

given to the harbour by the city, nor does it even provide its lighting or police protection. . . . In consequence this port is regarded by shipowners and importers as a most expensive one, and avoided accordingly." Schemes have been from time to time submitted for the remedy of this appalling condition of affairs. At length Mr. St. George, city surveyor, and Mr. Kennedy, city engineer, in slowness and serenity, have come to the rescue. Two capable heads have been put together; the most capable features of the most capable plans have been selected, and a feasible whole is the result. The Harbour is to be improved, renovated, extended. The proposal has considered that the general trade of the centre of the city has a prior claim to that of local or individual interest. The old, unseemly, migratory, and sometimes evanescent freight sheds are to be replaced by permanent structures. In order to avoid encroachment upon existing rights on land, and narrowing the already too narrow frontage, new wharves will be built out into the river, and upon a plan which, by providing accommodation only in pace with the commercial requirements, will ensure an expenditure within the limits of the commercial credit. The plan also contemplates the removal of obstacles to loading and unloading arising from the exigencies of the current; but whether the much more serious difficulty in this respect consequent upon the immense and varying difference in the height of the water at different seasons has been scientifically faced, and will be scientifically overcome, the scheme does not at present pledge itself. Every season has many levels. Every ship has more. Is it easier to legislate for the seasons, or for the ships?

The City Council has voted one million dollars to inaugurate the scheme. Who shall live to know the cost of the venture?

Between McGill Street and the East End there is no easy access from Craig Street to the river, a drawback which has also been the object of some philanthropic penitence. Many proposals have, gourd-like, shot up, but having had "no deepness," have as suddenly withered away. Among them one, that Saint Lawrence Street be extended in a direct line to the Harbour, and another, that Jacques Cartier Square and Champ de Mars be levelled, and roads at angles east and west be opened to Craig Street, scarcely braved the glare of the noon-day sun. A third,—to secure a direct approach from Craig Street by tunnelling beneath the Square and the Champ, and opening upon a boulevard by the river, is understood to meet with favour in the eyes of the Government in Ottawa. The interest of the Minister of Militia in our defence (if not defiance) has been propitiated by the assurance of special attentions to our deserted battle-field in shape of fresh sod, renovated terraces, demolished wooden fences, new footpaths, and trees instead of stumps.

VILLE MARIE.

PARIS LETTER.

THE French seem to have the power of taking leaps in the dark and alighting on their feet. Now that the Boulanger affair is past, one begins to realize all that might have happened. If the General had been another sort of man he would undoubtedly have effected another *Coup d'Etat*. The Government completely lost their heads. I was told on good authority that the President and his family sat up two nights literally ready to leave Paris at a moment's notice. The most singular thing about the election was the utter feeling of uncertainty in every one's mind, even just before the results were announced. In England and Germany his defeat was looked upon as certain. Several Paris correspondents of leading London papers were giving imaginary figures, in which Boulanger was always beaten by forty thousand to eighty thousand votes. Even here no one took the election *au sérieux*. I speak of course of the *bourgeois*, for the workmen prudently kept their intentions quiet, and nothing could be gathered from their own special sheets, the *Lanterne* being Jacquist, and the *Intransigeant* Boulangist. The *Figaro* and more serious papers turned the whole thing into ridicule, but their tone has altered considerably since the decision of King Mob.

The 27th of January being the Emperor William's birthday, the day is naturally kept as a holiday all through Germany. Almost before the probable results of the election were known in Paris the news of Boulanger's triumph was telegraphed to Berlin, and produced a deep impression. The rage of his political opponents, Floquet, Clemenceau, etc., cannot be described in words, and they show a want of dignity in allowing it to be so apparent.

There can be no doubt that Boulanger's extraordinary popularity is greatly owing to his personal charm, and to the lavish promises he makes to all, and which he sometimes really fulfils, even at the cost of personal trouble. If you have invented a system of balloons for conquering Prussia, or a patent leather with which you can walk on water with perfect ease, or if you can save your country from financial ruin by a lavish use of paper money, go to *Notre brave Général*; most people will laugh at you or rudely bid you go back to *Charenton* (the great lunatic asylum), but he will listen courteously, promise to think about it, is invariably struck by your good sense and genius, and generally ends by desiring his secretary to present you with one of his photos, those not in the trade which he reserves for "my friends." This amiable peculiarity is so well known that people—men and women—come from all parts of France to interview him about various affairs. For instance: Three days before his election he received a deputation of hackmen, cabmen, and hotel waiters, and sent them away fully convinced that once elected their

powerful friend would obtain from the Parisian Municipal Council everything that the heart of jehu or *garçon* could desire in the way of extra fares or tips.

