

WE see with pleasure that Mr. C. G. D. Roberts has been appointed to a professorship of English at King's College, Windsor, N. B. The position is one for which he is highly qualified, and of which we have no doubt he will make excellent use. He has a special field open to him as a critic of American literature, his knowledge of which is extensive, while as a Canadian professor he may remain independent of the cliques and coteries which are generally the bane of criticism. He will at the same time have leisure, and we hope inclination, for original work as a poet and in the general field of letters.

THE appointment of Mr. Geo. Dixon, M.A., as Principal of Upper Canada College, Toronto, has been received with universal approval—as, indeed, might have been expected from his popularity and success in Hamilton. Mr. Dixon will enter upon his duties immediately, and with the confident good wishes of all friends of sound education.

MR. THOMAS HUGHES, the eminent English author and publicist, and who has from time to time contributed an English Letter to THE WEEK, will arrive at New York about the 30th August en route for Tennessee.

TORONTO is rated by dramatic caterers as being one of the best cities on this continent to play to. There is a large amusement-loving public, and its Grand Opera House is capacious, ornate, and centrally situated. During the off-season Mr. Sheppard has had the building re-decorated, has added to and improved the scenery, and generally strengthened the stage upholstery. The programme for the forthcoming season, moreover, includes engagements with most of the popular companies and stars, and is a very strong one, promising many a treat to lovers of the sock and buskin.

It is news, indeed, to be told that the *London Standard* is no longer a Conservative newspaper—that it is politically independent. The announcement, made by a leading Toronto daily, is coincident with the appearance in the *Standard* of a stinging castigation administered to Lord Randolph Churchill. Hitherto what the great London journal had said upon public matters had been constantly quoted and treated by the critic as worthy the greatest respect; but now—anathema. Since 1881, we are told, the *Standard* has ceased to uphold Conservatism; but "May's Press Guide" for 1885 describes it as a "Conservative" morning paper. Which is reliable: the Canadian journal which has published fulsome flatteries of a man known only over the cable, and well trounced by the *Standard*, or the hand-book of an old established firm, with headquarters in London, and whose reputation depends upon the exactness of the information it gives upon English newspaper affairs?

A MUCH more vital matter to Canadians is the *Standard's* persistent hostility to the Canadian Pacific Railway. That paper—or, to be explicit, its city editor—insists that the company must collapse and that the Government's guarantee to shareholders is worthless. Official replies have been forwarded to the sceptical editor, and the *London Canadian Gazette* has time and again attempted to set matters right, but all to no purpose. *Delenda est Carthago*, says the great Conservative organ, regardless of the wholesome advice given by an American humourist to those who would prophesy.

Not only is Home Rule assured for Ireland, but Scotland demands a similar concession, and will get it—at least so say some whose zeal outruns discretion, and whose fondness for getting into print betrays them into all kinds of blunders. We are told, for instance, that the proposal to appoint a Scotch Secretary of State was received with the greatest enthusiasm north of the Tweed, and that a large number of members will be returned to the next Imperial Parliament pledged to Scottish Home Rule. Curiously enough, late English papers show that the new Secretaryship was received with great coolness by the Scotch members, and that, although such an appointment is recognized as only a just concession to the dignity of Scotland, it is likely that the Minister who occupies the post will hold a sinecure. The question was asked, What business shall be found for him? He might be made Keeper of the Great Seal; but such a position involves neither dignity nor work. It was proposed to hand over to him the management of Scottish education. Whereupon Dr. Lyon Playfair, member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's, was up in arms and poured ridicule upon the idea—will have none of it. And so the thing goes. The truth is that Home Rule, as understood by the Irish rebels and their champions, is no nearer accomplishment than it ever was, nor is it desired by the intelligence of either Ireland or Scotland. Much of the work now done by Parliament will doubtless soon be deputed to County Boards, but that is a very different thing from Home Rule.

WHEN they chuckle over the appointment of an English Commission to enquire into the condition of trade, and proceed to define the object of the Commission as an "endeavour to ascertain just why it is that the farmers, mechanics and manufacturers in Free Trade England are so much worse off than are those of other nations which have rejected the Free-Trade dogmas," the *New York Tribune* and other Protectionist organs are scarcely fair. Surely writers in these journals know that the appointment of the Commission is a mere electioneering dodge—that it is composed wholly of men inimical to Free Trade, having no commercial status; and that the reactionary proposals of the small clique styled "Fair Traders" are not even treated *au sérieux* by responsible English journalists of any party. Then it must be patent to the most thoughtless that its mere reiteration does not establish the assertion that English "farmers, mechanics, and manufacturers" are

"much worse off" than those living under Protection. On the contrary, it has been repeatedly shown that, having due regard for the difference in the cost of living, the working classes of England are equally well-off with their American brethren. It is true that a section of the agricultural labourers in the former country are miserably under-paid, but their condition is not by any means a criterion of the great majority of workmen; and have we not read something of late about destitution leading to riot and bloodshed in Free Trade America?

