

A CANADIAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND LIFE.

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No. 6. }

Saturday, February 19th, 1887.

{ JOHN CHARLES DENT,  
Editor and Proprietor.

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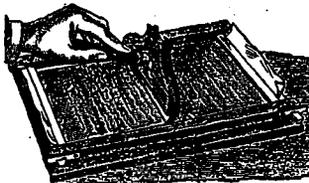
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## ARCTURUS.

### Notices of the Canadian Press.

A new star has appeared in the Canadian literary firmament under the name of ARCTURUS. The journal is a weekly, and is under the editorial management of Mr. J. C. Dent, whose accomplishments as a *littérateur* are a guarantee of excellence. ARCTURUS promises to deal with religious, social and literary matters and to discuss political questions from the national as distinguished from the partisan point of view. The number just to hand is an interesting and meritorious production. The editor apologizes for its imperfections on the score of the difficulties and drawbacks inseparable from the issue of a first number. But if succeeding numbers are as interesting as that with which the new enterprise is introduced, ARCTURUS will be a valuable addition to the periodical literature of Canada.—*Toronto Mail*.

ARCTURUS, Mr. John Charles Dent's new literary weekly, has received a flattering welcome from press and people. It is the most promising venture of its sort that has yet appeared upon the Canadian market. Its articles are sufficiently thoughtful to appeal to a class of readers who like a supplement to the rapid fire of running commentary which it is the province of the daily press to deliver, but the editor wisely eschews that heavy oracular style which has been the bane of so many literary weeklies. The initial number is good, and is a practical promise of better. The *World* hopes and predicts for ARCTURUS a long and prosperous career.—*Toronto World*.

The first number of ARCTURUS, "A Canadian Journal of Literature and Life," issued in this city under the editorial management of John Charles Dent, makes its appearance to-day. It is fully up to the standard aimed at as a readable, forcibly written, and timely weekly paper, free alike from the pedantry which mars some pretentious efforts in this direction and the more frequent faults of slipshod and common-place writing. The articles are all interesting and thoughtful, and the editor has wisely permitted the writers considerable latitude in the presentation of their views instead of seeking to restrict their expression of opinion within the narrow limits usually marked out by party and class journals. Typographically ARCTURUS presents a bright and handsome aspect. It is convenient in form, and no pains have been spared to secure perfection in those details of arrangement which have so much to do with conveying a favourable impression with regard to a newspaper. Although the field of journalism seemed so fully occupied by publications of every class and grade, Mr. Dent must be credited with having struck out a distinctive line, and one which ought to find appreciation. If the standard of the first number is maintained ARCTURUS ought speedily to obtain a large remunerative circulation.—*Toronto News*.

ARCTURUS is the name of a new weekly paper published in this city, of which Mr. John C. Dent is announced as Editor and Proprietor. It claims to be "A Canadian Journal of Literature and Life." Mr. Dent's contributions to Canadian history and literature are an ample guarantee that this new journal will be conducted with taste and ability.—*Christian Guardian*.

ARCTURUS is the name Mr. John Charles Dent has selected for his new literary weekly, the first number of which appeared on Saturday, 16th. He calls it ARCTURUS because it is "A star of the first magnitude in the northern heavens"—according to the astronomical dictionary. We only hope the name will be kindly taken to by the public, for the paper promises to be bright and able, as, indeed, in Mr. Dent's hands could hardly fail to be. The typographical appearance of the new comer reflects high credit on the printing establishment of James Murray & Co.—*Grip*.

We are in receipt of the first number of ARCTURUS, a new weekly journal of "literature and life," owned and edited by Mr. John Charles Dent. The literary name and attainments of the editor are of themselves a guarantee of the highest excellence in all the departments of first-class modern journalism. The number before us, although published under the inevitable difficulties of a first issue, gives promise of a bright and successful future. The salutatory sounds a clear note of thorough independence, is succinct and clearly defined in its position, withal broad in its scope and liberal in its views. The initial number contains thoughtful and well-written articles upon independent journalism, the Labour Reform question in politics, and the Bible in the schools. It also gives us breezy book and other notices, and the extraneous selections are judiciously chosen. We welcome ARCTURUS, and bespeak for it a prosperous career.—*Toronto Sentinel*.

Such is the title chosen for a new weekly journal just established in this city by the well-known writer and historian, John Charles Dent. Made up in handsome form, with a neatly-engraved heading, and clearly printed on toned paper, ARCTURUS looks the picture of good taste, and comes freighted with gems from the editor's sparkling pen. To say that its leading articles are written with exceptional force and ability is but paying a slight tribute to the fine intellectual attainments of a gentleman who has long ago made his mark in the world of letters; and under his educated touch the new journal will be an enterprise of no uncommon merit. ARCTURUS, both as to brainwork and mechanical execution, is a credit to Mr. Dent, and we wish it a long and prosperous career.—*Irish Canadian*.

MR. JOHN CHARLES DENT has issued as editor and proprietor a new Canadian journal of literature and life called ARCTURUS. It is a neatly arranged, well printed and thoughtfully written production, and ought to easily find its own constituency. Mr. Dent is the author of "The Story of the Upper Canadian

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Rebellion," and is not only a writer but a journalist of experience. ARCTURUS should succeed and fill a useful position in Canadian literature. That it may do so is our wish.—*Ottawa Free Press*.

For some time past the announcement has appeared in the Ontario press that Mr. John Charles Dent, author of "The Last Forty Years," "The Story of the Upper Canadian Rebellion," and other valuable historical works, was about to establish a weekly periodical—"A Canadian journal of literature and life." The first number of ARCTURUS which now lies before us, is the fulfilment of the promise. ARCTURUS is thoroughly independent in its expressions of opinion on political, social and literary questions. The terms of subscription are \$2 a year. Address, Room U, Arcade, Toronto, Ont.—*Montreal Gazette*.