When it is considered that this system has been steadily pursued for at least four years, his widespread popularity ought not to excite the surprise it seems to do in the minds of his contemporaries, who, whilst in power, try to enforce their dignity by rendering themselves all but inaccessible to the public at large. In Legitimist circles the Comte de Paris is said to be going to make an effort to assert himself this spring, and the Imperialists are in a great state of excitement, for to them also Boulanger has made lavish promises which he will find it difficult to perform as time goes on.

In Cabanel, French Art has lost a most distinguished painter, and society a charming man, specially, however, as a lady's artist. His portraits will give to future generations of French women the truest impression of *la femme au XIX.ème siècle*. He lived and died in the curious old house inhabited by Alfred de Vigny, of "Cinq Mars" fame.

The death of the Crown Prince of Austria has produced a sad impression in Paris, for he was, rightly or wrongly, supposed to be an enemy to Germany, and this fact alone caused him to be popular here, and he was known to be well acquainted with French literature.

Notwithstanding the political and financial troubles which absorb just now so much attention, the spirit of gaiety has not deserted Paris. The ball of the Hotel de Ville, offered by the town to every citizen, came off last week with great *éclat*, and the Exhibition promises to be far more interesting than was at first expected, even by those who admired the original idea of its promoters, i.e., to celebrate the centenary of 1889 by the erection of a new and singularly hideous Tower of Babel. M. A. B.

THE REED PLAYER.

[On the Flyleaf of Mr. Archibald Lampman's New Book of Poems.]

THERE is a crying on the Northern lakes,
Lyric with sunrise, with the sundown low,
Freed on waste reaches when the drifting snow
Rides with the norwind, heard when June o'ertakes
The hillward rivers and white sleep forsakes
Them as the spent auroral streamers go,
Elusive, tender, sad, enduring, slow,
No rapture quickens and no sorrow slakes.

It brims the years with calm, yet few take heed.
Only the loon and whippoorwill have known
Where keeps the spirit in shy sequestering.
Till now their brother hath notched a river reed
From the blue limpid shallow-bars, and blown
The surge and whisper of the heart of spring.
BLISS CARMAN.

CANADIANS AND AMERICANS.

TO the ordinary foreigner, Canadians and Americans are one. They see no difference, apparently, in their manners, morals, or speech. This is not, however, so wonderful when we remember that even a Canadian has to consider with some care before an answer could be given to the question that is certainly asked more at the present juncture than in the past—the question, What is the difference between a Canadian and an American?

The first difference is one lying on the surface, and yet yielding a solution to further problems—or at any rate indicating one. Canadians are of better physique than the inhabitants of the States: broader shouldered, deeper chested, more heavily built, and, for the most part, lacking that air of anxiety that is common to the citizens of the Union. It is no gallantry, but simple truth, to say that Canadian women look brighter, more cheerful, more lovable, and more like Wordsworth's ideal woman, than our fair American cousins; and perhaps the cause of the difference lies in the fact that Americans do not take so much exercise in the open air, and eat luxuries that are more toothsome than nourishing.

In manner of speech we are assimilating more and more with the Americans, but some differences still exist to show that English influence has not altogether fled. Canadians speak more slowly and in a lower key than Americans, but without the pleasant and musical utterance that marks the inhabitants of the sea-girt isle, who seem gifted by kind nature with sweet and rich voices. No one who has attended the theatres in Canada or across the border can fail to notice the difference in speech between English and American actors. Canadians take a position midway between the two, but incline to the American more than to the English.

Slowness in utterance is to some extent an index of the manner of life. The whole life of Americans is more or less a rush onwards, and nothing could be better than such a life if the sole object were to speedily settle the vast territories to the west and north and to develop the resources of the continent. To many Americans that is the sole aim of life; and so, compared with England, or even with Canada, they are a fast-living people, wedded, however, to their idols, so that the wise words of Herbert Spencer fell upon their ears, but have had no perceptible effect upon their manner of living. Canada, again, stands between the two extremes afforded by England and by young America—more progressive than England, less hurried (and worried) than the United States.

