

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AGAIN.

Science has doubtless added not a little to its store both of theoretic and practical wealth since the British Association last met in Canada. Science has also lost some of her most illustrious names, and at the Toronto meeting faces and voices will be missed that roused and inspired the students and workers who had the privilege of seeing and hearing them thirteen years ago. But such losses are in the nature of things, and it would be unphilosophic to bewail them. If some distinguished names have disappeared from the roll of the association, the work that was begun or achieved signal triumphs under their auspices is still successfully conducted, and there has been no pause in the search for knowledge and the development of this earth of ours. As we look through the titles of the papers in the different sections in the Montreal volume, we cannot help being struck by the large number of Canadian contributors. Nor are these names confined to any single section or group of sections. We find them distributed through them all.

In Section A, Dr. Alexander Johnson called attention to the number of wrecks, attended with great loss of life and property, that had taken place through want of knowledge of the tides and tidal currents in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Atlantic coast of the Dominion. How often has the woeful tale been forced upon our attention during more than a dozen years, and yet, though Dr. Johnson and others have not failed to carry out the association's desire on the subject, and the Government for a time did something towards so deserving a cause, instead of recognizing the need of fuller effort and provision, our rulers have let the movement come to a standstill for want of funds. In section B papers were read illustrating the fertility of North-west prairie soils, which were afterwards published in pamphlet form. The late Dr. T. Sterry Hunt was also present. Section C. (geology) is one in which Canada has come to the front all through the Victorian era, and it was well represented in 1884 both by veterans and younger workers. In section D. (biology), the late Dr. Carpenter, and Dr. Osler, then attached to McGill's medical faculty, attracted the admiration of men whom we recognize to-day as their equals. Dr. (Sir W.) Hingston discussed the "Climate of Canada." Dr. Dallinger showed an important apparatus, then new, for studying the behavior of septic organisms under change of temperature. Sections E. and F. (geography and economic science) were especially well represented by Canadian essayists—the economic contributions being afterwards brought out in a separate volume. G. (mechanical science), under the presidency of Sir F. J. Bramwell, was also fairly supplied with special papers bearing on Canadian subjects, while section H. (under the control of Dr. Taylor), was wholly devoted to the anthropology of Canada.

The local committees had done their work zealously and effectively, and the principal of McGill University, who was successively president of the American and British Associations, was, with his colleagues, unwearied in judicious service. The railways offered the visitors from over the sea the use of their lines, and some of their members went as far west as the C.P.R. would take them. A number of pamphlets published in 1885—some of them having been originally read before learned societies in the United Kingdom—disclosed what a happy surprise Canada was to some of those students of nature. Some of them had, it is true, been prompted beforehand, by Principal Grant and Mr. Colmer, C.M.G., secretary to the High Commissioner, but what a resident or native tells about a country often differs considerably from what that country suggests to the intelligent visitor who observes for himself. The Englishmen saw sources of attraction in Canada that their ciceroni never thought of mentioning. Some of them, indeed, obstinately fixed

their attention on matters that their hosts thought of comparatively little interest. On the whole, however, learned members of the association were greatly pleased with what they saw in Canada, and with the treatment they received. Sir Lyon (now Lord) Playfair said on the opening day (August 27, 1884), that such a gathering was long to be remembered in the annals of science. If we began to quote from the speeches and reports regarding Montreal's and Canada's hospitality, it would be hard to know when to stop.

The question has been asked, who first started the idea of inviting the association to Canada in 1884? Our impression is that it was Dr. A. Johnson, dean of the faculty of arts, and vice-chancellor in McGill University. It was on that occasion that the veteran principal of McGill received the honor of knighthood, having already been made C.M.G. It is to be hoped that Montreal will give a hearty support to the Toronto meeting. The meeting concerns, not the Canadian Institute merely, or the city of Toronto, but the whole of Canada. We are, moreover, to-day in a much better position to show the visitors the vast range and varied wealth of the Dominion than we were thirteen years ago.—*Montreal Gazette.*

THE PRINCIPAL ASSET.

The following is from a circular letter issued by the home office of the Liverpool & Globe, which does a life insurance business:

"Between thirty and forty the calls upon most of us for sheer necessities are greater than at any period of life, whilst a man's market value does not usually touch highwater mark until a decade later, and the amassment of any considerable sum becomes out of the question until comparatively old age. With supply and demand running nearly neck and neck, there is little chance of putting much by, and it takes quite a lot of self-denial to make up a solitary £100. But with life assurance it is different.