We welcome to the ranks of independent journalism the newly established paper ARCTURUS, published in Toronto, and edited by Mr. J. C. Dent, one of the most talented and brilliant of Canadian writers—our national "Junius." We judge from its high moral tone that it seems destined to become a mould of Canadian sentiment, and cannot be questioned as an authority in politics, literature and art. We wish it success.—*London Farmer's Advocate*.

ARCTURUS, a Canadian journal of literature and life, is the titular description given by Mr. John Charles Dent to the handsome sixteen-page weekly which he has just published at Toronto. The initial number develops more than ordinary excellence, and the periodical bids fair to be a source of profit to its talented projector, as well as of credit to the Dominion.—*St. John Telegraph*.

THERE has been issued at Toronto a new sixteen-page, clearly printed weekly paper, entitled ARCTURUS. Mr. John Charles Dent, who is well known in connection with Canadian literature, is the editor and proprietor. The first number contains a department of interesting political notes. An editorial article, "An Independent Newspaper," is temperately written, but it puts forward strongly enough the idea that the future of the country is a fair matter for consideration by a thoughtful people. There is an article on "The Labour Question in Politics," one on "The Bible in Schools," a department of "Literary Notes" and of "Book Reviews," with, of course, a good portion of space given to romance-literature and to poetry. A well-managed weekly paper is a necessity for the thoughtful reader. The daily journal takes up questions as they occur hour by hour, forecasts, discusses and disposes; the weekly, having more time for consideration, and a better opportunity of dealing with developed events, can correct and give judicial opinions. We hope that Mr. Dent's journal will succeed, and that he will be able to discover that there is a large population east of Quebec with ideas and opinions on the future of Canada.—*St. John Globe*.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

As the election campaign draws nearer and nearer to its close, the contest becomes proportionately hotter, and the phraseology of the stump-orators approximates more and more nearly to that of the Athanasian creed. "Slangwhanging" is not a lovely word. It is a word "that would have made Quintilian stare and gasp," but it is the only one which aptly indicates the character of the verbal courtesies which are daily, almost hourly, bandied backward and forward between rival speakers from the hustings at the present time. It is consoling to know that another week, at most, will see us to the end of this sort of thing. Verbatim reports of some of the political speeches made in this Province during the last fortnight would furnish very ungenial reading to the author of *The Law of Kindness*.

PERSONS who remember the political campaign of 1878, and the election which took place on the 17th of September in that year, will feel chary of predicting the result of elections where the vote is by ballot. The result of that contest was probably not anticipated by any human being. The Reform party, almost to a man, confidently counted upon Mr. Mackenzie being sustained in his stewardship. Most Conservatives looked for a similar result, and the few who were more sanguine had no wild expectation that the success of their party would be anything like what the event proved. Prognostications about election contests must under ordinary circumstances, be untrustworthy and uncertain. Where the constituencies are numerous, and where the interests involved are exceedingly conflicting, the prediction must

be more dubious still. When to all these conditions is added the fact that the vote is by ballot, anything like a confident forecast is manifestly out of the question. There are persons with whom one meets every day who know all about the matter, and who can calculate to the strictest nicety the extent of Sir John's majority. Their calculations seem to be based on well-ascertained facts, and beyond any sort of peradventure. Yet what sensible person attaches any importance to them? There is no man living to-day whose opinion as to the result of the contest now pending is worth taking into serious account.

THE Ontario Government has been asked to establish a School of Practical Science at Kingston of a similar character to the one in Toronto. The request was ostensibly made for the benefit of the people of the eastern section of this Province, but there is no room for doubt that the scheme originated with the officials of Queen's College, and that it is largely intended to promote the interests of that institution. A prominent member of the deputation, in addressing Mr. Mowat, naively remarked that they would all be satisfied if Principal Grant spoke for them. So the Very Reverend Principal did speak, and his arguments were ingenious and interesting. He thought, for example, that as the Government has offered Queen's College a site worth \$30,000 on condition that that institution should be removed to Toronto, it would evidently be equally economical for the Government to build the College a School of Science in Kingston at a cost of \$20,000 or so, and give them \$10,000 a year to carry it on. Notwithstanding this skilful reasoning, it is to be hoped that Mr. Mowat will not accede to the request made by the deputation,—and this for several reasons. The equipment of the Provincial School of Science in Toronto is quite inadequate to the requirements of the present time. Our best students are compelled to resort to American technological schools to complete their education. It is manifestly more to the advantage of the Province that this institution should be put in a state of thorough efficiency than that another second-rate school should be established. Further, the Government cannot afford to lay out a large sum of money merely to allay the academical jealousy which Queen's College has long shown towards the Provincial University. The next thing we should hear of would be applications from the Western University at London and the proposed new Baptist University at Woodstock for a scientific school in connection with their institutions. And it is difficult to see how their petition could be refused if that of Queen's College be granted. Finally, a theological institution like Queen's is not likely to be a good foster-

mother for a scientific school. History and recent events alike prove that science fails when dominated by theology. It is an open secret that the heterodox teaching of the professor of biology in the Toronto School of Science is one of the chief arguments of the Baptist theological professors who are advocating the withdrawal of McMaster Hall from its present connection with Toronto University. For the same reason strong objections were raised in the Methodist General Conference last summer against the federation of Victoria and Toronto Universities. Although this scientist is admittedly one of the ablest on the continent, it is quite safe to say that his official head would soon come off if these ecclesiastics had things in their own hands. Altogether, then, it is clear that this request of the authorities of Queen's College for the establishment of a School of Science under denominational control should not be favourably entertained by the Government.

