

Blake quoted with merited approval, intimated that among other conditions of efficiency in a teaching institution, a certain proportion between the number of teachers and that of pupils is essential. May it not be that, in this important particular at least, the smaller universities may have an advantage which goes far to counterbalance other advantages supposed to be possessed by the larger? But be that as it may, we are always disposed to think that when a number of private citizens contribute voluntarily of their means for the establishment of institutions for the higher education of the youth of the country, they become to the extent of what these institutions accomplish public benefactors, and so are entitled, if not to thanks at least to courteous consideration at the hands even of those who may be connected with the Provincial institution. Whatever may be the shortcomings of the independent universities in Ontario, those who are familiar with the history of higher education in the Province know that in some respects at least their presence and work have been distinctly beneficial to the state university. They know, too, that as a rule they have points of contact with large classes of the people which enable them to draw to their halls hundreds of students who would never have found their way to the Provincial University.

Justice may perhaps warrant another observation. Chancellor Blake informed his audience that "after much desultory discussion in the press and elsewhere, during which it became necessary once again to combat and confute the pretension that the non-federating universities, while remaining independent of and apart from the Provincial system, had a right to claim participation in its regulation, a plan has been inaugurated, etc." Whether it is correct to describe those institutions which exist and work under Provincial charters as "remaining independent of and apart from the Provincial system" we shall not stay to enquire. But, while it may be admitted that these institutions, as such, can claim no right to participate in the regulation of the Provincial University, it should not be forgotten on the other hand that their individual friends and promoters do not, by the fact of becoming such, deprive themselves of any right which they have in common with all other citizens to a voice in the management and control of the Provincial University. This is, of course, a mere truism; but it may need occasional repetition. Still further, would it not be a wise and patriotic policy on the part of the managers of the Provincial institution, apprehensive as they confessedly are that the voluntary colleges may, by setting up imperfect standards of matriculation, lower the level of university training even in the superior institution, to take advantage of any overtures which they may make, for the purpose of establishing, if possible, a uniformly high standard of matriculation and thus warding off the threatened evil?

But waiving all such contentions, what we set out to say, and what seems to us desirable to be said, is this: Is it not time that the undertone of semi-suspicion, or hostility, or whatever it may be, which seems to run through certain of the utterances of some of the zealous friends of the Provincial University, were discarded as unworthy of a great national institution, and a broader, kinder spirit taking its place? It cannot be that there is any room for jealousy in the matter. The University of Toronto exists for the promotion of higher education in the Province. Are not the independent institutions doing at least something for the promotion of the same great end? And in so far as they are doing that on voluntary and philanthropic principles, and without asking aid from any public funds, are they not entitled to the thanks of those who are employed, no matter how much more efficiently, at the public expense, in the same work? Surely quantity, number, counts for something in national education, and not quality for everything. And yet from the tenor of the remarks sometimes made, one would almost suppose that some of the friends of the state institutions were a kind of educational marionettes, who would deem it better that hundreds of our young men and women should remain uneducated, than that they should go forth with minds disciplined by a four-years' course of tolerably diligent study, but wearing the badge of an academic degree which has not received the true Provincial stamp. Is it not time that the magnates of the University which claims so marked a superiority that it can surely fear no rival, took a more generous attitude and cordially welcomed every institution honestly engaged in the higher training of Canada's sons and daughters as a coadjutor in a patriotic work, large enough to tax the energies of all, leaving it to the discernment of an intelligent public to assign to the work of each its proper grade and value.

THE POET.

As flowers in bud awake at early morn,
Yet reach perfection not till middle day,
The poet, though to his high mission born,
Attains his best by patient industry.

And like the harp, attuned to every breeze,
That in the open casement sighs or sings,
The poet's soul is void of melodies
Till unseen spirit fingers sweep the strings.

Life, the magician, with his subtle powers,
Death, the dark helmsman over seas unknown,
Nature, all mother, and the teaching hours
Breathe their heart secrets to the bard alone.

