

A Reply to "Union Member."

MONTREAL, Dec. 4, 1908.

To the Editor of The Martlet:

Dear Sir.—The letter of "Union Member" in your last issue is extremely interesting. It is, indeed, gratifying to know that there is one "knocker" who really desires to improve matters, and I can assure him that he will incur no animosity on the part of the Reading-room sub-committee while attempting to aid us. His suggestion as regards a book in which members may set down their ideas is very good, and a motion will probably be introduced in the House Committee that such a book be kept in the hall porter's office.

Mr. Editor, "Union Member" asserts that the periodicals are "excessively unpunctual in arrival." Can he prove any part of that statement. He attempts to do so in two instances. He says, referring to the "Nineteenth Century," that "a whole week before one could read a review in 'Public Opinion' of an article in that same 'Nineteenth Century.'" Is he quite positive that he has not badly mixed the October and November numbers. Possibly he has not, but what we know is — and this is really the point at issue — that the regular dates for the "Nineteenth Century" to arrive in Montreal are the 18th, 19 and 20th of the month. The November "Nineteenth Century" was received by the Foster-Brown Co. on Nov. 19th, and was signed for and in the Union covers on the 20th.

Another example of his is the "University Magazine," which (the October number), as he says, "was on sale downstairs two weeks before it appeared in the red

covers of the Union." The magazine appeared on the 2nd or 3rd of October. Does he remember that the voting on the names of the candidates for House Committee was not held till the 6th or 7th, and that the meeting at which the chairmen of the sub-committees were appointed was not held till a week later? Does he consider it denotes particularly slack management when a sub-committee was formed, magazines chosen, an order placed and filled in his own margin of three days?

That "Punch," "Sketch" and the "Illustrated News" are often late is entirely incorrect. One "Sketch" did not arrive. It did not reach the news company, having gone astray in the mail, but we have been promised that we shall yet receive the missing copy. With that exception these periodicals have been signed for and placed in their covers as soon as possible after the arrival of the packet. The mere fact that "Union Members" says that he sees these periodicals late would be poor evidence in court against the double check system which has been and is yet in vogue.

"Union Member" found the "Fortnightly" for May, 1908, still in the covers, and he considered it very good. The "Fortnightly" is not on our list, having been exchanged for — among others — the "Blue Book" and "Popular," which he particularly specifies and condemns. Is he not in this very thing guilty of that very bias of opinion of which he suspects us? We have no more affection for the two above-mentioned magazines than he has, but popular demand — and we sounded it very carefully on this point —

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