

as the North Pole. No one expects the Anglo-Egyptian expedition will long remain at Dongola; it waited for the cool and flood season to arrive there: the same reasons must be invoked to push on to Khartoum. The advanced guard of British civilization at Uganda is beckoning to the Sirdar to come. The sooner all the English African grabs are swallowed the quicker can ensue the processes of digestion. The independence of the Khedive must be secured; the conversion of the debt effected, and the annual tribute to the Yildiz Kiosk stopped. These measures would be as efficacious against "gangrene" as Holloway's ointment against bad legs of thirty years' standing. People are feeling queer at the awkward turn internal affairs are taking in Germany; there is always the possibility of seeking in exterior complications the extrication for a home deadlock. It is remarked that the Kaiser has been down on his luck ever since his memorable and unhappy wire to President Kruger. The Matabele outbreak being regarded as crushed, discussion is now taking place as to the pace the development of Rhodesia will acquire; that it is in for a "big boom" no one seems to deny; that the Transvaal will come into line for the general interests of the Colony is not doubted; she cannot maintain the position of a lone star, nor is she seriously credited with the ambition to lead a separate movement against English rule. The impression exists, that the story of the Raid and the Johannesburg Reformers has yet to be written. The sooner that is done the better, while so many of the actors are still in the flesh; this effected, the whole matter ought to be in the deep bosom of the ocean buried.

It would not be surprising if all the trades flew to arms against the bicyclists; the great wheel movement is certainly a profound change in manners and customs. It certainly saves outlay on luxuries: it begets a democratic indifference to the stucco and starch facades and sides of society. The booksellers are prepared for the worst; literature was said to only enrich publishers, now the profit receiving class lack profits. Every day seems to have its new wail; the fashionable boot and shoe makers rage like the heathen, assert that the ladies despise now their cinderella slippers at 40 fr. the pair, preferring the untanned bicycle shoe with its buckle for 10 fr. It is true that ladies after an exhilarating spin feel averse to changing costume or getting into a gala toilette, or reading, or doing anything else, save enjoying a siesta. Beyond doubt the bicycle and the Turkish bath have restored many to robust health. Then gentlemen commence to take a pleasure in ladies bewitching the world with their wheeling, especially when the costume, elegantly simple, is in keeping. The auto-car—about three new ones appear in Paris daily—is also laying its mark on the time-worn institutions of locomotion by the noble animal. Livery stables are quietly closing, and horse-dealers figure of late unusually large in the list of bankruptcies. But life springs from death.

"Frigotherapathy," that is the new cure Parisians will be invited to try, from next October, when suffering from dyspepsia or sluggish stomach: no more life pills or big or little ditto of any sort. Engineer Pictet has his Troglodyte wells ready, by which the patient, after being examined by two doctors, will be slowly lowered into the antarctic depths, to be bathed in a temperature of 110 to 212 degrees below zero! The patient will then be wound up—in the cord sense—not a block of ice, or as stiff as a frozen leg of mutton from Australasia, but cured of his ills. It is hardly yesterday since Turkish baths have been invented, to cure us of all ills, by heating the mortal frame to about 212 degrees above zero; now it is that many below that leads to centenarianism.

Parisians are in their glory; since the death of "Paul and Virginia," the Darby and Joan chimpanzees at the Zoo, their cage apartments have remained vacant. Now they are occupied by "Monsieur" Baboun, and "Madame" Baton: two chimps. from French Guinea. They are models of domestic bliss; walk arm in arm round their cage, and after eating their dinner, fried eggs and meat, they wipe the plates with a napkin and smile thanks to the waiter.

Paris, August 22nd, 1896.

Z.

The masses in France take little interest in religious doctrine; but the French are keenly alive to the political and social action of a church: hence they endow missions abroad while stumping the country for the separation of church and state at home.

Letters to the Editor.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF APPLIED CHEMISTRY.

SIR,—Your issue of the 21st missed being sent to me while away, as the other issues were, so that I have but just seen it. "Current Topics" is a department to which naturally attaches the most importance as dealing with current events. Having read it one feels up-to-date in the most notable events of the time. And your paragraphs on "The Second International Congress of Applied Chemistry" met my views exactly. As I read the first two the question, Where was Canada? impatiently arose, and I was more than gratified to find that your third paragraph asked that very question. Why, sir, was not Canada represented at so important a gathering? Why? Because as yet Canada is Provincial—there is no mistaking the fact. Her people have not yet learned to think of themselves as a people but as segregations. Till we come out of this narrow groove of thought we shall never make ourselves felt as a people. Till we take our place in international gatherings as a matter of course, and so manifest to the world our self-respect, we may cry Nationality—Independence all we like, we shall only look, and be, ridiculous. The old York motto—the motto our Women's Canadian Historical Society has adopted as alone adequately indicative of work and aim—the motto "DEEDS SPEAK," applies strongly in the present instance. "Why was Canada absent" from such a gathering, perhaps above all others, a gathering of the time? It was not for lack of able and accomplished chemists: Pyke, Ellis, Macfarland, Shutt, are names that rise at once to minds; a dozen more might readily be added, covering alike every branch of the great science, and coming from all over the Dominion. What these men have missed in aspiration, enlargement, encouragement, and opportunity for observation, it is difficult to estimate; what Canada has missed cannot be estimated. Let us see that it never occurs again.

S. A. C.

Music.

STUDIES IN VOCAL MUSIC — FOURTH PAPER: THE SONGS OF ROBERT FRANZ.

IT would be difficult to point out any composer of high rank whose songs display such striking uniformity in quality as those of Robert Franz. Few, if any of them, can be fairly set aside as altogether unworthy of attention, and the number of those that are unquestionably great is equally small. These statements show at once both the strength and the weakness of the composer. He does not turn aside from his high aims for the purpose of gaining the applause of the ignorant, nor, on the other hand, is he able, strive as he may, to reach those rare altitudes where only the greatest masters—and they but seldom—have stood. With these opinions probably most careful students of Franz will agree; but if we should seek to define exactly the height of the plane which his works occupy there would no doubt be much dissent. While to the present writer it seems that very many of the songs have been *made* and not *born*—cunningly made, yet lacking somewhat in power—at the same time there is a charm about the finest among them which is unquestionable. Many of them are short, and the prevailing style is decidedly simple. Yet they are, to a large extent, unconventional, and it was, perhaps, in the effort to avoid conventionality that the composer sometimes produced melodies which seem rather strained and unattractive. Frequent and quite unexpected changes of key are to be noted as a prominent feature of the songs, producing at times delightful effects, but on other occasions giving to the compositions a restless and uncertain character. In not a few instances this uncertainty is brought to a climax by closing the song without returning to the chord of the tonic—a most unusual custom and one which is often unpleasant to many listeners. Sometimes the composer selects this type of ending without any easily discernible reason, but its purpose is readily seen when it serves to heighten the effect of incompleteness produced by the words of the song when they end with an unanswered question. "Wand' ich in dem Wald des Abends," Op. 39, No. 4, and "Ach, wie komm ich da hinüber?" Op. 41, No. 2, will serve as examples, besides