

former or the latter preponderate. The reasons for my strong belief that we will gain more than we lose I proceed to give.

It is alleged that the attention and services of the staff will be diverted from the pupils to the teachers in training. There is no reason why this should be so during class hours. The presence of the latter as spectators may be for a little while a slightly disturbing element—how long will depend largely on the teacher of the department, but during the class work they get no attention from the class teacher. He has conferred with them beforehand as to the way in which his subject is to be dealt with, giving them an outline of the procedure he is going to adopt, and of the reasons which justify it. He will confer with them afterwards as to the way in which his subject has been dealt with, and will account to them for any departures from his pre-arranged plan which they may have noticed or to which he may call their attention.

Just here comes in the censure to your own remark as to the utility of this opportunity for observation to the teacher in training. When he was at school himself his faculties were all directed to getting up work for examination, and methods attracted little of his attention. Now he is familiar with the work, and his attention is concentrated on the interchange of thought between teacher and pupils. I need hardly add that in my belief he will see in our schools better methods than he has observed in some other places, if not in all, and if any of our teachers are practising defective methods they will soon be forced under this system to abandon such as are indefensible.

At this point we come face to face with the important fact that for our own teachers this training institute work will be at once an inspiration, an impulse, and a discipline. The best and most earnest teachers are apt to get into grooves, and nothing could be better adopted for getting them out than the inevitable necessity of looking into their own methods with a view to explaining them to others and defending them against objections. With good opportunities for arriving at an intelligent opinion on this point I make bold to say that our teachers will rapidly and greatly improve under the system, and that if they do not they will have to make way for others. And if the teachers become more expert the pupils will benefit by the improvement.

In comparison with this advantage the slight derangement of the schools, caused by the influx of teachers in training, sinks into insignificance, and moreover it will be very slight. No "raw students" will be allowed to "try their prentice hands" on the pupils. The teachers in training will be well educated men and women, graduates of universities or experienced public school teachers. They will have spent sometime studying the history and theory of education in the School of Pedagogy before they begin their attendance at our institutes, and their theoretical training will go on step by step with their practical observations. Not till they have been at both kinds of work for a longer or shorter time will they be allowed to teach a class at all, and then only after explaining their method beforehand. Their class opportunities will be so few and they will be distributed through the school in such small groups that the disadvantage of their presence will be reduced to a minimum, while year by year the advantages direct and indirect will go on increasing. At least that is the belief which induced some, if not all, of the members of the Board, after careful and anxious consideration, to support the scheme.

WM. HOUSTON.

Toronto, March 14, 1891.

# A CANADIAN NATIONAL LEAGUE.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—A short time ago, as you may remember, I made a suggestion in your columns that a Canadian national league should be formed, the object of which would be to further the nationhood of Canada and promote the interests of our country. At the time the scheme was pooh-poohed as being totally unnecessary. Canadian sentiment on the subject of annexation, we were assured, was perfectly satisfactory. "The mere consideration of such a league," the *Ottawa Evening Journal* said, "would be an admission that there is danger of political union with the States, and such an admission would be an untruth." I think the last election has been a strange comment upon such statements. Canadian sentiment on this subject is not satisfactory. I think it is much more solidly opposed to annexation than Americans, who only judge from the numerical results of the election, may be led to infer; but it is not satisfactory yet. It will not be so until every man, woman and child in the Dominion will be content to wait and work patiently, and, if necessary, even make sacrifices in order to preserve our present position; not out of a sentimental love of England—though that is a strong feeling with me—but for the sake of Canada. Great as the privilege is of being an integral part of the grandest empire the world has ever seen, we, as Canadians, must not forget that the welfare of our native land must come first. Any other policy would not only be disloyal to our country, but disloyal to the best interests of the British Empire; for the secret of England's success as a colonizing power lies in the fact that she allows her colonies to do what they please, and that her colonies do it. A man who builds a house for himself will, generally speaking, be more careful about its construction than a man who builds a house for some one else. A colony

