

sense (for one can call it nothing else) in this new country than in all the rest of Canada put together.

Of the future of this great Province no one who has seen it can speak otherwise than hopefully; everything breathes of hope. The climate is for the most part so delightful, the mineral resources so great, the confidence of outsiders (such as Americans) so implicit that British Columbians may well be excused for thinking their Province unexcelled. Hard times have never pressed them; wealth and population have steadily increased; railways are being built and railways are being planned. New towns are springing up in every part. Much of the prosperity is certainly due to Americans; one may be far from being an annexationist and yet admire the good qualities of the Americans in this Province and their excellent services to the community. In British Columbia they have proved admirable settlers, confidence in the country and (it is perhaps needless to add) in themselves is so great that they are freely investing capital in the Province, and it is safe to say that in the next few years millions of dollars of American money will find their way into this country. Much of the hoped-for future of the Province depends upon the mines. Hitherto they have been little worked, but prospectors of experience say that in the Kootenay country which lies in the south-east part of the Province amid the Selkirk Mountains are mines richer than those of Montana. The output yet has not been large, but the probable wealth of mineral of some of the mines may be estimated when it is stated that an American company offered the owners of a mine near Nelson in the Kootenay district \$1,300,000 for it—an offer rejected by the owners who thought (and perhaps with truth) that it would command a higher figure. That the mines will be worked in the not distant future is as sure as anything can be, and the Americans will be among the first to profit thereby.

B.

### THE CRITIC.

WHAT after all is criticism? It is one of the features of the day, perhaps the feature of the day; nothing is produced in the spheres of art or literature in whose wake there does not immediately follow criticism, good, bad, or indifferent. Whole books solely devoted to criticism follow each other in rapid succession. And everybody criticizes everything, the sober and judicious *Athenæum* equally with the ignorant or flippant provincial daily. But what after all is criticism?

Canons of criticism there cannot be. Both art and literature are to-day so untrammelled by rule that there are no rules by which to criticize. The days of epics in twelve books and dramas in five acts, the days of the dramatic unities, the classic days are fast passing away, and criticism has few or no principles upon which to depend. In short, form is with us of little moment, matter is all important. It follows too quite naturally that criticism now is largely but the expression of individual opinion. One singular and salient evidence of this is the great stress laid upon the critical utterances of individuals of high repute—a "notable book" lauded in the *Nineteenth Century* by, say, the Right Honble. W. E. Gladstone is sure of a second edition; and it is the notable reviews whose verdicts are quoted in long lists of "comments of the press." It is upon the reputation of the critic that the publisher relies, not upon the justness of the criticism.

And quite naturally. If there is no scale by which to weigh the thing criticized, there is no balance into which to throw the criticism. Accordingly it is not at all surprising to be told—as for example we are told by M. Anatole France (in *La Vie Littéraire*)—that there now exists no science of criticism. Nor are we even much astonished when Mr. Oscar Wilde hints that there ought to be no such thing as a science of criticism—that the artist, literary or pictorial, should be left free to create what he likes without thought of what criticism may say. However, Mr. Wilde to the contrary, criticism there always will be, if because of nothing else because criticism is in itself a thing interesting, instructive, and often creative—as in the case of such masters in the art as Sainte-Beuve, Matthew Arnold, Scherer.

The fact is, as M. France avers, there is no science of criticism; it is a matter of individual opinion. But the public usually demands, and rightly, that the individual who expresses his opinion shall be one who possesses certain qualifications. He must, for example, be widely read, in order that he may have at hand high standards by which to compare. He must also be able to eliminate to a large extent what a writer has happily called the "personal equation;" he must be able, that is, to lay aside idiosyncrasies; and, although primarily he bases his judgment upon the effect on himself of the work to be criticized, yet he can so rid himself of his own sympathies or antipathies as that his ultimate verdict shall represent as far as may be the effect of such work on humanity at large. In this, to make use of another happy phrase, his criticism is avowedly an attempt to forestall posterity. Perhaps this is the essence of all criticism. For in reality posterity is the final, in fact the only, critic. It has very wisely been said that only the third generation can pronounce an unbiased opinion: the first is dazzled by the glamour of a great name; the second is blinded by the reaction which inevitably follows this; the third it is which can see clearly.

