

(For the Canadian Illustrated News.)
A SCHOOL-MARM.

PARLIAMENTARY RECORD.

NOTES BY THE WAYSIDE.

OTTAWA, Oct. 10, 1873.

I am often surprised that more people don't study physiology. There are such wonders in our own frames only waiting to be discovered! Why, the silent polar regions with the dashing electric lights has no more wonders than the pulse beat in my wrist. That little throb working night and day, in hunger and cold, in happiness and sorrow, through the term of my existence, till the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl is broken, is a great mystery. The blood welling from the heart, coursing along its appointed channels, flowing back to the central reservoir, purifying, strengthening, giving life is a theme that some clergymen might be more eloquent over and spend time more profitably in teaching than in wearying us with dry-as-dust discourses about the heresies of the Gnostics or the infidelity of modern science.

Did you make a remark, *ma belle*? You complain that I have entrapped you, that seeing the heading to this paper you expected something else than a lecture on physiology and you ask me with a pretty little impatient *moue* what has all this got to say to a school marm. *Je n'en puis mais*. I had no intention of entrapping you; besides, *mon amie*, I am coming to the point; but I must approach it in my own way. There is a relevancy as we shall see by and by.

Revenons à nos moutons. Our blood, my dear, as perhaps you are aware, is coloured by little red specks floating in it called corpuscles. According to Dr. Bird, the blood of the Bengalee contains far fewer red corpuscles than that of the European, and to this deficiency the doctor ascribes the apathy of the Bengalee and his consequent subjection to the more sanguine European. Throughout the animal kingdom the presence of these globules in greater or less proportions indicate a higher or lower organization. They are absent from the blood of the mollusks, but appear in increasing numbers at every upward stage in the scale of vitality. Do I weary you, my little dears, for it is for you that I am speaking, and would you exclaim, if you know Latin *Durum*? I would add *nil in teris sit patientia*. Have a little patience, I am almost arrived at the point. Mark this. The number of red corpuscles in woman's blood is less than in man's. Do you see the relevancy? Hence her humble position, hence she takes the drudgery and labours after her lord. I throw out the hint to the Sisterhood. Let them see to it. What they want is more red corpuscles!

I cannot join in the sneer that is sometimes flung at the school-marm. She is doing a great work. She is training the young, and on her influence depends the knowledge and goodness, to a large extent, of those who in fifteen or twenty years will be heads of a new generation. There is nothing more sacred than education and those girls and women are the priestesses of Minerva. I take off my hat with reverence in the presence of a school-marm, she is a sacred person. I have known a couple of them in my life and they live in my memory gratefully. Their calling requires them to exercise their brains. Their conversation is less frivolous than many of their sisters, who turn up their noses at the schoolroom drudges. They can talk about something else than dress and marriage. Their calling does not unsex them and they can be clever and independent, and yet women. But they must not remain too long at this work. It is apt to sour them. It is a capital preparatory school for higher walks; but I pity the poor woman who commences perhaps at fifteen or sixteen and works on into middle or old age at the dreary toil. She sees her pupils growing up and flourishing, getting wealthy and prosperous; becoming married and having children of their own about them, while she labours on.

I know a sprightly school-marm. She is clever and lively. Her conversation is a cordial after the rapid nothings we hear from so many of her sex. She earns her money teaching, she keeps herself and adds to the household receipts. I like to hear her musical laugh rippling from her lips; but I dread to look into the future. Must she wither at her post; must the bud come to the flower and the flower turn to fruit; must the fruit fall to the ground and then the stalk, lean and wrinkled, perish and be broken into the clods? Will young men sneer and pass by and marry dolls, because they are ladies and haven't to work for their living and leave this girl, who is worth a hundred fashionable pupils, to fade, fade away into nothingness. Come, young men, consider; *tout de bon* is it better to have a butterfly or a sensible young woman for your partner. Will the mere fact of your wife having been brought up unable to help herself guarantee your happiness? One thing, unless you have some brains don't marry a school-marm. She is apt—from custom no doubt—to estimate the mental capacity of people with whom she comes in contact and you know, gentlemen, if your wife feels that she is cleverer than you, good-bye to domestic happiness. Women must look up to their husbands and not look down on them. So after all, my poor narrow-minded young men, who have no thoughts beyond your desk or your counter, who have no wider sympathy than what is bounded by your banker's book, who have no aspirations higher than the accumulation of dollars, I think you had better pass the school-marm by and take a doll.