THE death of Miss Isabella Valancy Crawford, which took place in Toronto on Saturday last, was very sudden, and—so far as we have been able to learn—altogether unexpected. It is little more than a fortnight since she was a visitor to the editorial sanctum of this journal. She was at that time apparently in the enjoyment of perfect health, and looking forward with hope and confidence to the future. She had several projects of authorship in contemplation, and appeared to be full of literary ambition and enthusiasm. Rightly or wrongly, Miss Crawford had brought herself to the conclusion that she had received scant justice at the hands of the conductors of Canadian journals, and on this subject she felt not a little sore. In a letter now lying on the editorial desk, dated the 17th ult., she expresses herself as follows:—"I feel that I should wish to introduce myself to your notice as a possible contributor to the pages of ARCTURUS. Of course the possibility is remote, as by some chance no contribution of mine has ever been accepted by any first-class Canadian literary journal. I have contributed to the *Mail* and *Globe*, and won some very kind words from eminent critics, but have been quietly 'sat upon' by the High Priests of Canadian periodical literature. I am not very seriously injured by the process, and indeed there have lately been signs of relenting on the part of the powers that be, as I was offered an extended notice of my book in the columns of the — and the —. This proposal I declined (I suppose injudiciously), as I think it might have been given at first, instead of coming in late in the day, and at the heels of warm words from higher literary authorities." Miss Crawford added further particulars during a personal interview, from which the Editor was led to infer that, like many another aspirant to poetic fame, she was perhaps a little over-sensitive as to the treatment she received at the hands of editors and publishers. Of her literary knowledge and ability, however, no one who spent an hour in conversation with her, and who took the time to read her best poems, could entertain any doubt. Her *Old Spookses' Pass* was favourably reviewed by some of the leading journals of Great Britain. The *Spectator* referred to it in flattering

terms, and the *Saturday Review*, the *Graphic*, and other recognized literary authorities sounded its praises with liberal appreciation. An examination of the volume will convince any capable critic that these commendations were not undeserved, and that Miss Crawford was endowed with a large share of the literary and poetic faculty. Her friends and relatives have our warmest sympathy in their bereavement.

THE study of political economy by all classes of the community is beginning to produce various whimsical and startling effects. Everybody is familiar with Canning's *Friend of Humanity and the Knifegrinder*. In that case the knifegrinder was ignorant of political economy, and had no story to tell. He would have had a very distinct account to render of himself and his wrongs if he had been a diligent student of Adam Smith. Most of us, again, have heard of the thief who, when placed on trial for stealing a watch from a jeweller's shop, pleaded in extenuation of his offence that his medical adviser had ordered him to "take something." Then, Mr. Phillips Thompson has introduced us to the political economist and the highwayman. Of course, political economy has its ludicrous side, and, like every other science, lends itself to the irreverent fancy of the joker. But this latest thing from New Jersey leaves all previous examples of this sort in the shade. A few nights ago the Jersey City post office was robbed. The robbers seized the postmaster and his wife, and tied them down in bed. The postmaster himself was gagged, but his wife's tongue was left at liberty, and with her the enterprising chevaliers of industry had a most interesting conversation. They informed her that it had not always been thus with them: that they had been brought up to a different course of life, but that they had been driven to robbery by the abuses prevalent in society. The driving seems to have been of a mental rather than a physical nature, and the incitement alleged was that property is unequally distributed in this world; that some have everything and that they, the robbers, had nothing. This sounds like burlesque, but it is simple and actual fact. The New York *Nation* grows witheringly sarcastic over the episode, and contrives to extract therefrom a grave remonstrance against the pension-raid on the surplus in the United States Treasury. "What a very solemn fact is this?" says the editorial writer. "We have heard often enough that society is responsible for the tramps who infest the country roads in the summer time, but we were really not prepared to hear that society was now driving men into robbing post offices. The only quick and sure remedy we can suggest is to place on the pension-list every man who says that dissatisfaction with the present division of property impels him to be a robber. We ought not to wait until he actually robs before we do this. We ought to take the poor fellow's word for it in advance, before his soul is stained with crime. Could there be a higher and holier use for the surplus than pensioning those who without pensions would become burglars?" All of which is genuinely humorous, and sounds very much like William L. Alden.

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH, 1887.

JOHN CHARLES DENT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.  
Room U, Arcade (Victoria St. entrance), Toronto.

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THE first instalment of

## LITERARY EXPERIENCES

will appear in the number for Saturday, February 26th.

## PARTIES WITHOUT PRINCIPLES.

THE present political situation in Canada recalls an anecdote which some years since went the rounds of the American press. A prominent Englishman visiting the United States was asked what impressed him most in his intercourse with the people. "Their lack of interest in politics," was his somewhat startling reply. The astonished querist asked how he could reconcile this view with the excitement and turmoil everywhere noticeable during a presidential contest. "Ah!" said the Englishman, "I did not refer to the interest in elections—I meant interest in *politics*."

Those who are capable of appreciating the distinction will realize how specially applicable it is to Canadian public life. Everywhere we see the greatest interest taken in elections, in the success of one party or the other, in the fight for office and patronage. But of concern for the triumph of important principles, or the carrying out of needed measures of reform, there is infinitely little. In the estimation of nine-tenths of the people the word "politics" has been so degraded from its original significance that it conveys absolutely no other meaning to them than a scramble for the spoils. The narrowing down of the issues between Conservative and Liberal consequent upon the settlement of several vexed questions, and Mr. Blake's acceptance of the N.P., makes this want of vital points of difference between the parties more than ever apparent, and makes more glaringly obvious the absurdity of the pretence that the welfare of the country is bound up with the fate of either.

This state of affairs is not because there are no important questions to discuss. On the contrary, there never was a time in the history of Canada when there were greater and more urgent problems claiming the attention of every patriotic and thoughtful man. There are the questions of our relations to the British Empire and to the United States; the numerous changes rendered necessary by the defects revealed in the working of our experimental Confederation scheme; the Temperance and Labour problems—in short all those real, exigent questions which have gradually come to the front during a long period of national growth, characterized by extensive economic and social re-adjustments, but which questions have been waved aside by the partisans as either unworthy of consideration or matters to be postponed until the indefinite future. The parties have carefully studied to make their platform as non-committal as possible, and instead of boldly grappling with these new issues, have talked round them in smooth and vague platitudes.

