

"that it is very hard on the Liberal party to bear all this farago of crotchets. You cannot jumble up this mass of crude cries and present it to a rational nation, and call it a policy, without revolting its common sense and creating inevitable reaction." All of these remarks, which are as true as they are cutting, were only indirectly aimed at Mr. Gladstone, but he is a sensitive man, and cannot fail to have felt keenly their point. The relentless orator, however, has more arrows in his quiver; and he next turns to the "Whig tradition" which he states is the inheritance of the Liberal party of to-day. In this, he says: "are enshrined those principles of religious toleration and of personal freedom which have regenerated the political system of England." The Whig party has never been the party of destruction. It has always been the party of reform, and reform is the antidote to destruction. If those who demand subversion repudiate and ostracise those who adhere to reform, they will neither unite the party nor will they reassure a nation." "In England, as well as abroad, the ecclesiastical topic like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up all the profane snakes. Theological affairs are difficult and dangerous matters to handle. They are a sort of dynamite which blazes up when you least expect it; and no one can tell where it may be quenched. No man who has a due sense of responsibility will set flame to such a material." The speaker then went on to refer directly to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet, and stated in the words of Burke that "he did not know how to draw an indictment against a whole people." "I cannot impeach a community which forms so great a portion of this empire." "I cannot impeach five or six millions of men as a suspected class." "The truth is there has been nothing changed." He continued to argue that the doctrines of the Church denounced by Mr. Gladstone have been precisely those which were held when the great emancipation measures of the Whig party were passed; and to which he contended the Liberal party should adhere. It may be added that Sir W. V. HARCOURT is himself a decided Protestant; and that his argument is substantially that which has been held by the *London Times* and many other papers. Mr. Gladstone's resignation of the leadership is, beyond doubt, the immediate result of the concentrated attacks upon him. But whether as some papers suggest that Sir W. V. HARCOURT can supplant him, is what we very much doubt. He is for one thing too new to political life for a leader, but his ability none can question.

INTERCOLLEGIATE CONTESTS.

Americans, who are always straining after novelty in all the pursuits of life, have lately devised a contest between representatives of the colleges of the country. This time there was no question of a competition for excellence in rowing or other athletic exercises, but the game was purely intellectual. Two prizes—one of \$175, the other of \$125—were offered for the best oration, and two prizes of \$150 each for the best essay. Another year, premiums will be given to the best exhibitions in classics and mathematics. On the 7th inst., in the New York Academy of Music, the first contest took place. Six colleges were represented—Cornell, Lafayette, Rutgers, Williams, Princeton, and New York University. Among the judges were some of the highest names in the land, such as WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, F. W. HIGGINSON, WHITEHEAD REID, GEORGE W. CURTIS, RICHARD GRANT WHITE, and JAMES T. FIELD. Eleven orations were delivered, and eight essays were submitted. Although the number of colleges which sent representatives was not large, the contest is said to have been fairly successful, and hopes are entertained that next year the competition will be larger.

Americans claim that this is a new feature in education. But such is not the fact. The idea is an old one, and has

been put into practice for a long time in the different countries of Europe. We could not tell the number of colleges which send their representatives yearly to the British metropolis to compete for degrees in the London University. And the examination is something quite different in variety and thoroughness from that of the late Intercollegiate Contest. However, the introduction of the plan on this side of the ocean is a praiseworthy one which should find imitation in Canada. A trial of strength in some of the popular branches of study between the colleges of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, to be held at Toronto or Montreal, would doubtless be productive of good in more senses than one. While it would primarily stimulate a wholesome emulation, it would likewise result in bringing together the young men of the country, and assimilating to a greater degree the modes of instruction in the different provinces. As a rule, we believe that our teaching is too provincial, and not sufficiently national.

All sorts of causes are being imagined as leading to the spread of infectious disease. Dr. CARPENTER, of this city believes that small pox was introduced into a certain neighbourhood by persons attending a funeral of one of its victims, walking on the footpath, instead of in the street, and coming in contact with children who were playing in the snow. Others call attention to dogs and cats as dangerous companions, because their woolly coats may contain the germs of disease. Others still warn us against using books which may have previously been through the hands of fever patients. If this goes on much longer, we shall be cautioned against kissing our wives and sweethearts, through the same fear, and then what will become of us!

The Provincial Legislature of Quebec has taken a severely virtuous turn of late, and wished to wreak its vengeance on the Government for alleged negligence in the matter of the Tanneries Land Exchange. Suppose it should look to itself a little, and examine whether it has done or is willing to do its whole duty in the same business. The three or four most important witnesses in the case have positively refused to give their full testimony before the Investigating Committee. Let us see whether the House will force them to appear before the bar, and oblige them to answer, at the risk of imprisonment.

ALBANI.

AUTHENTIC SKETCH OF HER LIFE.