My little dears, do you still exclaim that you can see no connection between the red corpuscles I was talking about and the school-marm? Listen, can you tell me, *mes petites*, why the teacher is apt to grow sour and discontented and wither instead of bearing fruit perennially? I will tell you. Her red corpuscles decrease. The blood of an old teacher is nearly white. The close poisonous air of the school-room, the anxiety, year after year, deoxygenises the blood, just the same as the miasma from the swamps whitens the vital fluid of the Bengalee. Therefore the little dears must not be kept too long at their work. Just enough to brace the mind, just long enough to show them the value of thought and independence, and then let them be married and I will come and osculate them in a grand fatherly way and the fair young ladies shall have my blessing.

Why did I not marry a school-marm? *Al! Al!* why probern old wound? Has the young man the wisdom of age, has the old man the opportunities of youth?

BOOKS, &c., RECEIVED.

From Osgood & Co., Boston: Howells's *Chance Acquaintance*; *Murjorie Daw*; *Sex*; In Education; *Protty's Wedding Tour*; *South Sea Idylls*.
From B. Bently & Co., Montreal: *The Young Men's Christian Association*.
From Chisholm & Co., Montreal: *The International Railway and Steamboat Guide*.

I had just the time to append to my last letter the issue of the debate on the Address, the resignation of the Macdonald Government and the formation of a Ministry by Mr. Mackenzie. There remains only, therefore, to bring this correspondence to a premature close, that I should add a few lines on the complexion of the new Cabinet. There are two or three points in connection with this matter which deserve attention. The first is that Mr. Mackenzie took office very willingly. "He snapped at it, sir," as a disgusted Tory said, suiting the gesture to the word. Those who know the member for Lambton will admit that there is some truth in this. He is a very ambitious man. The Premiership has been his day-dream and his night-dream for years. No one pretends that he is not fitted for it, and there are special qualities in his nature which force even his adversaries to wish him well in it.

Another point which has created comment is this new-fangled mode of seats in the Privy Council without portfolio. Even the Ministerialists do not like it. They all admit the ability of Mr. Blake, but they do not consider that this can excuse his singularity. It is introducing a bad precedent. It leads to invidious distinctions and it will be sure to engender jealousies. Besides, it has the crowning defect of inconsistency. The present party in power denounced thirteen as too numerous a Ministry. Now they create fifteen. Be sure there will be more about this matter before many months are over.

A third thing worthy of note is the fact of prorogation. It is argued that as Mr. Mackenzie came to Ottawa sure of victory, he should have come with a policy. He knew that the session was to replace the Spring session, and that the yearly estimates had been made up for that purpose. Yet not only did he take two days to make up a ministry, but he asked a prorogation, because he had no line of policy to present to the House. The prorogation will cost the country \$100,000.

It was also remarked as odd, if not discourteous, that Mr. Mackenzie was absent from the House at prorogation and had his Cabinet announced by Mr. Hulton.

There is no real enthusiasm among Ministerialists. It is a period of transition for them, and they do not pretend to read the future. Conservatives express the hope, that now Sir John has been defeated and abused unto death, there will be a popular reaction in his favour. They further console themselves by saying that he was not beaten on a question of policy. I think that very fact should deprive them of comfort. If he had been defeated on a line of policy, he might recuperate on some other, but as he was defeated on a charge of corrupt management, I fear the wound is mortal.

CHAUDIERE.

HON. ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA.