The deliverances of the leaders and the official expressions of party conventions may be searched in vain for a clear emphatic utterance regarding the future status of Canada, the needful alterations in our governmental system—apart from mere administrative changes—the question of prohibitory legislation, or the re-adjustment of relations between labour and capital. The usual course is to ignore these and kindred issues so long as that is possible, and when that time is past, to endeavour by specious but carefully-guarded phrases to secure the adherence of those interested, while promising nothing definite.

Under these circumstances it is not remarkable that the hold of parties, as at present constituted, is weakening, especially on the minds of those who see that the most vital and momentous problems lie quite outside the limited range of the party platform. The marked tendency just now to independent journalism evidently connotes a tendency on the part of the intelligent public to independent thinking. In the discussion of the subject not a little confusion of thought has arisen from lack of clearness of expression on the part of those who arraign the existing parties. There is an apparent inconsistency in denouncing partyism or the party system, and then proposing the establishment of a third party. The party system itself, if an evil, is probably a necessary one. Not against partyism, but against parties which have outlived their usefulness, should the efforts of independent men be directed. Moreover, a mere independence as between Grit and Tory—an attitude of negative criticism—will accomplish nothing. The "independence" which simply sets itself up on a moral pedestal and devotes itself entirely to pointing out the shortcomings of partisans, and uttering empty generalities, respecting the duty of preferring country to party, is as little admirable as the other form of "independence," which consists in bestriding the fence and dealing out praise and blame to each side in nearly equal measure.

There has been enough of criticism, enough of negation, enough of grandiloquent aloofness from public affairs and the "I am holier than thou" assumption. What is above all things wanted for the regeneration of politics is constructive effort; the affirmation of principles; the forcing to the front of new, living practical issues, as contrasted with the wordy platitudes and traditional war-cries of the old parties. There is evidence that the process of crystallization, the drawing together of the element which will in time form a third party or supplant one of the existing organizations, has fairly begun.

## THE FLÂNEUR.

THE Rev. Mr. Potts appears to me to have taken an undignified stand in reply to the straightforward letter of Mr. Blain. On the Sunday evening preceding the mayoralty contest Mr. Potts made a strong party harangue from his pulpit in favour of Mr. Howland, during which he animadverted in no very complimentary terms on all who took the liberty to differ from him as to the fitness of the candidates for the civic chair. Mr. Blain bore himself through the election, even by the admission of his opponents, in an above-board and manly way. He naturally feels aggrieved at receiving from a personal friend what can only be characterized as an unfair blow beneath the belt; and in an outspoken letter to Mr. Potts he says so. Does the Reverend gentleman apologize, or explain? Oh, no. He only "declines to be lectured," and "accepts the responsibility." From one whose profession, and some people say whose fancy, is to lecture others, the first phrase comes with an ill grace; while the "responsibility" for an act is in a case like this very vague. There is far

too great a tendency among certain clergymen in this city to turn their churches into political hustings. Surely we have enough and to spare of party politics on the six days of the week, without an ecclesiastical re-hash on the Sunday. Mr. Potts is an able and a useful man, and has done much that I admire, and it is to be hoped he will not hesitate to acknowledge a mistake, and make to Mr. Blain such reparation as gentlemen when in error are usually anxious to offer.

THE Volunteers are very much incensed at being refused permission to visit England in their military capacity on the occasion of the coming Jubilee celebration. As these gentlemen, I am told, offer to pay their own expenses, what is the meaning of the refusal? The ostensible reasons urged are frivolous in the extreme, and are laughed at by the men themselves, who say this is not the first occasion when a disposition has been evinced to treat them with unnecessary harshness. If necessary, a short act can be passed through Parliament in a week to meet the requirements of the case, and the authorities may as well in this matter try to meet the very reasonable request of many members of the force.

ONE reason given against the proposed visit is that our men are not equal in drill to the crack corps of the English Volunteers. Perhaps not; but they are fairly equal to the average, and certainly one way to increase their efficiency is in evoking a spirit of emulation by showing them better work than they are, perhaps, in the habit of doing. We need have no fear of a comparison between any men we may send and those they will meet in the Old Country, and one thing is certain, if they go (and I hope they will) a hearty reception for them is certain, as is also the prospect of a "rare high time."

SOME more unfortunate citizens have been summoned before the Police Magistrate and fined for not clearing away the snow in front of their dwellings. Now, I cannot see why we should be required to clear the streets in winter anymore than to water them in summer. It is the duty of the municipality to see that the public highways are in a suitable condition always. We never object to money spent in this direction. The present stupid plan is not and cannot be carried out, and the pretence of it had better be abolished, and the work done and paid for in a proper manner.

A PERSONAL Liberty League has been established in London to advance the ideas of Mr. Herbert Spencer as to individual liberty. The outrageous proceedings in Toronto the last two or three Sundays point to the necessity for a branch of the association being established here at once. It seems scarcely credible that in a city like this and in times like these a hired carriage can be stopped in the streets by the police and the occupants interrogated as to their business and forbidden to proceed, because they are travelling for pleasure on the Lord's Day! And yet we are rather fond of boasting of our progress, and thanking heaven we are not as those benighted beings in the Old World are. Indeed, in some things we are not, only scarcely in the manner we so complacently assume. Not long ago the Mayor said he wished to save Toronto from becoming like Paris or Brussels. I do not know whether Mayor Howland is, but I am tolerably familiar with both those capitals, and I can assure him he would wait a long while in either place to see a man after leaving a house of worship on Sunday evening hide his prayer book in his pocket and sneak in at the back door of a saloon. What is called the Sunday question must soon come to the front in Toronto, and nothing will do so much to ripen opinion as such acts of high-handed tyranny as we are witnessing in our midst just now, which, while they may please the minds of Sabbatarians and bigots, must cause all friends of true religion and all lovers of liberty to blush.