And the true poet, throwing down his gage
To Fate, fights upwards, far beyond the mist,
Till from the vantage of the seer and sage
He sees all earth by sunshine warmly kissed.

He learns that all who would be truly great
Mix with the battling world, nor shirk their part,
But take such trials as are given by Fate
And set them to sweet music by their art.

He only is a poet who can find
In sorrow, happiness; in darkness, light;
Love everywhere, and lead his fellow kind
By flowery paths towards life's sunny height.

Montreal, Canada.

ARTHUR WEIR.

OTTAWA LETTER.

THERE seems nothing to indicate that another month will see the members summoned by Mr. Kimber to the bar of Senate, there thanked by His Excellency for their services, and told to go home and be good boys, with the blessing of Providence. Nothing is talked of around the House these days but "Redistribution" or "Gerrymander," according to your political proclivities. For three months the members and the public had anticipated a debate upon this important measure, and now we are in the thick of it. As Quebec Province is the most seriously affected, its representatives have occupied a good deal of the time in the debate hitherto. The greater number have spoken in their own tongue, and those of the Opposition with a vehemence which betokens no ordinary measure of bitterness.

In reviewing the course of the Redistribution Bill, so far, it is well to recall to the readers of THE WEEK, Mr. Laurier's amendment to the motion for the second reading that a conference or committee of both parties be appointed to consult together as to the details of a Redistribution Bill. This measure was voted down, and the next lion in the path for the Government was Mr. McCarthy's amendment, which was also voted down, the mover and Colonel O'Brien alone supporting it for the Conservatives, while the Opposition, possibly considering that half-a-loaf is better than no bread, voted for it.

Here is this amendment, which may become quite famous: "That the said Bill be not now read the second time, but that it be resolved that the distribution of seats of the members of the House should, so far as practicable, be based on equality of population, due regard being had to the community of interests existing in localities, a full and fair expression of public opinion and the permanence and stability of constituencies; that the most effective way of accomplishing these ends is to assume county and city boundaries as the natural limits of electoral districts, with equitable divisions thereof constituted with compactness as regards geographical position and based on well-known existing areas, where the population entitles the city or county to two or more representatives; that the system now prevailing and proposed to be continued by the said Bill fails to secure equality of population, ignores community of interests, disregards geographical compactness, renders stability impossible, and is liable to gross abuse in affording opportunities in the arrangement of electoral districts for promoting party aims and obtaining party advantages regardless of the consideration which ought to determine the settlement of the representatives of the population in this House."

The idea of the boundaries of counties being closely adhered to in a Redistribution Bill must strike almost every one as commendable, and if this principle were followed, it would almost entirely relieve those anxious for fair play of any apprehension. It would be difficult to effect a gerrymander if this were so. It had the effect, by reason of the discussion upon it, of bringing before the public, to a considerable extent, the relations which exist between the Government and Mr. McCarthy. It has been an open secret that they have been strained ever since the uproar over the Jesuits' Estate Bill.

This little family quarrel is great fun to the Opposition. Since they supported Mr. McCarthy's amendment they have become quite ardent admirers of him, personally as well as politically, and several, in their speeches, have compared him to other great statesmen of the Empire who occasionally jumped over the party traces when they found the whip too galling.

On Monday evening, according to arrangement, discussion on the Redistribution Bill was again resumed. Mr.

Somerville, the doughty Reformer, took up his parable and talked for about a couple of hours in an intelligent enough manner. He ended with an amendment to the motion to take up the second reading, that only those provinces should be dealt with wherein it was rendered necessary by the recent census. This would mean that Ontario and Quebec should be left alone, and with the righteousness of allowing the great and growing cities of Montreal and Toronto to remain, census after census, with the same representation they now have, there would be a good deal in the proposition.

