foible that all must at some time give way to. This is one of the commonest vices of the novelist, and among young men (for we think the morality of fiction appeals to men as well as women) is superlatively pernicious. Such complacent contemplation of the immoral tacitly engenders the idea that it is a man's proper act to sin, and that it is almost less than venial: a sort of prerequisite to the attainment of the much-coveted title of man-of-the-world. Already decided disagreement has been expressed with those who choose their subject with a view to enlightenment in worldliness. The more than problematical utility of such a course is so overbalanced by the weight of its injury as to be practically imponderable in the moral scales. Far rather let the subject be chosen with the primary aim of inculcating a moral lesson, with reluctance to increase knowledge of immorality, than with the chief aim of familiarizing with vice and adventitious indoctrination of virtue.

That there are other and important rules that should be observed in the novel dealing with the immoral is obvious. These rules, as well as those mentioned, are not new ones, and moreover, as before mentioned, are chiefly negative. The aim of this brief article has been to indicate the insidious and pernicious propagandism of two novelists of international reputation from publications that command the attention of the best classes of the reading world.

C. DAVIS ENGLISH.

CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES.

WASHINGTON.

CANADA and Canadian affairs have become objects of increased interest in the United States during a year or two past. I shall not attempt, within the limits of this letter, to pick out all the threads composing the strand of fact just indicated, but shall select a few of those lying readiest at hand.

One ground of the growing interest is not a subject of pride or congratulation on either side of the border—the conversion of Canada into a convenient and seemingly friendly asylum for fugitives from justice in this country; nor is such the kind or degree of interest contemplated in the preceding paragraph.

The Canadian incident that has most engaged public attention in the United States is the opening up and development of the North-West. Even when Confederation had been accomplished, it seemed to the average observer here that the Dominion was destined to a very moderate career, the course and limitations of which might be outlined with practical accuracy. The bounds of northern settlement had been reached; the western limits would not get much beyond Ontario within the century ahead, that is as far as most people care to think about, and British Columbia would find no change in her actual relations with her sister Provinces. Long before the intervening stretches should be peopled, the older parts of the Dominion would have gravitated into the Union by the operation of involuntary and inexorable forces. Such is substantially the way in which a thoughtful American would have been likely to put the case ten or a dozen years ago, while the thoughtless would have blankly assumed that Canada was not and never could be of particular consequence to a country galloping along from grandeur to sublimity in the periodical count of polls and dollars.

The facts and probabilities connected with the North-West Territory have compelled a recasting of opinion. It is now perceived that Canada

has surface-room, depth and quality of soil, and other natural resources, sufficient for the production and maintenance of a great and wealthy population. Within so comparatively short a space as fifty years her military power, if not dangerous, will be far from despicable, singly or in alliance. Her still abundant forest land, and the consequently fuller and quicker benefit she will be able to realize from the application of the budding art of forestry, secures to her a source of wealth rapidly drying-up in the States. Her wheat fields will apparently hold their own in competition with ours, and already it seems that we shall reach the limit of capacity for herding cattle before our neighbours. If we are to continue to be restricted to our existing classes of exportable commodities, we must reckon with Canada as a competitor who will pull down our profits in the three years out of five when business is but so-so in movement and result. The new country has been opened, solid foundations in it have apparently been laid. Nature has dealt liberally with it, and that great transformer of desert-places and the course of trade, the railway, is at work like a mighty lever, lifting everything along. The dullest and most indifferent among us must perforce take notice of the existence of our neighbour and the influence of that neighbour's apparent future upon our own career.

Possibly, the importance of the railway by means of which Canada has been able to stretch herself along our border from ocean to ocean, and to plant the germs of great populations and industries, has been over-estimated, now that we have been stirred from our stereotyped indifference; but certain it is that the consequences of that great work are beginning to impress themselves strongly upon the American imagination, the workings of which, under the inspiration of our emotional press, are always in inverse ratio to our moderation of action.

Another fact that has brought Canada further within the American horizon is her adoption of an industrial policy modelled upon our own cherished institution. We are in a rather queer state of mind, just now, towards our protective system—wondering whether it does in truth protect, doubting that it does, afraid to think that it does not, and clinging to it with true Anglo-Saxon arrogance, obstinacy and dogmatism. Many of us are beginning to think that a moderate, experimental course of free trade—that is, a tariff for revenue, with incidental protection—would be a good thing, after we respectively shall have "unloaded" and got to cover. We are comforted to see Canada take to protection, but curious, likewise, to know the outcome of it before doing anything of a decisive character ourselves. The communities of farmers and fishermen that lately made up what we now call Canada could not have greatly interested us had they remained as they were; but the Canada of to-day touches us at many points and threatens to elbow us now and then in the race of life as we run it at present.

These are a few of the leading considerations that explain and, *a priori*, prove the growth in the United States of a widened interest in and study of Canadian life and affairs, in despite of the deep concern we are affecting in respect of our relations with our Spanish-American *protégés* and neighbours.

B.

EDUCATION NOTES.

THE recent Annual Convention of the Ontario Teachers' Association was marked by proceedings of the usual interesting and varied character. It is claimed, and the claim cannot be denied, that most of the reforms of late years in our educational system originated in the discussions at the meetings of this Association. That the Education Department has a wholesome regard for these meetings is proved by the fact that the Minister of Education was pleased, at the invitation of the meeting, to fill the gap caused by the lack of an address from Dr. McLellan, the President—a lack, by the way, of which no authoritative explanation was given—by entering into an elaborate and interesting explanation of the new revised Provincial Regulations, and to invite discussion on them, with a view to their further improvement.

Mr. Houston's paper on "The Study of English" attracted the greatest amount of interest, and, judging from the tone of the discussion it elicited, we hope to see greater intelligence in the teaching of this important subject. He advocated that more attention should be given to written and spoken language, and less to formal grammar, which he would banish from our schools until after the entrance examination to the High Schools had been passed. In the earlier classes he would replace it by the study of literature—of course such literature as is within the capacity of the scholar.

The other papers read during the afternoon sessions were "A Plea for Science," by Mr. Glashan, "Technical Education," by Mr. Merchant, "The Permanency of the Teaching Profession," by Mr. Fotheringham, and "Reading as a part of Elocution," by Mr. Swift.

During the forenoon of each day of the meeting the Sections met in separate rooms. The Inspectors' Section gave their attention principally to the new Regulations, and they passed a resolution to the effect that no person should be allowed to be an Inspector who could not give proof of successful teaching in a public school while holding a Provincial certificate. In the Public School Section the time was divided between the Entrance Examination to the High Schools and the new Regulations. In regard to the former the History paper set at the recent examination was strongly animadverted upon, and a committee was appointed to wait upon Mr. Ross to express the opinions of the Section about it.

The High School Section had a shot at the obnoxious papers set at the recent examinations; they discussed with the Minister the new Regulations bearing on High Schools; and, led by Mr. Houston, they gave considerable attention to the constitution of the University Senate, and to some of its doings. "The anomalous position of Upper Canada College in our sys-