The Americans have claimed this charming artist as their own. They have assigned to several of their cities the honor of her birth place, Albany, Troy and Saratoga. They have made her mother to be a Scotch woman. They have attributed her musical education to their own teachers. When the Canadians asserted their right to call the PRIMA DONNA a countrywoman of theirs, they have been laughed at. We have had occasion, in the columns of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, to give some of the correct facts in the life of this distinguished young lady, but our statements were not accepted by our contemporaries across the border. We are, therefore, pleased to find that, at length, Albani's own people have taken the matter in hand. We have just received from Quebec an elegant pamphlet giving an authentic account of her history from the pen of one who is authorized to speak, and who ranks high among French Canadian literateurs. We think we are doing a service to the public, as well as to the cause of art, by briefly analyzing this work in our columns.

I.

EMMA LAJEUNESSE was born at Chambly, Province of Quebec, in 1848. She was christened later, at Plattsburg, N. Y. Her father, Joseph Lajeunesse, was first a student of medicine, and afterwards professor of music, in which art he displayed considerable ability and an elevated taste. Emma is the eldest of two other children, one of whom is in orders, at the Montreal Seminary. Madame Lajeunesse, nee Mélima Mignault, was the first teacher of her

* Albani: Par Napoleon Legendre. Avec autographe et portrait. Quebec, Coté & Cie, 16 mo. pp. 72. Price 25 cents.

daughter. At the age of four, the child began her practice on the piano, but she was by no means assiduous in her exercise thereon, being fonder of the noise and amusements of her age. She was far from being a docile pupil, as she was giddy, irascible and difficult to manage. Towards the year 1853, M. Lajeunesse came to settle in Montreal. He occupied a house on St. Charles Borromée street, where he taught music and went about repairing and tuning pianos. The profession was not a lucrative one, and his hardship was increased by the death of his wife. His only hope was then centred on his young daughter, whose musical education he set about conducting in earnest. M. Lajeunesse adored his child, but when there was question of her musical studies, he was extremely severe. The days of little Emma were well filled. She practiced six hours a day regularly, two or three hours on the piano, an hour or two on the harp, and an hour, morning and evening, at singing. Her father was then her sole instructor. The character of the child did not bend with absolute ease to this artistic servitude. She often rebelled against, or tried to rebel against it. One day, when her father absented himself for a considerable time, the child had taken advantage of the circumstance to amuse herself with one of her young companions. During the course of the game, she bruised a finger in the frame of a door. She was obliged to hide her pain and suffer in patience. But a few days after, the torture proved so great, that she found it impossible to play the harp. She sat near the instrument and began to read. The father was naturally astonished.

"Come," said he, "this is no time for reading, you must work."

"I cannot work."

"What?"

"It hurts my finger to play."

"Show me your hands."

She did no such thing, but she hid her hands in her apron. Her father got angry and insisted. The girl grew stubborn, in her turn, and transported with anger, she seized the harp and ran her fingers over its strings, while the pain shattered her nerves. Unfortunately, the finger caught in one of the strings, and the nail was torn off. Emma fell upon the floor and her father had just time to prevent the heavy instrument from falling upon her head and crushing it. She was a long time recovering from her swoon, and her health was seriously compromised. But she gradually rallied, and resumed her studies. One of the things upon which M. Lajeunesse insisted was that his daughter should read music at first sight. She had an extraordinary aptitude in that direction. Her musical memory was likewise prodigious. Often, in her walks, after hearing a piece of military music, she would return to her piano and repeat it from beginning to end, without a single error. When Emma had acquired a certain mastery of her art, her father went with her through the principal towns and villages in the environs of Montreal, giving concerts. She played on the piano, the harp and the harmonium. He accompanied on the violin. On all his programmes, he invited the public to offer the young pianist a piece to play *prima vista*. She always passed through such perilous tests with credit. She made her *début* as a singer, in Montreal, at the age of eight; and even at that early age, the quality of her voice presaged her future eminence. On the 12th of September, 1862, she appeared at the Mechanic's Hall, under the patronage of Sir Fenwick Williams and staff, Lieut.-Col., Consul and Hon. C. S. Rodier, Mayor of the City. Her triumph was complete. In the same year, however, she retired to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, at Sault-au-Récollet, to complete her literary education. There she led a quiet, laborious life, for two years, and even had volleys of embracing the cloistral career. But her vocation so clearly pointed elsewhere, that she changed her mind and resolved upon a higher artistic culture.

II.

In 1864, M. Lajeunesse started with his family for Albany. There Emma found a protector in Bishop Courty. He obtained for her a teacher's employment in the Convent of that city, with the position of organist and first soprano in St. Joseph's Church. She kept the organ, however, only one year, finding the labor too severe for her delicate health. After several years spent in the capital of New-York, M. Lajeunesse, by his own savings and those of his daughter, and with the aid of a grand public concert, found means to undertake a voyage to Europe. Emma was further assisted in this resolve by the generosity of the Baroness Lafitte. On arriving in Paris, she placed herself under the direction of Duprez, the famous tenor. He, at once, divined her extraordinary gifts.

"Your nerves not solid enough for the piano," said he, "especially as it is played now-a-days. You were born a nightingale; follow the instincts of your race. *Noblesse oblige.*"

After two years spent with Duprez, she went to Milan by his recommendation. Her professor there was the celebrated Lamberti. After examining her, he exclaimed:

"Duprez has not exaggerated. There is a fortune in that little throat."