THE difference between Philip drunk and Philip sober is often such as to cause amusement. The difference between Lords Salisbury and Churchill in and out of office is calculated to cause their less pichydermatous followers no little disquietude. The following cuttings speak for themselves. In "Hansard," 3 S., clxxxviii., 1,527-1,539 are these remarks:

After all, our theory of government is not that a certain number of statesmen should place themselves in office and do whatever the House of Commons bids them. Our theory of government is that on each side of the House there should be men supporting definite opinions, and that what they have supported in opposition they should adhere to in office; and that everyone should know, from the fact of their being in office, that those particular opinions will be supported. If you reverse that, and declare that, no matter what a man has supported in opposition, the moment he gets into office it shall be open to him to reverse and repudiate it all, you practically destroy the whole basis on which our form of government rests, and you make the House of Commons a mere scrambling-place for office. You practically banish all honourable men from the political arena, and you will find, in the long run, that the time will come when your statesmen will become nothing but political adventurers, and that professions of opinion will be looked upon as so many political manoeuvres for the purpose of obtaining office. I entreat honourable gentlemen opposite not to believe that my feelings on this subject are dictated simply by my hostility to this particular measure (the Reform Bill), though I object to it most strongly, as the House is aware. But even if I took a contrary view—if I deemed it to be most advantageous, I still should deeply regret that the position of the Executive should have been so degraded as it has been in the present session.

The speech was made in 1867, and the speaker was the present Marquis of Salisbury. On the 20th of December, 1883, Lord Randolph Churchill spoke as follows:

I believe the Tory Party is not prepared to give way an inch to the Irish Party in this matter (of further concessions); it is resolved to stand firm, and I tell you truly and sincerely that on this question the Tory Party is entitled to your support. It is time, and high time to pull up. Concede nothing more to Mr. Parnell, either on the land or on the franchise, or on local self-government. We have gone in three short years too far, and we have gone too fast; the hill is very steep and the drag has not been sufficiently weighted, and unless we take a long pull and a strong pull the horses will get away from us, and there will be a terrible smash. Do not, as you value your life as an Empire, swallow one morsel more of heroic legislation, and by giving a continuous support to the Tory Party, let the Irish know that although they cry day and night, though they vex you with much wickedness and harass you with much disorder, though they incessantly divert your attention from your own affairs, though they cause you all manner of trial and trouble, that there is one thing that you will detect at once, in whatever form or guise it may be presented to you, there is one thing you will never listen to, there is one thing you will never yield to, and that is to their demand for an Irish Parliament.

PIANOFORTE players have always complained of the difficulty of making the ring-finger work as freely as the others, and according to the *British Medical Journal* Mr. Smith, of Queen Anne Street, London, has by a delicate operation succeeded in enlarging the powers of the pianist. He says: "I have just succeeded in freeing the ring-finger of the right hand of an accomplished lady pianist, without causing her much more pain than is felt from the prick of a needle. Before operation she was able to raise the finger only five-eighths of an inch beyond the others. Directly after operation she could raise the finger easily to one and a-half inches, without the least feeling of loss of control over its action. The division was, of course, made subcutaneously, so that only a minute wound was left in the skin, one-eighth of an inch in length."

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Times* in China, in a lengthy contribution, gives a sketch of the newspaper press in that empire. Newspapers are not an innovation in China. The *Peking Gazette* is the oldest newspaper in the world. The *Gazette* continues to be, as it originally was, chiefly a vehicle for communicating to the public the acts and decrees of the Government. Contact with and assistance from Europeans has, however, led to the establishment of newspapers containing more miscellaneous contents, and constructed more on Western models. There is a numerous literary class in China, with comparatively little to do, and in their hands the new instrument bids fair to develop into a valuable educational force. The writer singles out for special commendation the *Shanghai Gazette*, and several native papers of Hongkong. These papers contain local intelligence, advertisements, and other items to be found in European journals. But the ablest feature in them is the criticisms on purely native affairs, which bristle with references to Chinese literature, and are marked by wonderful felicity of style. In dealing with foreign topics the writers, however, show a great falling off. They humour the patriotic prejudices of the people, and their productions are marked by extreme Jingism. The acts of the Government and of local officials are freely treated, and censures are liberally indulged in. At first attempts were made to suppress these papers, but they are now grudgingly tolerated by the authorities, and bid fair to become a new and potent factor in the national life.

IN "Ouida's" opinion, "so much water has been mingled with the wine of English literature that it has altogether lost the body and flavour which it had of old, and its extraordinary prolixity and puerility are among the many unmistakable signs of the decay of English intellectual power." This strong indictment she makes in the *North American Review*, and there is some truth in it. There is too much pot-boiling, and from being a daughter of the Muses and Graces, Fiction is "but a mere slave of the lamp and the quill." But "Ouida" is not so right when she asserts that a principal reason for the decadence of English fiction is the "puritanism" of English writers. There is a strong puritanical flavour in Englishmen to-day, as