IN Germany, as here, they are now engaged in an electoral contest of considerable moment, and in some points similar to our own. From remarks in some of the papers it is evident the nature of the contest is not understood. Now, I am not going in for the role of the schoolmaster, but will endeavour in a few lines to make the broad issue tolerably clear. It is a mistake to suppose that the opposition is against the proposed increase of the

German army. The increase has been granted, and the fight is as to whether the Reichstag shall vote the supplies for the additional number for seven years, as demanded by the Government, or three years as desired by a majority of the Chamber. The opposition to the Chancellor—and this is what I want to emphasize—consists of the advanced Liberals, who desire to make the army a Parliamentary as opposed to an Imperial force, and the Romanists who desire "better terms" for the church. The population may be approximately given as thirty millions of Protestants to seventeen millions of Catholics, but these latter, in Germany as in Canada, march to the poll in a solid column, while the Protestants are politically divided. Dr. Windthorst, the leader of the Romanists, is one of the ablest men in Germany, and he assumes the same attitude towards Bismarck as Messieurs Taschereau and Lynch do with our Premier. Prince Bismarck can have the Catholic vote whenever he likes to pay for it. Dr. Windthorst and his following coalesced with the Liberals, and defeated Bismarck, who if not sustained by the country—and of this there is considerable doubt—will have to "go to Canossa."

WHAT is meant by "going to Canossa?" Well, we in Canada ought to know, as we are familiar enough with the practice, if not the phrase. This is a bit of political slang in Germany, and implies yielding to the Vatican. It originated in the pilgrimage of a German Emperor—Henry the Fourth, I think—who had to walk to a place called Canossa barefoot in the snow, to assuage the ire of an offended Pope. When Bismarck sometime since determined to check the influence of the Vatican in Germany, both in the appointment of bishops (who are State paid) and in educational matters, he passed what are known as the Falk laws, and so earned the hostility of Rome. Only a few days back the great Chancellor boasted that he would not go to Canossa; but we shall see. It may be that after the elections in both countries are over Sir John Macdonald and Prince Bismarck will be able to exchange congratulatory telegrams as to the desirable results they have both attained by "going to Canossa" together.

WHEN the Local House gets to work, it is to be hoped it will make some alteration in the law as to landlord and tenant. We talk much about what is being done in other countries; let us look at home. A week hardly ever passes in this town but some poor family has all its little "household Gods" sold for rent it cannot pay—added to, also, by exorbitant charges for bailiff, etc. I would not allow a man's furniture to be taken for rent, any more than for a tithe, a fabrique assessment, or a saloon score. If rent is not paid, evict the tenant, and there let the matter rest.

## Correspondence.

*Mr. Gladstone and Goldwin Smith.*

Editor ARCTURUS:

In a cable dispatch to the *Mail* of February 2nd, we read that, in a reply to Mr. Gladstone's article on *Locksley Hall*, Mr. Goldwin Smith disputes the assertion that "devilish engineering brought about the dissolution of the Irish Parliament, and the union between the two countries."

As Mr. Goldwin Smith has the peculiar habit of denying to-day what he wrote yesterday, very little reliance can be placed on anything he says. When Mr. Gladstone wrote the above sentence, he but used, in a slightly different form, the words written by Mr. Goldwin Smith some years ago in his *Irish History and Irish Character*. In that work we read, as follows: "The great criminal was England. It was English misgovernment that had suppressed all that was good, and drawn out all that was bad in the Irish character." "I have myself," he says, in *Three English Statesmen*, "sought and found in the study of Irish history the explanation of the paradox that a people with so many gifts, so amiable, naturally, so submissive to rulers, and everywhere but in their own country industrious, are in their country bywords of idleness, disaffection, and agrarian crime." Again he says in *Irish History*: "The Celtic race, when under education, outstrips the Teutonic as the laurel outstrips the oak. And there seems no good reason for believing that the Irish Celts are

averse from labour, provided they be placed for at least two or three generations in circumstances favourable to industry." On page 195 he says: "There are still speakers and writers who seem to think that the Irish are incurably vicious because the accumulated effects of so many unhappy centuries cannot be removed at once by a wave of the beholder's wand." Again, he says: "Those who are disposed to regard the Irish as inherently lawless will do well to remember the historical relations between the people and the English law." Justice, he says, requires that allowance should be made on historical grounds for the failings of the Irish people. If they are wanting in industry, in regard for the rights of property, in reverence for the law, history furnishes a full explanation of their defects.

Goldwin Smith's chief desire to-day is to thwart Mr. Gladstone by sophistry, or by any other means attainable. If the erudite Professor had been consulted by the famous statesman when framing his Home Rule Bill, his vanity would have been so tickled that he would have been found on the other side of the question to-day, advocating Home Rule for unhappy Ireland.

Yours, etc.,

SYDNEY SMITH.

### Mr. Blake and the Riel Question.

From a well-written letter which has reached this office we extract the following paragraph:—

Mr. Blake has only himself to thank that he does not stand much higher in the opinion of his party, and also—what is of far more importance—higher in general esteem than he does at this moment. When he made the London speech, and declared he would build no platform out of the Regina scaffold, had he gone a little further, and justified the course of the Government in vindicating the law and administering justice independent of race, he would have been a much more formidable opponent. He could have arraigned the many acts of maladministration of the Macdonald Government with ten-fold force, and the prospect for him of succeeding to the Premiership would be much more distinct than it is. The Reform party adopted the Race and Revenge cry as a chief plank in their platform, and Mr. Blake has virtually accepted it. Thus they have endorsed a case that is morally, legally, and logically not only indefensible but absurd. They by their late action have traversed all that had been said on the subject by their acknowledged leaders and the accredited press; and they have placed in the hands of friends of the Government the most potent weapon of defence they possess. By appealing, as is being done in the name of Riel, to the lowest instincts of the lowest natures, and to the most bitter feelings of race and creed, not only have the Grits alienated many of their friends, but have foregathered for themselves an amount of shame and humiliation of which very shortly they may be better able to count the cost.