which labours to exalt itself into a nation will become a worthier dependency of the Crown than one which is content never to hope to be anything but a dependency. We must not be in a hurry, we must wait. Maturity will come in time. One day we shall be able to look the States in the face and meet on equal terms. Every day, I believe, brings us nearer to the federation, not only of the Empire, but of the whole Anglo-Saxon race, when the world shall be clasped in English arms and speak in English speech. Should we at any time be mean-spirited enough to allow ourselves to be swallowed up by the hydra-headed nation to the south, our action will retard not promote such a consummation, and we shall have no share in the glory. Surely, then, it cannot be out of season to urge again the formation of a Canadian national league on the lines I have proposed, and to ask you, Mr. Editor, for your counsel and assistance in the matter. Now that the suspense of the elections is over, it is almost with the joy of a captive who has regained his liberty that I go back to my long winter drives through the forests of this glorious country and know that it is still ours—still Canada's—and not simply the half-despised backwoods possession of the "million-footed" mob which kicks in and kicks out the ever-changing tenants of the White House at Washington. Yes, Canada has been saved this time, but the cry goes up, "How long?"

Drummondville, P.Q. FREDERICK GEORGE SCOTT.

P.S.—It may be well to restate the principles of the proposed Canadian national league. Mr. Lighthall had, unknown to me, started something of the kind before I wrote my first letter, but I do not know the lines on which he is working. My suggestion was:—

1. That a C.N.L. should be formed with male and female members, the object of which would be to develop the national idea, and extend the knowledge of our resources, our literature, our history; to erect public monuments, and to have, annually, public dinners at which our political leaders could speak.
2. That entrance to such a league should involve the signing of paper, pledging the signer to work in the interests of the nationhood of Canada, specially as against annexation.
3. The small subscription fee would pay for cheap tracts, and perhaps a periodical devoted to Canadian interests.
4. A small badge should be worn by the members as a means of recognizing one another, and there should be branches of the C.N.L. in England and the States.

## SONGS OF THE SEA.

To him, who in the love of Nature, holds  
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks  
A various language.

NO part of Nature's wide domain can these words of Bryant's be more truthfully applied than to the sea, and in no literature has the "various language" which it speaks been interpreted into grander verse than in the literature of the English tongue. How vividly some of our English sea-songs call up memories of the ocean in its infinitely-varying aspects.

Suppose yourself, gentle reader—I like that old epithet by which writers conjure into their magic circle the readers they love—suppose yourself off for a sail on a bright summer's afternoon. The wind is blowing almost a gale, and there is a voice in it which prophesies rain on the morrow. But that dark bank of clouds at the south-west is still a day off, and there is yet not a cloud to obscure the brightness of the sun.

Land and sea  
Give themselves up to jollity.

Dull care is driven away, or rather we flee from it, for we left its shadow on the wharf, as we sailed merrily down the harbour, and every bound of our boat from wave to wave leaves it farther and farther behind us. Soon we round the outmost cape, and yield ourselves up to the glad sense of freedom, which the broadening view awakens within us. While the changing waves, parted by the prow, rush swiftly alongside, and foam out behind, and an occasional one breaking over the bow gives us a taste of the salt sea spray, what better song is there in any language for such a time than this one:—

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,—  
A wind that follow fast,  
And fills the white and rustling sail  
And bends the gallant mast,—  
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,  
While like the eagle free,  
Away the good ship flies, and leaves  
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind!  
I heard a fair one cry;  
But give to me the snoring breeze  
And white waves heaving high,—  
And white waves heaving high, my boys,  
The good ship tight and free;  
The world of waters is our home  
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon horned moon,  
And lightning in yon cloud;  
And hark the music, mariners:  
The wind is piping loud,—  
The wind is piping loud, my boys,  
The lightning flashing free;  
But the hollow oak our palace is,  
Our heritage the sea.

