

the "remainder" look, are pyramids of horse-shoes. There is a washing-machine, where the linen is scrubbed by brushes inside a box, and that economizes soap. There is an infant prodigy, aged four years, that plays any piece of music she once hears. She cannot read music, so has to depend on ear. In stall-decoration, the Norwegians are very successful. Norway owed her support to France, since the latter purchases enormously timber and skins from that country.

The Italian section is especially remarkable for its rich, artistic fitting-up, where there is nothing loud in colour, nor heavy in arrangement. Being acquainted with one of the chief officials, I demanded if he felt any of the effects of the unhappy political relations between his country and France. "None at all; every article of a really valuable character exhibited has been sold, and plenty of orders booked. As for the abolition of the commercial treaty, any one studying the statistics in our section in the economical court, will find that it has not affected Italy seriously." In faience, ceramics, and corals, Italy has unrivalled displays. The show of carved woods is very superior, and the manner in which marble has been made, not only to speak, but to "laugh," is peculiarly excellent. The subjects in wood-carving and marble of a humorous nature are very various and hilarious. The collection of gloves and combs is superb, and the display of Venetian glass is among one of the popular delights to witness its being manufactured at another section, in "Habitation Street." There are boxes of roses, that if the Shah comes across them he will certainly purchase the collection. When you take up a box of the flowers the petals expand, emit delicious perfume, and play some voluptuous piece of melody.

Boulangism has been hit in the cantonal elections, but the blunder will not be repeated, by the General seeking to repair his ill-luck, in contesting the second ballot. He will now try his fortune at the legislative elections—the conclusive test. Perhaps the importance Boulangism has attained is chiefly due to the Government's attacking it with such a display of force. The country has not the slightest intention of throwing up the Republic—knowing well there is nothing to replace it—but has no objection to re-cast its administration. The two evils France suffers from are: in European prestige, she has been eclipsed by Germany, and to re-conquer that, she must stake her life as a nation—what the nation is not prepared to do. Independent of being worried by divided republicans, she is harassed by the monarchists, who have an omnipotent rôle when the republicans are mutual enemies. The moment the North and South, the East and West parties, consent to give way to a common form of government, then France will have internal peace. That moment will be co-eval with the millennium, and in the mean time, political warfare will be the order of the day, reined in at stated periods by universal suffrage.

The Cretan question is considered to be ugly. England does not contemplate occupying, and she is equally resolved not to allow any European Power to "protect" the island, till she quits Egypt. As at Tangiers, she will be among the first to land men to defend her residents. It might not be difficult to arrange with Turkey to allow Greece to protect the island for a certain sum paid to the Sultan, yearly.

The exhumation of the remains of the Grand Carnot, of Marieau, etc., for re-interment at the Pantheon, etc., does not create much attention. Mortuary politics never were popular in France. Besides, the "procession of the biers," is a *memento quid pulvis es*, when the motto of Exhibition year is, *Tout à la joie!*

A stall in the retrospective section of the Exhibition contains a tomb of a warrior: a card states that among the objects of "personal use" of the deceased are a skull and a jawbone.

HONORARY DEGREES.

ALTHOUGH it would be a subject for deep regret if our Canadian universities should become as free in conferring honorary degrees as Dr. Leonard Woolsey Bacon, in a recent number of the *Forum*, says that Harvard and Yale are, not to mention the universities of less note in the United States, yet is it not the case that degree-conferring powers have been needlessly extended and exercised even in Canada? We have numerous universities, some of them existing only on paper, and without any teaching faculties, yet these must needs meet in convocation once a year, or perhaps oftener, and confer degrees which really mean nothing. A great mistake was also made in granting degree-conferring powers to certain theological colleges, which have exercised them in making D.D.s *ad libitum*. The same remarks which Dr. Bacon, in the article referred to, applies to the weakness among clergymen in his country, to have the mystical letters appended to their names, and to use them both with reference to themselves and their fellows on all possible occasions, will apply in Canada, and the degree of D.D., which should be a mark of distinguished pre-eminence in theological attainments, has almost ceased to be such. It is to be feared that the degree has been too frequently conferred, not so much as a reward of merit as with the view of placing it where it will do the most good. Some of these degree conferring colleges are seeking to secure endowments. Is it not possible that the conferring of their honorary degrees is not always entirely disinterested, but that they hope, to use a hackneyed term, to become rich by degrees? I do not mean to say that the authori-

ties of these colleges deliberately dispose of their degrees for mercenary considerations, but I do say that appearances indicate that they sometimes confer a degree which they would hesitate to bestow did they not cherish the hope that the conferee, or some of his friends, would remember the institution in his will, or if not going so far as that, that substantial advantages would accrue to the institution as a result of the honour bestowed by it.