We present in this issue a new portrait of this honourable gentleman, such as he appears to-day, on assuming the important change of the Premiership. The face is in repose. It is indicative of energy, not unmingled with gentility in the expression of the eyes. Speaking generally, however, Mr. Mackenzie's physiognomy is not a reflex of his great abilities or character. Alexander Mackenzie was born at Dunkeld, Perthshire, in 1822, and though his early years were spent in his native land, has been long enough in Canada to make his way in the country and to become a thorough Canadian. Rising by his own energy and genius to a position of influence in the locality in which he settled, he was first elected to Parliament in 1861, for the County of Lambton, as an ardent Clear Grit, and has since continued to sit for that constituency, the efforts to defeat him at the last general election having proved utterly ineffectual, though backed by the strongest influences his opponents could bring against him. His parliamentary career involves few particulars that need be noted. He was a devoted oppositionist, except during the time when the McDonald-Sicotte-Dorion Cabinet was in office until the Coalition of 1864, when he gave the Government a hearty support up to the time the Hon. George Brown resigned the Presidency of the Council. He was then (January 1866) offered a seat in the Cabinet but declined to accept it, and he has now the exceptional distinction of being the only politician of ability who has adhered, through good and evil fortune, to the leadership of the Hon. George Brown. Though generally acting in opposition to the Ministry, after the retirement of his chief, Mr. Mackenzie always gave a cordial support to any legislative measures necessary to the perfecting of Confederation; and he, in obedience to his honest convictions, in direct antagonism to several of the members of his own party on the important subject of "protection to native industry." Mr. Mackenzie does not believe in protection through the operation of a high tariff and he is of a character likely to follow his own convictions on every question of policy that may come up. He has been a useful hard-working Member of Parliament; to him the country owes the excellent Act for providing speedy egress from public buildings, and he and his fast friend Mr. McKellar were mainly responsible for the crude and ill-digested Municipal and Assessment Acts (Upper Canada) of 1866, for some of the errors of which, however, it would be quite unfair to hold either of those gentlemen accountable. He was for a long time Chairman of the Printing Committee of the House and has always taken an active part in parliamentary affairs. Though no orator, and in spite of the disadvantage of a somewhat harsh unpleasant voice, he is an effective, logical and instructive speaker; he masters almost every subject with which he deals, and deals with almost every subject that comes before parliament.

Having obtained a seat in the Provincial Legislature of Ontario, he was chiefly instrumental, along with Mr. Blake, in securing the overthrow of the Sandfield McDonald Administration and succeeded Hon. A. B. Wood, as Treasurer of the Province. He soon resigned the office and devoted himself entirely to his duties as Leader of the Opposition in the Federal Legislature. It was he who moved the resolution which led to the resignation of Sir John A. Macdonald, and, according to constitutional practice, he was called upon to form a new Government.

Winter at last! As I write the snow is falling fast, and already lies thick on the ground. The sleighs are out in full force, and coming out this morning I witnessed the, to me, first tumble of the season. I know of no situation in which a man looks so ridiculous, unless, perhaps, when his hat blows off in a high gale of wind, as when he falls on a slippery sidewalk. Ten to one he is walking along with a jaunty air—somehow or other people who are in a violent hurry do not slip nearly so often as they should according to all the rules of proverbial philosophy—when his foot lights on a treacherous spot, slides beneath him, and with a wild flourish of his arms that somehow always reminds me of a school boy hooraying at getting a holiday, down he goes. Before rising he invariably casts a glance around to see that nobody is laughing at him, then slowly devotes his energies to the task of picking himself up, whisks off the snow from his coat, and goes his way crestfallen. That is what my man did this morning, what I shall do perhaps to-morrow, and some other wayfarer the day after.

Who does not like the winter, notwithstanding its drawbacks of falls by the wayside, delayed mails, and increased wood-merchants' bills? There is something so exhilarating in a ten mile walk in the pure bracing air, with a pleasant companion to chat with. And at night, when the snow begins to fall and the groaning woods bend beneath its increasing weight, what more delightful than to heap the wood with liberal hand upon the glowing hearth and bring out the old wine in its Sabine jar? Alas, now-a-days the single-handled demijohn has taken the place of the old two-handled *diota*, and the Cæcuban is replaced too frequently by a liquor of which fusil oil is one of the principal ingredients.