There is a song by Barry Cornwall, which has sung

itself into my memory, and always comes up at such a time, beginning,

The sea, the sea, the open sea,  
The blue, the fresh, the ever free.

And yet I read some time ago that the author was so subject to sea-sickness that he could not stand the voyage across the "narrow sea" from England to France. So that the verse,

I love, O how I love to ride  
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,  
Where every mad wave drowns the moon,  
And whistles aloft its tempest tune,

must be taken as telling what he would love to do were it not for sea-sickness. What a pity when he has written us such a splendid song he could not enjoy forming one of our company!

But there is little brightness in sea or land or sky at the close of such a day. We sail back as the sun goes down behind the watery clouds. All the light has gone from sea and shores. The dull roar of the breakers seems to fill the heavy evening air. The white foam flies up over the bar at the harbour's mouth as we sail quickly in. How different the language the sea speaks to us now. Kingsey's "Three Fishers" speaks our thoughts for us.

Three fishers went sailing out into the west,  
Out into the west as the sun went down;  
Each thought of the woman who loved him the best,  
And the children stood watching them out of the town:  
For men must work, and women must weep,  
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,  
Though the harbour be moaning.

The sad voice of the sea at evening has been translated, yet more truthfully into verse in his other song of the "Poor Fisher Folk."

O Mary, go and call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home,  
And call the cattle home,  
Across the sands o' Dee!  
The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,  
And all alone went she.

The creeping tide came up along the sand,  
And o'er and o'er the sand,  
And round and round the sand,  
As far as eye could see;  
The blinding mist came down and hid the land  
And never home came she.

O, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair,—  
A tress o' golden hair,—  
Above the nets at sea?  
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair  
Among the stakes of Dee.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,  
The cruel crawling foam,  
The cruel hungry foam,—  
To her grave beside the sea  
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home  
Across the sands of Dee.

Byron's farewell to England in "Childe Harold" has the same mournful melody,

Adieu, Adieu! my native shore  
Fades o'er the waters blue;  
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,  
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.  
Yon sun that sets upon the sea  
We follow in his flight;  
Farewell a while to him and thee,  
My native land, good night!

For war songs (the "spirit of our fathers" yet survives in us) we have that spirited naval ode of Campbell's,

Ye Mariners of England!

worthy of the nation that is "Mistress of the seas," and his stirring lyrics of naval victories, which have been sung by British seamen to the fierce accompaniment of the "rushing battle-bolt from the three-decker out of the foam." What one of the many thoughts which the ocean has power to arouse in the minds of men has not found true expression in English song?—*The Dalhousie Gazette*.

ABOUT A.D. 1215, the Countess of Anjou paid two hundred sheep, five quarters of wheat, and the same quantity of rye, for a volume of Sermons—so scarce and dear were books at that time; and although the Countess might in this case have possibly been imposed upon, we have it, on Mr. Gibbon's authority, that the value of manuscript copies of the Bible, for the use of the monks and clergy, commonly was from four to five hundred crowns at Paris, which, according to the relative value of money at that time and now, could not, at the most moderate calculation, be less than as many pounds sterling in the present day.

THE fact that Easter falls on a very early date this year (March 29), has caused a "friend of fact and figures" to collect some curious statistics. In 1883, he says, Easter fell on March 25, and it will only once again this century, namely, in 1894, fall on so early a date. In the three following centuries it will occur only eight times on the same date, namely, in 1951, 2035, 2046, 2057, 2103, 2114, 2125 and 2198. The earliest date on which Easter can fall is on March 22, and this only in case the moon is full on March 21, when this date happens to fall on Saturday. This combination of circumstances is extremely rare; it occurred in 1390, 1761 and 1817, and will happen again in 1990, 2076 and 2144, while during the three following centuries it is not once "on the books" at this early date. On the other hand, Easter never falls later than April 25; this was the case in 1666, 1734 and 1886, and will only happen once in the next century, namely, in 1943.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.