There is one qualification, however, never to be lost sight of, the critic must before all possess in a high degree

that indefinable thing called taste, he must recognize that indefinable thing called beauty wherever and in whatsoever form it appears. To recognize verisimilitude is one thing—the philosopher does this; to recognize beauty is another thing—that the poet does. Well, the true critic is both philosopher and poet combined. And such a combination is as rare as it is priceless.

### LA SOTTISE.

BRIGHT eyes gleaming in tenderest passion,  
White hands gliding o'er sounding keys,  
Fragrance of summer roses' sweetness  
Mingling soft with the summer breeze.

Light sinks dim as the music lingers,  
Hopes rise high as the fancies stray,  
Heart to heart in the falling cadence,  
Beating soft as it dies away.

Tell me, dearest, what means the music?  
Tell me, dearest, and tell me true,  
All seems gone with the last faint sound,  
My heart, my being, lost in you.

Sweetest one, 'tis a dream of madness—  
Strike the keys in a nobler vein;  
Love with white lips drawn tight in silence,  
Life and Love—'tis a dream of pain!

J. A. T. L.

### PARIS LETTER.

WILL Germany or France monopolize the eyes of the universe in the year 1900 by holding an international exhibition? The rivals have much to urge on behalf of their respective claims, and if persisted in some neutral power will possibly step forward and open the new century by a peace-offering. Evidently, if France and Germany send invitations to the powers, the latter will declare off; if the rivalry degenerates into a test of political influences, the era of international exhibitions may be regarded as closed—and which would be for many only a mixed regret. Could the world remain in fallow for a century in respect to Big Fairs?

In Africa the French apparently keep pegging away; how far the expenditure of men and money will repay is not quite clear. Impartial observers measure the colonial expansion of France, not by hinterlands, but by emigration to her possessions and the investment of hard money in their development. Full steam is being put on with respect to Dahomey, or at least to Cotonou. Dr. Siciliano describes the climate as murderous: inflammation of the liver exists in a chronic state; dysentery is frequent, and a European once attacked ought to quit the country; articular rheumatism is also frequent both with blacks and whites; the Guinea fly, or dragonneau, produces terrible ravages; ulcerated feet and legs are common; marsh fever is a standing complaint and is different from the Lagos black fever. The first reform to effect in Dahomey is, to compel the natives not to bury their dead under the floors of their huts. A European, if he abstains from alcohol and visits his native air every three years, can live for a time in Dahomey; only matured, ripe-aged white men ought to go to that country; young people "melt away."

The crusade against the Jews is a shade less rabid, but the leaders of the baiting campaign have not the slightest idea of disarming. There is no popular agitation strictly speaking against the Israelites; but they are not in the odour of sanctity; they are in a minority in France, and are viewed as occupying a disproportionate number of places in public offices. Perhaps the error they commit is that of figuring too prominently in party fights; that is dangerous for a small minority, as a reaction ensues. The Marquis de Morés, the Frenchified Italian Duc of Vallombrosa, is not a fool, as many allege; he works his crank orism to make the order of Rothschilds disgorge their fortunes to create capital for the prolétaires. The duel mania has calmed down; it is proposed to suppress it by law—which is moonshine. England accomplished that feat by the threat of certainly hanging as a murderer, the survivor in a mortal duel. Guilloitine a brave for defending his honour—perish the thought! The way to suppress duelling in France is—not to publish any account of the meets, and to take no notice of a man with his arm in a sling, or a sticking-plastered head, or locomoting on hired crutches or detective policemen's walking sticks.

The anarchists, having ceased to scare, now make amends by amusing. Ravachol continues to be a burning and shining light of the *in memoriam* character. Executioner Deibler and his sinister tool-house are well guarded by the police, to keep off a few stormy petrels. The terrible anarchist's decapitation will be a surprise for amateurs of the guillotine—the event will be sudden and can take place at any moment. It is arranged that Deibler will operate on a condemned in the provinces, and, returning to Paris, will double back and finish up with Ravachol. The sooner the better. At a meeting of his sympathizers held here, one "oratrice"—great criminals have ever fascinated some of the fair sex—called for a "bravo" for the parting "compagnon"; a member proposed to fire some of the public buildings on the 14th July, to make up for the diminished grants voted for the illumina-

tions, while the meetings unanimously regretted society had not 100,000 Ravachols. The anarchists after all are not destitute of fun.