### LITERARY NOTES.

THE articles appearing in the *Fortnightly Review* on the position of European politics are generally attributed to Sir Charles Dilke. If they are from his pen, the complimentary references to the Queen will be the more noticed by those who are aware of the means by which the late member for Chelsea as a young man acquired his first unenviable notoriety. That Sir Charles Dilke has the special knowledge displayed, as well as the literary ability to produce these papers, is certain; but it is curious that since the publication of *Greater Britain* twenty years ago, his pen has been idle.

THE ineffectiveness of hostile newspaper criticism to injure a really well-written book has perhaps never been more clearly demonstrated than in the case of Mr. Froude's *Oceana*. That work contains many inaccuracies, and it has been reviewed most unfavourably by the leading journals of England and America. But it possesses all the author's peculiar charm of style, and much of it is delightful reading, irrespective of any other merit. Its sale on both sides of the Atlantic has been immense, insomuch that the author is about to make another long journey with a view

to writing a book on Cuba and such parts of the mainland of America as formerly belonged to Spain. The new venture, however, is not likely to make its appearance before next winter.

THE Canadian colony in New York city appears to be flourishing apace, insomuch that a local newspaper organ has been established for its delectation. The new periodical is called *La Feuille D'Erable, Organe des Canadiens a New York et aux Environs*, and the first two numbers have reached this office. They are well printed and profusely illustrated. The publication is monthly, and consists of a broadsheet of eight pages, about half of which is in French and the remainder in English. The first number contains a portrait and biographical sketch of Erastus Wiman. The engraving has been fairly well done, but the likeness is not striking.

THE Springfield *Republican* has some judicious remarks on the subject of magazine poetry. "With the advent of every new magazine," it remarks, "we look with ever defeated hopes for some new departure in the way of poetry, such as might well distinguish it. For there is a great deal of noteworthy verse written in this country which finds its sole welcome in the newspapers, and gets lost in them except to the few who can appreciate it among their hasty readers. A magazine editor would do well to read the papers, and when he espies a notably original verse, seek for its author and say to him or her: That is the sort of thing I want. But no such editor appears, and the trivial rules, with very rare exceptions. Vigor, originality, all unique quality, seems tabooed. There is no catholicity of taste, and so no variety."

UNDER the usual heading of "English Notes," in the February number of the New York *Book-Buyer*, the London correspondent of that periodical has an exceptionally interesting letter. From it we learn that George Augustus Sala's autobiography is nearly ready for the press, and that it will be issued almost immediately. If it faithfully reflects the writer's life it will be a truly scandalous chronicle. Query: Will it contain the particulars of his libel suit against Hain Friswell; and will it state what he did with the five hundred pounds damages recovered therein? Will it contain any reference to *Modern Men of Letters Honestly Criticized*, or the pathetic story of *Seven Sons of Mammon*, by which latter name Mr. Friswell irreverently christened the illustrious author of *The Seven Sons of Mammon*? There are certain subjects which a judicious writer wisely ignores; and, so far as Mr. Sala is concerned, these are among them. But he can doubtless tell us some good things about Dickens and Thackeray. He was one of Dickens's special favourites. In fact, it may almost be said that he was made by Dickens; and this was one of the many instances of the discrimination of the author of *David Copperfield*, for Sala is a man of extraordinary ability, and has long been recognized as the very best all-round journalist on the London press.

MR. FROUDE is an enthusiast with regard to classical studies, and has no sympathy with the modern tendency to dethrone them from the position which they have held for centuries in the highest seats of learning in England. He has written a letter on the subject to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in which he deplors the waning interest in the classics. "I hesitate to say," he writes, "that an understanding of English literature is impossible without a knowledge of Greek and Latin literature. Many of our very best writers knew little or no Greek and Latin. Shakspeare had 'no Latin and less Greek.' Pope translated Homer, but was a poor scholar. Defoe, Bunyan, Burns, Byron, Carlyle, Cobbett, Charles Lamb—these and many other names occur to me which disprove the position as it concerns writers; and I think you might find very good students of English literature also equally ignorant. The Scandinavian literature, not the classical, was the cradle of our own. At the same time I regard the Greek and Latin literature as the best in the world; as superior to the modern as Greek sculpture is superior to the schools of England and France; and that no one can be a finished scholar and critic (I do not say writer) who is ignorant of it. Our national taste and the tone of the national intellect will suffer a serious decline if it ceases to be studied among us." All which is to a certain

extent true; but there is no doubt that the study of the classics tends to cramp the mind into a narrow groove, and to cramp the style into that of a pedant. William Cobbett and John Bunyan certainly wrote more vigorous English than either Porson or Bentley.

ELIEN FUGACES—how the rapid years roll by! This fact is brought pertinently home to the editor of this paper by a letter just received from an old friend in one of the "outer counties." Thus he writes:—"From the columns of ARCTURUS of Feb. 5th, I see that J. Maddison Morton has not yet been taken to his last resting place. Poor old Maddison Morton! Genial old Maddison Morton! 'Known all over the world,' you say, 'as the author of *Box and Cox*.' Yes, long ago well known, even in rural districts of Western Canada, where 'Through the Pines of the North the Dark Wind-Singer strode.' Well, indeed, do I remember our indebtedness to that amiable old writer of comedy, many, many years ago, when we were scarcely more than boys. Why, just think of it. It was nearly a quarter of a century ago when you, as the *Printer*, and I, as the *Hatter*, played *Box and Cox* to a rural audience. Borean blasts held high carnival outside the village hall, in which a theatrical stage, with its accessories, had been erected for us, the amateur players. But all was bright and cheery within. The wind whistled through leafless branches of trees which, in double file, tall and straight, protected a pathway near by, familiar to the footsteps of the village postmaster. But no matter; our hearts were not a bit wintry then, as we stepped on to the stage in the rôles of *Box and Cox*. When we played that farce, so long ago, to raise funds for a village library, we thought, did we not, that we did it exceedingly well? Indeed, my impression is that not only was the play well rendered, but well received, and by a remarkably intelligent and appreciative audience. Poor old Maddison Morton! had he but known how many plays we had, for that occasion, critically examined and tossed aside, to select, at length, *Box and Cox*, would he not have been quite justified in recognizing, in our choice, something better than a left-handed compliment to his literary genius? But at that time we felt like boys of twenty—so do we still, don't we? What!