What is true of the degree of D.D. is perhaps still more true respecting the degree of LL.D. It is a very convenient toy to play with, perfectly harmless you know. It can be conferred without hesitation whether the recipient knows anything of law or not. It would be absurd to make a man a doctor of divinity who had never studied theology (though I believe it has been done in the case of Count Bismarck, on what pretext I am not aware), but to make a man a doctor of laws who knows nothing of law is apparently considered quite the proper thing. In one instance I believe (I am happy to say it was not in Canada), it was conferred upon a person who had invented an improved stove! That individual doubtless conferred a greater boon upon humanity (if his stove was a good one, and probably it was) than many who toil and moil with their brain, and discover some new theory or advance some new idea in the world of thought, but let some new degree be adopted if a distinction of that class is desirable, to meet such cases, and let not the degree and the individual be rendered ridiculous.

This is a utilitarian age and more attention is being paid to technical and industrial training and less to the dead languages and abstruse subjects fitted only for mental gymnastics than formerly. Why not affiliate our schools of practical science with the universities as has been already done in some instances, and have degrees which would cover the cases of those who had undergone a training or distinguished themselves in the field of manual work? Do not degrade those distinctions which ought to signify a training in the realm of mind.

In making these comments I do not wish to cast any reflection upon one of our leading universities which recently turned out a large batch of LL.D.s, the first in its history, for I believe that in every case they were worthily bestowed, but I wish to utter a note of warning and to urge the authorities of our universities and degree-conferring colleges to be sparing in the exercise of their powers. I should be sorry indeed to see a graduate of any Canadian institution feel constrained to write of his fellow graduates as Dr. Bacon has had to do. But if the brakes are not put on I fear it will not be long till there will be reason to do so. People wearing honorary degrees, it is only fair to say not all conferred by home institutions, are becoming very plentiful. By all means let everyone who can have a degree, but let it be an evidence of mental training, a proof that its possessor has learned how to study, rather than the result of so much knowledge obtained by means of cram, or what is worse, so much of a consideration paid for an equivalent. I trust, however, no Canadian college will ever sink so low as to sell its degrees.

J. J. BELL.

LONDON LETTER.

LOOK! About this spot Tom of Ten Thousand was killed by Konigsmark's gang," quoted my companion, as we stood by St. James's on Saturday morning to watch the gilt coaches bearing the marriage party on their way to the little chapel across the Mall. "In that great red house Gainsborough lived, and Ouloden Cumberland, George the Third's uncle. Yonder is Sarah Marlborough's palace, just as it stood when that termagant occupied it." As she spoke immense crowds, swaying forward towards the garden gates, broke into a roar, for through the glass front of a slow-moving carriage the bride's white skirts were visible. Poor pale-faced, nervous bride, bowing stiffly, looking gravely; what a contrast to the jovial smiling father by her side, who seemed as proud and contented as if the Scotch Earl waiting by the altar were a king or an emperor. Golden crowns decorated the golden chariot, magnificent as the one that took Cinderella to the ball; royal arms, crossed with the label of the eldest son, blazed from the panels; footmen in the dress of the last century guided the be-ribboned shining horses, while round about came the soldier escort. Gallop fast, shining horses; roll quickly, brilliant carriage. The fairy godmother may at a touch, and for some caprice, turn you back again into the pumpkin, lizards, rats, which once you were. How familiar the cortège looked as it passed. A thousand times one has stood by the roadside to watch a princess drive to be married, those lovely princesses whose histories Hans Andersen has told us, those beautiful ladies in jewelled coronets and embroidered robes who condescended to enliven many a quiet hour in one's childhood. Scenes, the *facsimile* of this, coloured in the same crude manner with reds, and yellows, and blues, are well-known to us all. But always the fairy-tale bride looks radiant, and smiles. It is only in real life that as you stare into the gilt coach you see the white quivering face and eyes misty with tears of the girl leaving home for the first time, a girl heedless of diamonds and laces and brocades, thinking only of her mother, and her sisters, and the boys. In real life princesses are the same as ordinary folk, and the dimmed blue eyes and unsteady lips spoke a language not of the Court but one we could all understand. "God bless her, poor dear; I hope she'll be happy," said someone near me, resting for a moment on the edge of the road. Princess Roseleaf in the story would think such a remark

impertinent, for in Fairyland brides and bridegrooms take the happiness for granted, but Princess Louise would have said Amen to the prayer of Her Majesty's affectionate subject, who had turned away from her every-day toil to look with sympathy and interest at the young girl in her orange blossoms and point lace.