In politics the two countries differ more widely, perhaps, than in anything else. It is not that our standard

of political ethics is much higher than that of Americans, though higher it certainly is. But the intense spirit of American democracy almost merged in demagogism does not exist in Canada. Canadians are democratic, certainly, but whether it be the result of the link that still unites us to England, or the result of more thorough training in professions and trades, democracy in Canada is a sober and rational goddess, whose worshippers never have to even affect a frenzy of devotion. If there were no stronger reason for maintaining our connection with the British Empire this would be almost sufficient—that our system of democratic and responsible government is just nicely balanced by the *souçon* of monarchy which we derive from British traditions. No honest Canadian wishes to see a Canadian House of Lords, but neither should an honest Canadian wish to see among us an American House of Representatives. In politics, therefore, as in so many other things, Canada appears as a link between the limited but unmistakably aristocratic monarchy of England and the hot and fiery democracy of the young republic.

Speaking of politics, reminds one that it has often been said that there was lamentable indifference in American elections to the personal character of the candidate—much more than is shown in our own country. This is hardly true, though undoubtedly the question of character is thrown greatly into the background by the more engrossing of "record." "What is his record?" is a more vital question in an American election, and one much more often asked than the question "What is his character?" Besides this, there is a general feeling among the better class of Americans that politicians are little better than knaves, that they are animated by a wish for the perquisites of office, that they bear an itching palm; and, in fact, are altogether corrupt. We have not gone so far as this in Canada. High-minded and honourable men yet take part in politics, and their honour is never called into question. Most of our leading statesmen have not profited pecuniarily from their position in Parliament, but have retired from politics poorer than when they entered them. The spirit of the time is sometimes reflected in the comic papers of a country, and no one who reads the numerous comic journals in the United States can doubt that the distrust of politics and politicians is universal. J. H. BOWES.

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS AND HER FIRST SUCCESSFUL BOOK.

THE papers are telling a romantic little story about the courtship and marriage of that charming writer of entertaining books, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. Her latest book seems to have procured her a husband, though it was also the cause, in a way, of the accident which nearly sent her prospective father-in-law to his tomb. But there is no need to repeat the details of the very interesting episode here. My story is about Mrs. Ward's first great success as a writer of strong and bright fiction. The incident has not appeared in print before, so far as I can learn. It came to me from good authority, and its truth may be vouched for. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps began authorship at the bread and butter age of most school girls. Her productions were characterized by gracefulness of narrative and strength of incident. For the most part they took the form of short stories. In 1868, however, she turned her attention to more elaborate work, and one fine morning she rather tremblingly entered the sanctum of the late James T. Fields, at that time the head of the publishing firm of Fields, Osgood and Company, Boston. She carried the manuscript of *The Gates Ajar* in her hand. Fields knew her father well, and though he had not much confidence at first in the wares which the young authoress offered him, he received her graciously, and promised to give her story every consideration. Esteem for the old Massachusetts clergyman probably prompted him to give *The Gates Ajar* his best attention as much as anything else. Fields' manner was always captivating. Authors used to say that his refusal of a manuscript was oftentimes preferable to the acceptance of the same by other publishers. In this instance, however, he resolved for the sake of the girl's father to risk the expenses of publication. He was shrewd enough to make the edition small; so five hundred copies of the great book were printed and bound. Osgood, his partner, being more of a man of the world, did not quite share Fields' sympathies in the matter. He looked upon the venture as another evidence of his partner's "foolish, soft heart." Asked if he had read the book; he said, "No, he never read any book published by his house until it had reached a circulation of ten thousand copies." Well, *The Gates Ajar* was published. Copies were sent out to the reviewers and a few booksellers were supplied with small quantities of the work. The criticisms were not all unfavourable, but the orders came in very slowly. Nearly three months passed away, when, to the surprise and joy of Fields, there was a visible change in the fortunes of the book. Letters began to come to him from all parts of the country demanding *The Gates Ajar*. These demands increased, and edition after edition was put to press. The success of the work was phenomenal. It rapidly became the vogue and the subject of enthusiastic conversation everywhere, and Miss Phelps' name was on the lips of everybody. She had struck a new vein in fiction, and imitators of her style and manner sprang up on all sides. Less than two years after *The Gates Ajar* had seen the light, a friend dropped into Osgood's cosy library one night, and seeing him with a book in his hands, asked him the name of it. "*The Gates Ajar*," he replied, "and a mighty good book it is, too. We are printing our fortieth thousand." GEORGE STEWART, JR.