'Gray temples at twenty?—Yes, while if we please;  
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze.'

The new play from Maddison Morton's pen, you tell us, is just now being played in London with great success. So that he has not forgotten his boyhood, old as he is.

'Then here's to his boyhood, its gold and its gray;  
The stars of its winter, the dew of its May!  
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,  
Dear Father, take care of Thy children, THE BOYS!'

These latter terms being supposed to include dear old Morton, the editor of ARCTURUS, and another boy—the writer."

A *Canadian Tour*, which is having a considerable sale in London, consists of a series of letters which appeared in the *London Times* giving a very favourable view of Canada, its resources and possibilities. It was written by Mr. Joel Cook, of the *Philadelphia Ledger*. Mr. Cook has been one of the American correspondents of the *Times* for over twenty years.

THE February number of *Shakespeareana* has a brightly-written criticism, taken from the *New York Tribune*, on a recent performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*. The criticism is by William Winter, which is equivalent to saying that it is appreciative and carefully put together. Therefore, when we find one of the characters in the play referred to as Custis, we know that the blunder is not Mr. Winter's. We are simply constrained to set it down to the account of the proof-reader, although one cannot help feeling surprised that the proof-reading of such a periodical as *Shakespeareana* should be consigned to such incompetent hands. But when, in a subsequent article in the same number, we find a certain work editorially referred to as ignorant and "presumptuous" (*sic*); and when we find on still another page a reference to Miss Helen "Fawcett"—we are constrained to ask whether all this blundering is to be laid to the account of the proof-reader. It looks very much as if some other member of the staff were off on his holidays.

MR. LOUIS J. JENNINGS has just published a trenchant and severe indictment of Mr. Gladstone throughout the whole of his career. When we know that Mr. Jennings was for years one of the most caustic writers on the staff of the *Saturday Review*, and afterwards a noted "slogger" in the columns of the *New York Times*, it will be believed that his pen is not usually dipped in sugar and water, but in very indelible ink. The book is called *Mr. Gladstone: a Study*, and is published by Blackwood & Sons. Mr. Jennings has massed his facts in an able and telling array, but of course many of his inferences are open to dispute. The *London Echo*, in a long article on the book, after admitting that "Mr. Gladstone has stood higher in the estimation of his countrymen during his lifetime than he is likely to do in the page of history," continues: "If Mr. Jennings had been content to show that Mr. Gladstone has made many mistakes, and has been, in some respects, a short-sighted statesman; that he is too impressionable; that personal considerations may have had more to do with his political conduct than many suppose; and that, even as a financier, his reputation has been beyond his merits, Mr. Jennings might have framed a telling indictment, such a one as it might have been difficult to upset." Now, the *Echo* is Radical and Gladstonian, and if the friends of the veteran statesman speak of him in this manner we cannot wonder at the tone adopted by an avowed enemy in the masterly literary autopsy which Louis Jennings has just given to the world.

## Poetry.

### THE LEGEND OF BABE JESUS AND THE WEEDERS.

#### I.

As the weeders went trimming the corn young and green,  
Babe Jesus, and Mary, and Joseph were seen;

Southward to Egypt, from Herod the King,  
Lightly they fled like a dove on the wing.

The weeders looked up from their work unaware:—  
"What Lady is this with the sun in her hair?"

"What Infant is this with seven stars on his brow?"  
Our Lady she spake to those weeder men now:—

"When horsemen come spurring from Herod amain,  
And ask if an infant passed over your plain,

"Ye shall answer and say to those men from the town,  
No babe hath passed by since the wheat-field was brown."

#### II.

Then on came those soldiers from Herod the King,  
And the men in the field hear the hoofs as they ring:—

"Now tell us, ye people who stand in the corn,  
Have ye seen riding southward a babe newly born?"

"Bethink you and tell us, and see ye speak true,  
Or by Herod the King, ye right dearly shall rue."

Then the weeders bethought of that Baby so fair,  
With the stars, and the Lady with light on her hair;

And boldly they spake to those men from the King:—  
"We will answer aright to the message ye bring:

"Since the wheat-field was brown, ye to Herod shall say,  
Of a surety no infant hath passed by this way."

And lo, as they spake, they cast eyes on the wheat,  
And saw a new wonder, most sudden and sweet;

For all unawares, as those horsemen drew nigh,  
In search of the Babe that the King would have die;

While those weeders stood mazed, as the hoof-beats they heard,  
The wheat was turned brown by the Lord and his word.

And never a harvest fell short in that land,  
Because of the answer that Mary had planned,

And by grace of the Lord sitting up in the sky,  
And for love of the Baby that never shall die.

## GREEN TEA.

(Concluded from last week.)

## CHAPTER VIII.—THE SECOND STAGE.

"It was with me, and the malice, which before was torpid under a sullen exterior, was now active. It was perfectly unchanged in every other respect. This new energy was apparent in its activity and its looks, and soon in other ways. For a time the change was shown only in an increased vivacity, and an air of menace, as if it was always brooding over some atrocious plan. Its eyes, as before, were never off me."

"Is it here now?"

"No," he replied, "it has been absent exactly a fortnight and a day—fifteen days. It has sometimes been away so long as nearly two months; once for three. Its absence always exceeds a fortnight, although it may be but a single day. Fifteen days having past since I saw it last, it may return now at any moment."

"Is its return," I asked, "accompanied by any peculiar manifestation?"

