

ity's creed that beside the altar of our highest worship, and at the shrine of our truest devotion we place the bone of our bone and blood of our blood; and their images guard the hearth sanctuaries made sacred by their presence or their memory.

JOHN W. L. FORSTER.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### TRADE COMBINES.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Not being affected in any way, except as an ordinary consumer, by the different Trade Combines at present in existence in Canada, my arguments, if not considered conclusive in themselves, may at least be regarded as disinterested.

It is now very generally conceded, for reasons which it is hardly necessary to enumerate here, that the act of selling staple goods under cost, the demand for which is constant, except under extreme circumstances, is immoral. Not only are the results injurious both to the seller and his competitors, as well as to those giving credit to them, but they frequently lead to the dishonest palming off on the public of spurious imitations, adulterations, short weights, etc.

Starting, then, with this principle as one premise, and coupling with it the unquestioned axiom that it is the duty of all Governments to prevent immoral trading just as they would interfere with immoral social practices, it will be evident that instead of trying to annul the arrangements entered into between the manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers to sell staple goods at a small margin of profit, they should turn their attention rather to the regulating of these combinations so as to prevent their being abused for the purposes of undue private aggrandizement.

In order to secure a permanent standard of excellence in the publication of the Ontario school books the Minister of Education found it necessary to give a limited number of publishers the control of the work, and the late investigation into the cost of this work proves conclusively that it is not beyond the power of the Government to regulate the profits.

In a like manner all combinations entered into by individuals or firms as to the selling prices of staple goods could be controlled. In the criticism in THE WEEK of last Friday on the address delivered by Mr. Blain at the Toronto Board of Trade it was urged that the Government should not allow combinations to exist in Canada, because they are already preventing outside competition by means of our Protective Tariff. This argument might hold good in certain instances, but not as a general principle; for how then could they deal with the Canadian Watch Jobbers' Association, for instance, who have a standing agreement with the manufacturers of American watch cases and movements by which all the members are liable to have their supplies cut off if they sell under list prices or to any one except a legitimate dealer? And while here, let me state that this Association is, without doubt, working to the advantage of every one concerned, not excepting the consumer.

The only practical reason I have ever heard put forth for the selling of staple goods at a loss is that the sacrifice generally "secures orders for other goods." In other words, it is done for the sake of advertising. Now, in these days of trade journals, circulars, calendars, and a thousand and one other advertising media, there can surely be no necessity for resorting to a means which, besides being very costly, is injurious to others, and at the same time compels them to follow suit in exactly the same degree, thus lowering the value of the advertisement to a fraction.

But the only reason publicly assigned by those championing their unworthy cause is that combinations are not in harmony with British liberty, forgetting in their greedy pursuit of popularity that no nation so quickly discriminates between Liberty and License as does Britain. The wholesalers of Canada are not wishing to deprive any one of their liberty, but claim that when the rights of the many are being abused by the unprincipled conduct of the few, it is their right and the duty of the Government to interfere.

Let us advocate, therefore, a regulation and supervision rather than the abolition of just trade combinations, and let us hear less of a so called British liberty, which no honest Britisher should want.

Toronto, March 25, 1889.

H. K. S. HEMMING.

### A CORRECTION.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—In your issue of March 22nd, 1889, I find the following: "M. Coquelin plays *Jean Dacier* for the first time in America on Monday evening, at the Star Theatre in New York." Permit me to say that during his recent appearance at Montreal, two or three weeks ago, M. Coquelin played *Jean Dacier* for his benefit performance. Perhaps, however, in this case "America" was used to designate "the United States of America," which, from a territorial point of view, is about as inaccurate as it would be to designate Russia by the name, "Europe." What a pity it is that the "Great Republic" has no national name, but only a legal or constitutional designation. Yours truly,

A. C. LYMAN.

Montreal, March 25, 1889.

## READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

### MIMICRY IN NATURE.

Go to the seashore and observe grasshoppers among the beach grass. They fly up at your approach, whiz off a rod or so, and alight. Can you see them? They are coloured so nearly like the sands they live upon that detection of one at rest is almost impossible. On yonder grassy bluff, a stone's throw away, you will find none of them, but other kinds equally, or almost equally, lost to sight by their harmony with their surroundings. What chance of life for either if they suddenly changed places? They would be so conspicuous that every passing bird or other insectivorous creature would sight them. Of course, these protective colours have been gained by slow steps. Every grasshopper that found its preferred food among the sands was liable to be eaten. In the long run just those would be eaten which were most easily seen. One which varied in colouring in ever so small a degree, so as to be less easily seen than his brother, would live to perpetuate his kind, and his brother come to an untimely end; the progeny would show the fortunate variation, and be more likely to be spared to transmit in increased volume the probability of the happy colouring. Given, then, a brood of grasshoppers that find their preferred food in sandy spots, and, unless other and more powerful forces act upon them, it must result from their liability to be eaten by creatures fond of grasshoppers, that in time they will resemble in colouring the sand on which they live; it is impossible that they should not. Any creature not especially protected by naughtiness or habit or special device of some sort must, in the very nature of things, if it is to live at all, have some other protection, and that afforded by colour and pattern is by far the most common. The world is made up of eaters and eaten, of devices to catch and devices to avoid being caught.—*Atlantic Monthly*.

### GLADSTONE ON NOVELISTS.

PUBLICITY is given to some remarks which Mr. Gladstone "once" made in private—the time is indefinite—on the British novelists of the present century. He gave the palm, it appears, to Scott—a predilection which might be explained on the basis of Mr. Gladstone's Scottish blood and leanings, but which as it happens, he shares with a very large number of unquestionable southrons. One may not agree with the ex-premier in fixing upon *Kenilworth* and *The Bride of Lammermoor* as the best of Scott's work: but it is at least interesting to know that the latter is Mr. Gladstone's favourite; and, as regards Scott's romances generally, few will be disposed to question the pre-eminence of the Wizard of the North, whose great merit it is that he was always the story-teller and never the would-be philosopher. "Next to Scott," Mr. Gladstone supposed, "would come George Eliot." But why? Surely—if we must construct an order of precedence—Thackeray would have the better claim. A true instinct induced the ex-premier to put *Silas Marner* in the forefront of George Eliot's novels; and *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss*, and the *Scenes of Clerical Life* have, of course, very much to say for themselves. But Thackeray's flower show is surely at once more brilliant and more satisfying than that of his feminine rival. Dickens, too, might have a claim to rank before George Eliot, even though to be primarily a humourist and as a tale-teller too much of a melodramatist. Mr. Gladstone characterized *Jane Eyre* as a great and powerful work, but "was unable to appreciate the genius of Emily Brontë." *Wuthering Heights* he thought a mere succession of horrors. It is certainly rather a creepy book, but, as regards sheer power, there are those who consider it finer than anything that Charlotte Brontë ever wrote—which, of course, is saying a good deal.—*London Globe*.

### DREAMS AS RELATED TO LITERATURE.

To the ordinary practical man the poet is apt to appear a sort of dreamer. And this view is in a measure correct, for the realm of fiction into which the imaginative writer seeks to bear us has at least this in common with dream-land—that it greatly transcends our every day humdrum world in romantic tint and thrilling effect. Nor is this all. We know from the confession of poets that at the moment of imaginative invention the procession of images takes on the semblance of a real external pageant. Like the dreamer, the poet seems to be looking on a scene detached from himself and of which he is not the creator, but merely the spectator. This dream-like attitude of the poet's mind would be specially striking in the first crude stages of the poetic art. The primitive poet seems, so far as we are able to reconstruct him, to have possessed a much more child-like imagination than the modern one—an imagination more spontaneous and daring in its movements, less fettered by a strict standard of verisimilitude. Quite naturally, therefore, he gave himself out to be, and was regarded by his audience as being, a veritable seer of visions. With the progress of culture this naive view of imaginative creation would no doubt be modified. The clearer consciousness of artistic creation as an orderly process of construction after nature's own model would tend to separate literary production from dreaming, both as a process and as a result. Yet with all this growth of clearer ideas both as to dreaming and poetic invention, the bond that first joined them has never been wholly sundered; for, notwithstanding the wide empire acquired by nature and truth in the region of imaginative production, there has always remained a good residual territory where other poetic impulses have kept sway. The primitive, child-like longing for pure marvel has never been