Who does not like the winter? Too many among us have cause enough to dislike it! While you and I are trudging along in the cold air, snugly wrapped up in fur, or lazily enjoying the grateful warmth of our own, or our own land-lady's fireside, there are thousands to whom the winter means want, misery, perhaps starvation. The piercing air we face so merrily on the highway and which we exclude so carefully from our comfortable homes, penetrates through their thin garments into their very bones, dries the flimsy fastenings of their poor abodes, and lays up for them a cruel store of present suffering and future sickness. Do not be afraid that I am going to preach about gratitude for present mercies. That is out of my line. When you want that kind of talk you turn to the pulpit, not to the paper.

"Wrecked in Port." There are few people who can appreciate the full significance of the saying. Perhaps the following little story out of real life will serve to bring home its true, sad meaning. Not many days ago a young man left England to join his parents, who had settled in the township of London, Ont. The voyage out was safely accomplished, also the journey to his destination. But at the very station where the young immigrant was to have met his friends, he fell from the cars, was run over by a passing engine, and within a few hours died from the injuries received. That was indeed a shipwreck within sight of the desired haven.

One hears so much about hard-hearted tradesmen that it is pleasant to read of one of the class who is exempt from a malady which, to believe some people, would seem to be extremely prevalent among store-keepers. The case in point occurred at Wilmington, Del. A man was detected hurrying away from a butcher's stall with a steak which he had stolen under his coat. A policeman followed him to his home, and peeping through the window, saw him give the steak to his children, who devoured it raw. Upon report of this being made to the butcher, his bosom so glowed with benevolent sympathy that, instead of prosecuting, he sent the starving family a large basket of meat and a little cash to buy wood to cook it.

If the ghost of Philippe de Comines ever revisits the earth it must be extremely astonished at the little show of respect that is practically vouchsafed to its former owner's maxim. Readers of Victor Hugo's "Bell Ringer of Notre Dame" will remember, on the authority of Dom Claude, that that excellent knight and veracious historian were embroidered on his horse's housings the motto, "*Qui non laborat non manducet*." He may not eat who labours not. At the present day it is generally those who labour the least who eat of the best. But this is not the point to which I desire to call attention. The inverse is equally true, and those who labour the hardest frequently fare the worst. The Rev. J. F. Walker, of the Calvary Episcopal Church, Chicago, would appear to belong to the latter unfortunate class. One Sunday not very long ago the reverend gentleman was noticed by his congregation to be in apparently ill-health and to read service in the morning with an unusual feebleness. When, however, he came to the sermon he broke down completely, and in a few startling sentences announced the reason. He had not dined the day before, he said, as he had no money wherewith to go marketing, and all that he had eaten on Saturday and Sunday was bread and butter and tea. When he went home on Sunday he was not sure that he should even find that. The congregation rose and departed without any further sermon, and for that day Mr. Walker had invitations to more dinners than he could have eaten in a month. SALATHIEL.

The wrongs which the British railway traveller undergoes at the hands of the keepers of refreshment saloons, and which Dickens so humorously describes in his story of the "Boy of Mugby," appears to have finally exasperated the long-suffering travellers beyond endurance. The other day an excursion party was temporarily set down by a railway train at Galashells. The confident waiters anticipated their usual pleasure in starving and oppressing their visitors, but they were sadly disappointed. The party did not pause to eat stale sandwiches and drink costly beer at the counter, but coolly carried off, not only the provisions, but every particle of crockery and plate on the premises. With this booty they returned to their train, and went on their way rejoicing.

For years passengers by street cars have suffered tortures, not quite so great as those which the law does not permit to be inflicted upon animals with impunity—not equal in enormity to those occasioned by bull-baiting, dog-fighting, gander-pulling, but still offensive to various senses, including the sense of dignity. The lack of manners in conductors has been keenly felt, but the lack of a seat more so. In Cincinnati it is proposed to provide by law that every passenger by a street car who rides standing shall ride gratis. No seat, no pay! If pay be extorted then the conductor shall pay a fine of \$10 and costs.