That swell quarter of the town which the Royal wedding had put in a fever was soon left behind. It affected a square mile at most, just that spot where, with a park between, the palaces lie near together. In Pall Mall, and again in the Strand, there were tokens of it, for flags hung from many of the windows, and garish decorations of coloured glass were set up in readiness for the evening illuminations; but as we left the Griffin behind, and climbed the little hill on which St. Paul's is set, we saw nothing to remind us that it was the wedding day of the Queen's granddaughter. Indeed, after we had crossed London Bridge into "Poet and Player Land," as Besant calls Southwark, the fête on the other side of the water became not in the least of importance compared to the facts that down Lant Street we could see the house where Bob Sawyer entertained his friends at that memorable party, and that here, close at hand, stands the Marshalsea.

Do you ever read in "Little Dorrit," I wonder, or do the Meagles, Barnacles and Merdles, the mystery that surrounds Rigaud, combine to try your patience too much? For the sake of the Borough scenes and young John, for Plornish, the plasterer, and his delightful wife, the volume lying forgotten on the shelves will bear looking into, and if by good luck you possess the first edition, with the Phiz illustrations, you will not consider the time wasted which we spent in reviving old recollections of the story. And what a queer story! A great writer is reported to have said that "Little Dorrit" is "d—d dull," and the judgment cannot be called harsh. But, dull as much of it is, it has certain good qualities which Dickens' work is never without, certain priceless touches of genius, that redeem it from being either commonplace or tiresome. The dingy figures loitering up and down the stifling yard of the prison, can't we see them all? Not one is missing of the crowd who were in durance here when the elder Dickens lived in the little room overlooking the churchyard and Captain Porter marched with his military stride overhead. The lad who ran across so often from his lodgings the other side of the street has told what he remembers of the Marshalsea as it was in 1822, and thirty-five years later he described how he found much of the old building, all the centre block, indeed, still unchanged. And as he saw it, as you and I have often seen it in our mind's eye, so to-day it stands, one of the most pathetic relics in Londonland.

"Whosoever goes into Marshalsea Place, turning out of Angel Court, leading to Bermondsey, will find his feet on the very paving stones of the extinct Marshalsea Jail, will see its narrow yard to the right and to the left, very little altered, if at all, except that the walls were lowered when the place got free, will look upon the rooms in which the debtors lived, and will stand among the crowding ghosts of many miserable years." This direction, written in 1857, for finding the old prison, is the right direction in 1889, and the picture of the forgotten corner is as true and faithful a one as if Dickens had visited it only this morning. The shadow of the famous pump, run dry this many a year, falls on the grey, worn flags. Some one looked out from Mr. Dorrit's window, barred no longer, on the second floor. Someone else, taking in her washing-lines, turned her kind face and smiling asked, did we want anything? And then it turned out that those whom we had come all that way to see lived in her own house, mostly. Shadows, of whose existence she knew nothing, as she had no time for reading, she said, having to earn her living. So we went into what was once the Porter's Lodge, and in our guide's kitchen found John Chivery and his father, and we went up the rickety narrow stairs to the garret for the sake of Little Dorrit, who was standing, as we expected, looking out on the spiked walls, while Maggie listened to the story of the Tiny Woman; and as we came down again we made way for Arthur Clennam climbing wearily up. All the while our friend spoke of many things, but she talked quietly, and did not scare the ghosts. She told us how fortunate she was to have such a green lookout. The churchyard trees made it seem like the country, didn't they? "It's always fresh and cool here," she said, throwing wider the staircase window, which let in a blast of hot air as from an oven; and, "being government property, it's cheap and kept in order," she continued, looking away from the stained walls and the peeling paper, begrimed as if nothing had been done since the last batch of debtors were here, over forty years ago. She told us how times were changing in Marshalsea Place, for formerly there were no poor here, and how they were coming in and making the houses not so respected in the Borough as they had been. The poor! She spoke as if they were many degrees below her, and yet her earnings are only four shillings a week, and she lives with her sons in three small, stuffy rooms. The neighbours were very pleasant, she said, and kind, and she knew "the lady," such a nice creature, who rented the room a door or two off where we told her old Mr. Dorrit once lived, and she would take us on to see her if we liked. But first we must notice where prisoners had cut their initials on the woodwork (we found a W. M., and thought of Wilkins Micawber until we recollected he was at King's Bench) and next we must look at the odd, narrow front doors which open in the centre, and are armed with such tremendously strong bolts and bars. Then we went out again into the yard