Under this great master, she passed several years in serious, difficult, uninterrupted study. Finally, overcoming her repugnance for the stage and her natural timidity, she appeared at the Opera House of Messina, in 1870, as *Anima* in *La Sonnambula*, and under her present *nom de guerre*, Albani. The manager of the Malta Opera House was in the audience, and before the beginning of the second act, had made her sign

an engagement to sing for him, during the next fall.

In Malta, her success was as decided as it had been at Messina. English officers garrisoned there, many of whom had previously been in Canada, were loud in their applause of the little Canadian nightingale. Her renown reached England, and Mr. Gye, of the Royal Italian Opera, engaged her for the next season. She was to have appeared in 1871, but after several rehearsals, the English impresario judged that her nerves were not yet sufficiently strong to confront the critical audiences of the great metropolis. He postponed her *début* till the following year, and Albani returned to study under her old master Lamberti. In 1871-72, Lamberti made her sing in the Theatre of La Pergola, Florence. He wrote thus to the director:

"I send you the most accomplished musician, and the most perfect singer, in regard to style, that ever went forth from my study."

The public of La Pergola recognized that the master had not deceived him, and the *palco scenico* was strewn with flowers at every appearance of Albani.

III.

On the 2nd April, 1872, Albani may be said to have regularly opened her career, as *Anima*, before a London audience. She was received with enthusiasm by her hearers, and with the highest favor by the critics. She followed this initial success by *Marta*, *Gilda*, in *Roberto*, and *Linda* de Chamouni. In October of the same year, she presented herself at the Theatre Italien, Paris. Before the most fastidious, if not the most critical audience in the world, she renewed her triumphs in the same series of lyric characters. The pamphlet before us gives lengthy extracts from the leading French papers, which are full of most discriminating praise. With the sanction of London and Paris, the future of Albani was secured. In April, 1873, she returned again to London, adding to her repertory, the roles of the Countess, in *Le Nozze de Figaro*, and *Elvira*, in *I Puritani*. During that season, she sang on alternate nights with Patti, and it is only justice to say that she shared the public favor with that popular artist. In October, 1873, she went to St. Petersburg, where her singing was not only a success, but an ovation. The enthusiasm of the Russians was unbounded. After another season at London, during the past summer, Albani crossed the Atlantic, and stepped upon the boards of the Academy of Music, New York, the 21st October, 1874. Her achievements there are fresh in the recollection of our readers. She, and she alone, saved Strakosch from failure, in his operatic management.

It is to be hoped that Canada will not be forgotten by her brilliant daughter, and that before she returns to Europe, all the principal cities of the Dominion may be privileged to hear this admirable artist. If Strakosch consults his own interests, he will not fail to bring Albani among us. He will be sure to make money. In any event, we are informed that Mlle. Lajeunesse will visit her native country in Spring, and spend a month or so among her relatives and the friends of her childhood.

HUMOUROUS.

BY an Irishman.—Why is a storm, when it's clearing up, like a castigation! Sure an' ain't it a bating?

"THE rude forefathers of the hamlet" are not known in Utah, but there are often four rude mothers in a family.

THE man who three years ago married a Newport belle says he begins to realize that a thing of beauty is a jaw breaker.

MRS. PARTINGTON declares that she does not wish to vote, as she fears she couldn't stand the shock of the electrical franchise.

THEY have a new test for intoxication in Canada. When a man can pronounce "reciprocity" without tripping, the police let him go.

THERE is a Connecticut widower who declares that nothing reminds him of his poor, dear wife so much as to live within earshot of a saw mill.

ONE by one the roses fade. It is now boldly denied that men who wear long hair are possessed of any more talent than men who have it nipped close.

A poor young man remarks that the only advice he gets from capitalists is "to live within his income;" whereas, the difficulty he experiences is to live without an income.

A CANADIAN murderer wanted them to put off the day of execution, owing to his being afflicted with the toothache; but the sheriff said he'd get to go to mill next day and he couldn't possibly accommodate the prisoner.

AN old bachelor says: "When I remember all the girls I've met together, I feel like a rooster in the fall exposed to every weather. I feel like one who treads alone some barn-yard all deserted, whose oats are fed, whose hens are dead, or all to market started."

IN Lowell, the other day, a discouraged mill-girl said to her boarding-house mistress, who was lamenting the fate of a boarder who had eloped with a sealawag grocery keeper: "You keep us on bull beef at \$4 a week and then expect us to be contented angels."

A LAD who borrowed a dictionary to read, returned it after he got through, with the remark: "It was werry nice reading, but it somehow changed the subject werry often." It was his sister that thought the first ice cream she tasted was a little touched with the frost.

A certain zealous but ignomant negro preacher, in expounding to his flock as to the astonishing nature of miracles, got a little confused in the matter. He said: "My beloved friends, the greatest of all miracles was about the loaves and fishes. Dere was 8,000 loaves and 2,000 fishes an' de twelve apostles had to eat dem all, and de miracles is dey didn't bust."