expelled from literature. Hence we find that throughout its history it has ever and again been harking back to its first freer and more dream-like form. In the drama, in poetry, and in prose fiction we detect an impulse to throw aside for the nonce the trammels of reality and to indulge in those ampler and more sportive movements which are natural alike to the pristine and to the dreaming fancy. Even Shakespeare, that most diligent student of life and most skilful of its delineators, was able, when he chose, to give a true dream-touch to his compositions. *The Tempest*, and, better still, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* may be taken as a specimen of the more prankish and dream-like movements of the poet's fancy. The confusion and topsy-turvy of this elf-people, the delightful absurdities into which the sleep-bound personages are drawn—all this affects us like a dream. Even in our own day, when fiction is on the whole photographic in its realism, we see the storyteller now and again rushing wildly off into the lawless realm of wonderland. The adoption of the dream-form may spring from a variety of motives. Thus, for example, the religious teacher has often thrown his ideas into the semblance of a dream. Bunyan would have us believe that he dreamt his strangely fascinating, laborious, and on the whole it may be said that the long, allegorical pilgrimage, with its preternatural sufferings and no less preternatural refreshments, very well answers to the idea of a dream. Mysticism, as might be expected, lends itself particularly well to a dream-like expression. In the famous dreams and visions of Swedenborg we see the spiritual apprehension of the unseen taking on the form of a dream sublimely impressive in the vast range of its flight and the solemn mystery of its spectacle. Although the supernatural significance of dreams is still recognised by literature in a shy sort of way, this does not constitute their sole source of value to the imaginative writer. The modern world attaches its own special meaning to the realm of dreams. Our habits of scientific scrutiny and analysis have led us to see in the wondrous visions of the night phenomena which are perfectly natural and explicable by the circumstances of the case. We know something about the bodily and mental causes that produce dreams, and even the influences that serve to impress a particular shape on our dreams. And while we thus know something about the general conditions of dreaming, we can see how each individual's dreams are connected with him in particular and individual experiences. As Mercutio so graphically tells us, our dreams bear the stamp of our special occupations, predominant tastes, and acquired habits of thought. Moreover, they commonly echo the mood of the hour, transposing into a foreign key the hopeful or dejected feeling induced by yesterday's experience, or by some occult change in the condition of the vital organs. Literature has been powerfully influenced by this new view of dreams, as indeed by scientific conceptions generally. This is illustrated in the fact that a comic poet like Hood is able to amuse us to-day by spinning some gruesome nightmare, at the same time robbing it of its horror by playfully pointing to the over-indulgence at the supper-table which is responsible for the apparition. To the Greek or Roman this frivolous treatment of the dream would have been repulsive, or perhaps unintelligible.—*Prof. James Sully, in the Forum*.

### POETICAL JUSTICE.

OUR busiest thinkers are idle drones  
In the eyes of the workaday world,  
And the songs that echo the angels tones  
Are but leaves of the autumn, whirled  
By the breath of the frost from up in the sky  
To the dullard who dwells in the vale,  
And spurns them as over his path they lie  
In the lull between gale and gale.

Douglas Sladen in *Australian Poets*.

### WITTY WORDS.

A SLOW-GOING husband once remarked of a lady half-forgotten by him: "Let me see: she had a very long nose, didn't she?" "Yes and she has it still," retorted his quick-witted wife. A wit says the times are so dull that it is difficult for him even to collect his ideas. Perhaps this is the man said to be so lazy that he has worked but once, and that was when he was labouring under a mistake. Another wag says: "To forget a wrong is the best revenge, particularly if the other fellow is bigger than you." "I do not say that that man will steal," said a witness on a trial; "but if I was a chicken, I'd roost high when he was around." A humourist says: "If you think no one cares for you in this cold world, just tell your neighbours that you propose to keep hens. You will be surprised to see what an immediate interest they will manifest in you." A witty comment was that which was made by a critic on hearing that a lawyer had composed a poem on "My Conscience." "It ought to sell well," said he, "the public are fond of novelties." Speaking of dancing, a clergyman hit the right nail on the head when he remarked that "People usually did more harm with their tongues than with their toes." "What is the usual definition of conscience?" asked a man of his pastor. "A man's rule for his neighbour's conduct is about the way it comes out, practically," was the apt reply. "You say your brother is younger than you, yet he looks much older." "Yes, he has seen a great deal of trouble, but I never married," was the ready reply. More sarcastic is the next, "Are you fond of tongue, sir?" "I was always fond of tongue, madam, and like it still." "John, what is the best thing to feed a parrot on?" asked an elderly lady of her bachelor brother, who hated parrots. "Arsenic!" gruffly answered John. Rather severe are the