A layer of wild men, but not so out-and-out as the classic anarchists, have formed a union to demand an amnesty for Rochefort and other less-known exiled or imprisoned patriots—in fact to present the country with a clean bill of political health. If not granted, the martyrs will be run as candidate-deputies at the general elections next year. Even Berezowski, who shot at the Czar Alexander, in the Champs Elysées a quarter of a century ago, and is now leading a Robinson Crusoe life in New Caledonia, was not omitted. Among the signatures of the petition was M. Clemenceau; when his name was read out, it was received with hisses. A Russian boy in national costume was passed on to the platform, when cries were raised in favour of Russia and the "Nihilists," plus an *à bas* for the Czar.

The Pope is surely but effectively bringing the monarchical Catholics into line with the republic; they who intend to become the Tory wing of the present constitution. The *Pays*, once a fire-eating Bonapartist paper, has just been brought up to become the organ of the new party—"Papal republicans," as they have been baptized. M. Emile Ollivier, who set up and out to break a lance with the modernized—and common sense—French political policy of Leon XIII., has been silenced as effectually as if he were in holy orders. Some writers draw attention to the summary manner with which the First Napoleon fought the Church; at one time—1812—the emperor had imprisoned in the fortresses of Vincennes and Ham for disobedience, four cardinals, four bishops, three vicars-general, nine canons and thirty-eight parish priests; many priests were exiled also to a circuit of fifty miles from their parishes, and a notice was placed on the door of the chapel, setting forth that the *curé* had to leave on account of misconduct. Having imprisoned the Pope himself, Napoleon would never be stopped by even a Sacred College full of recalcitrant cardinals.

The commercial situation of France is improving, and if the "flowing tide" continues, under the new tariffs and reciprocity treaties, French protectionists will take to illuminations. The Comte d'Houssonville, who seems to have given up as a going concern the running of the Orleanist dynasty for that unknown institution—the French crown—alluding to the economical situation of France, writes: that situation resembles England's more than that of the United States. Thus with respect to the condition of workmen, without being as miserable as it is in England, is not the less painful and difficult in France. He adds that the "measures for the protection of woman have not ameliorated her situation to any marked degree; in legally over-protecting her we transform her into a victim."

Two young men a few days ago took to quarrelling; forgetting they had fists, and not being able to borrow swords, they placed iron nails in two sticks and prodded at each others' heads and necks, till the police came and conveyed both to the hospital.

It was certain to come; doctress-in-law Mlle. Chauvin, has been appointed professoress in the governmental secondary lycéums for girls; she is a full-blown woman's rights young lady; claims for her sex, not only clerkships in the civil service—nothing to do from ten to four on week days, and a holiday on Sundays, but insists on the army and navy being open to her sex. As France finds difficulty in securing men for her new colonial army, why not try a few battalions of Amazonians; they could flesh their maiden swords in their sisters in arms at Dahomey?

There is nothing new in the alleged discovery that Labourdonnais (Labourdonnaye) sold Madras to the English, and was paid in hard money for his work. Any student of Indian history can tell that; the original documents of sale are in the archives of the India Office. The present writer drew public attention to the quip of the French calling the chief avenue skirting the Champ de Mars, that is, exhibition ground, after so tarnished a glory. I heard it stated, that Labourdonnais has claims on every tender and sentimental heart; it was he who was instrumental in obtaining the nomination of the governor of the island, who authorized the abduction of "Virginia," to her harridan old aunt in Paris—and when returning to her "Paul," she was shipwrecked.

A constant reader asks his journal, if "yak," is the correct pronunciation of "yacht."

The manager of two secondary theatres, and not bad ones, despite the "nineties," keeps his houses full; he merely exchanges his troupes and the properties every week.

An ever timely tax: During the Reign of Terror, the city of St. Etienne, near Lyons, struck a tax in favour of "suffering humanity."

Z.

KNOWLEDGE is an excellent drug; but no drug has virtue enough to preserve itself from corruption and decay, if the vessel be tainted and impure wherein it is put to keep.—*Montaigne*.

ACCORDING to the *Colliery Guardian*, M. Duubree, professor of geology at the Ecole d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, has found that the temperatures attained in several processes are not nearly so high as is generally supposed; for instance, that of the Bessemer converter is from 1,330 to 1,580° centigrade; molten steel from 1,580 to 1,640°; the Siemens furnace from 1,045 to 1,190°, and incandescent electric lamps from 1,800 to 2,100°.