When the House met for business one day last week, it was noticed that an immense and handsome bouquet of roses stood in a vase on the Clerk's table, and that all the Ministers, and most of the Conservative members, wore a buttonhole of a rose and a maple leaf. And the reason for all this was, that one year ago that day Sir John Macdonald died. So many events crowd into a year and one follows the other so quickly that we are apt to lose sight of the exact date when a certain thing happened. But the death of Sir John Macdonald was an event of more than usual importance.

It will be recollected by those who have taken an interest in the constitutional aspect respecting the dismissal of the Mercier Ministry by Lieutenant-Governor Angers of Quebec, that those who were hot in their opposition to the Lieutenant-Governor's actions claimed that the constitution was violated by the non-assembling of the Quebec Parliament during the course of twelve months. On Monday of this week Mr. Choquette asked the Government if they had known of that. The reply of Sir John Thompson was that the Government was aware of the fact, and that no communication had taken place between the two Governments on the subject. This does away with the statement that Lieutenant-Governor Angers was advised in his conduct by the Government of the Dominion.

As the time for mailing this letter arrives, there are all sorts of conflicting rumours afloat as to the probable duration of the session. Sir Richard Cartwright is reported to have said that it will not close before the first of September. But it is whispered around that an earlier prorogation may take place than is now expected, because Sir John Thompson may be required in England at any time, with regard to the Behring Sea negotiations. Mr. Tupper has already gone to London to prepare the case, on which Sir John is to be one of the arbitrators.

Rather to the surprise of those outside the confidence of the leaders of the two parties, there was a division on Mr. Somerville's amendment early Tuesday evening, and then the Opposition allowed a vote to be taken on the motion for a second reading of the Redistribution Bill, which was carried on a straight party vote. So the curtain has fallen on the first scene in this unsavoury Parliamentary act, and the weary fight over the Bill in committee has commenced.

T. C. L. K.

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TWO KNAPSACKS:

A NOVEL OF CANADIAN SUMMER LIFE.

BY J. CAWDORE BELL.

CHAPTER VII.

Ben's Sudden Sickness—The Spurious Priest—Cristine as Doctor—Saved by the Detective—Anxiety at the Maple—A Pleasant Evening—Sunday Morning and Ben—The Lawyer Rides—Nash and the Dominic Talk Theology on the Road—At the Talfourds—Miss Du Plessis the Real—The False Meets Mr. Rawdon—Mr. Terry and Wilkinson at the Kirk.

"WHAT is the matter with Ben?" asked Cristine, as they single-filed along the narrow path by the river.

"He's tumbled down over some grindstones, and hurt himself, and fainted right away," replied the youthful Tommy, pulling up handfuls of tall grass and breaking an occasional twig from a bush as he stumbled along.

"What are you to the Toners?"

"I ain't nuthun' to the Toners."

"How did you come to be their messenger, then?"

"I was runnin' to the farm to tell the widder that the priest was comin', when she come out cryin' and sent me off. Guess the priest's there by now."

"What priest is it you saw?"

"I didn't see no priest. Old Mum Sullivan, she saw him, and sent and told mother to tell widder Toner, 'cos she's a Roman, too. She said it was a new priest, not Father McNaughton, the old one, and she guessed he was all right, but she didn't like his looks as well as t'other's."

"Then you are not a Roman."

"Now, what are you givin' us? I play a fife on the Twelfth."

"Oh, you are an Orangeman?"

"Yum, Young Briton, same thing."

"So, you Orangemen run to help the Roman Catholics when they are sick or want to know if the priest is coming, and then, on the Twelfth, you feel like cutting each other's throats."

"I don't want to cut nobody's throat, but we've got to sass 'em on the Twelfth to keep up the glorious, pious and immortal memory, and to whistle 'em down 'The Protestant Boys.' We've got three fifes and three drums in our lodge."

After more of this edifying conversation, the pair arrived at a clearing on the river, containing a house and some out-buildings, not far from its bank. These com-