"You start with your capital sum, and pay for it as you go along. You make sure of the investment from the beginning, instead of waiting weary years until the amount be saved; and as you can create a large amount of capital for a very small outlay, it follows that the life policy becomes the most valuable part of one's estate, especially as the sum assured is usually at a handsome premium at the time of realization by the means of bonus additions.

"A fortune of £600 all told is not a munificent one for a widow and family to keep afloat on, but it is, at least six times better than a paltry £100; and yet there are endless numbers content to leave such a monument to their memory as a few household goods and chattels and a doctor's bill. It is, no doubt, thoughtlessness, but evil is wrought from want of thought as well as want of heart. The cure of this want of thought is surely a high moral duty, for a good man leaveth an inheritance. To all but the few the only practical way of leaving one worthy of the name is by taking a policy for a good round amount, and when an agent taps you on the the shoulder and bids you be mindful of these things, remember that upon your decision may hang the destiny of your family.

"If the chance came once only in a lifetime, perhaps more would eagerly seize upon it as one of the greatest boons of civilization, but because it sometimes comes more than once, too many realize to their cost the truth of the Spanish proverb, 'In the village of 'By-and-bye' is the hostelry of 'Never.'"

—Here is a case in which a man will have "cigarettes to burn." It is related by a St. John's, Nfld., paper of July 30: This morning Bowring Bros. received one of the largest orders for cigarettes ever given to one firm in this city. We learn that an offer from H.M.S. "Pelican" took 100,000, paying \$65 cash, for what will go up in smoke.

MONTREAL HARBOR PLANS.

Mr. Tarte now appears as the father, or step-father of another harbor plan, which, like all those that have found favor in his sight, needlessly reduces, as compared with "Plan No. 6," the amount of wharf accommodation in that part of the harbor where those who do the business of the harbor ask for most accommodation. Plan No. 6, provides for five piers, of varying length, between the present Victoria pier and the canal entrance. It has been before the public for years. It was designed by competent engineers, commended by the shipping interests, and formally sanctioned by the Harbor Trust in 1890. No engineering authority has condemned it as impracticable. It aims at giving the maximum of accommodation to ships where the ships want it. It is a business plan. Business considerations require that in its general principles it should be carried out. The newest Tarte plan reduces the number of piers from four to six (including the modification of the Victoria pier) runs the piers out from the shore with less slope, and extends the wharftage space between each two piers. This latter, if the plan were adopted, would be largely wasted room. It would be difficult to bring ships alongside the inner berths, with the pier berths occupied and the basins filled with lighters and elevators. To provide them, after they were brought in, with loading and shed room would involve a waste of wharftage space. The new Tarte plan is good only in so far as it follows the idea of Plan No. 6. It is inferior where it loses sight of the objects kept in view in designing Plan No. 6, the accommodation of the commerce of the port at the place where accommodation is demanded. It is, therefore, to be condemned.

It is sometimes urged, as if there were two interests in Montreal's trade, and a real rivalry between the two sections, into which foolish and vicious men, for their own purposes strive to divide it, that the East End has been unfairly treated in the past. The facts do not bear out the claim. It is not very long ago that the east end of the harbor business was at the Dalhousie Square depot. It is now at the St. Lawrence sugar refinery, a good two miles further down stream. The extent of the wharftage at present is, approximately:

	Lineal feet.
In deep water over 20 feet....	24,690
In water under 20 feet	6,080
Total	30,770
In twenty-five years the wharftage has been practically doubled. Taking the C.P.R. elevators as the starting point, there has in that time been built:	
	Lineal feet.
Eastward, in deep water over 20 feet	9,390
Eastward, in shallow water, under 20 feet.	2,790
Total	12,180
Westward, in deep water	2,870

The increase in wharf accommodation in the period covered, has therefore, been four times as great east, from what is now about the centre of the wharf line, as it has been to the west. The trade that has sought this East End—the sugar, the coal, and the lumber—has been provided for, and the whole of Montreal has been benefited thereby. The whole of Montreal will suffer if the efforts now being made to cripple the trade that seeks another part of the harbor are successful.—*Montreal Gazette.*

—Give no bounties, make equal laws, secure life and property, and you need not give alms. Open the doors of opportunity to talent and virtue and they will do themselves justice, and property will not be in bad hands. In a free and just commonwealth property rushes from the idle and imbecile to the industrious, brave and persevering.—Emerson.