"Nothing—no," he said. "It is simply with me again. On lifting my eyes from a book, or turning my head, I see it, as usual, looking at me; and then it remains, as before, for its appointed time. I have never told so much and so minutely before to any one."

I perceived that he was agitated, and looking like death, and he repeatedly applied his handkerchief to his forehead; I suggested that he might be tired, and told him that I would call with pleasure, in the morning, but he said:

"No, if you don't mind hearing it all now. I have got so far and I should prefer making one effort of it. When I spoke to Dr. Harley, I had nothing like so much to tell. You are a philosophic physician. You give spirit its proper rank. If this thing is real—"

He paused, and looked at me with agitated inquiry.

"We can discuss it by-and-by, and very fully. I will give you all I think," I answered after an interval.

"Well—very well. If it is anything real, I say, it is prevailing little by little, and drawing me more interiorly into hell. Optic nerves, he talked of. Ah! well—there are other nerves of communication. May God Almighty help me! You shall hear.

"Its power of action, I tell you, had increased. Its malice became, in a way aggressive. About two years ago, some questions that were pending between me and the bishop having been settled, I went down to my parish in Warwickshire, anxious to find occupation in my profession. I was not prepared for what happened, although I have since thought I might have apprehended something like it. The reason of my saying so is this—"

He was beginning to speak with a great deal more effort and reluctance, and sighed often, and seemed at times nearly overcome. But at this time his manner was not agitated. It was more like that of a sinking patient, who has given himself up.

"Yes, but I will first tell you about Kenlis, my parish.

"It was with me when I left this place for Dawlbridge. It was my silent travelling companion, and it remained with me at the vicarage. When I entered on the discharge of my duties, another change took place. The thing exhibited an atrocious determination to thwart me. It was with me in the church—in the reading-desk—in the pulpit—within the communion rails. At last, it reached this extremity, that while I was reading to the congregation, it would spring upon the open book and squat there, so that I was unable to see the page. This happened more than once. I left Dawlbridge for a time. I placed myself in Dr. Harley's hands. I did everything he told me. He gave my case a great deal of thought. It interested him, I think. He seemed successful. For nearly three months I was perfectly free from a return. I began to think I was safe. With his full assent I returned to Dawlbridge. I travelled in a chaise. I was in good spirits. I was more—I was happy and grateful. I was returning, as I thought, delivered from a dreadful hallucination, to the scene of duties which I longed to enter upon. It was a

beautiful sunny evening, everything looked serene and cheerful, and I was delighted. I remember looking out of the window to see the spire of my church at Kenlis among the trees, at the point where one has the earliest view of it. It is exactly where the little stream that bounds the parish passes under the road by a culvert, and where it emerges at the road-side, a stone with an old inscription is placed. As we passed this point, I drew my head in and sat down, and in the corner of the chaise was the monkey.

"For a moment I felt faint, and then quite wild with despair and horror. I called to the driver, and got out, and sat down at the road-side, and prayed to God silently for mercy. A despairing resignation supervened. My companion was with me as I re-entered the vicarage. The same persecution followed. After a short struggle I submitted, and soon I left the place.

"I told you," he said, "that the beast has before this become in certain ways aggressive. I will explain a little. It seemed to be actuated by intense and increasing fury, whenever I said my prayers, or even meditated prayer. It amounted at last to a dreadful interruption. You will ask, how could a silent immaterial phantom effect that? It was thus, whenever I meditated praying; it was always before me, and nearer and nearer. It used to spring on a table, on the back of a chair, on the chimney-piece, and slowly to swing itself from side to side, looking at me all the time. There is in its motion an indefinable power to dissipate thought, and to contract one's attention to that monotony, till the ideas shrink, as it were, to a point, and at last to nothing—and unless I had started up, and shook off the catalepsy I have felt as if my mind were on the point of losing itself. There are other ways," he sighed heavily; "thus, for instance, while I pray with my eyes closed; it comes closer and closer, and I see it. I know it is not to be accounted for physically, but I do actually see it though my lids are closed, and so it rocks my mind, as it were, and overpowers me, and I am obliged to rise from my knees. If you had ever yourself known this you would be acquainted with desperation."

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE THIRD STAGE.

"I SEE, Dr. Hesselius, that you don't lose one word of my statement. I need not ask you to listen especially to what I am now going to tell you. They talk of the optic nerves, and of spectral illusions, as if the organ of sight was the only point assailable by the influences that have fastened upon me—I know better. For two years in my direful case that limitation prevailed. But as food is taken in softly at the lips, and then brought under the teeth, as the tip of the little finger caught in a mill crank will draw in the hand, and the arm, and the whole body, so the miserable mortal who has been once caught firmly by the end of the finest fibre of his nerve, is drawn in and in, by the enormous machinery of hell, until he is as I am. Yes, Doctor, as I am, for while I talk to you, and implore relief, I feel that my prayer is for the impossible, and my pleading with the inexorable."

I endeavoured to calm his visibly increasing agitation, and told him that he must not despair.

While we talked the night had overtaken us. The filmy moonlight was wide over the scene which the window commanded, and I said:

"Perhaps you would prefer having candles. This light, you know, is odd. I should wish you, as much as possible, under your usual conditions while I make my diagnosis, shall I call it—otherwise I don't care."

"All lights are the same to me," he said; "except when I read or write, I care not if night were perpetual. I am going to tell you what happened about a year ago. The thing began to speak to me."

"Speak! How do you mean—speak as a man does, do you mean?"

"Yes; speak in words and consecutive sentences, with perfect coherence and articulation; but there is a peculiarity. It is not like the tone of a human voice. It is not by my ears it reaches me—it comes like a singing through my head.

"This faculty, the power of speaking to me, will be my undoing. It won't let me pray, it interrupts me with dreadful blasphemies. I dare not go on, I could not. Oh! Doctor, can the skill, and thought, and prayers of man avail me nothing?"

"You must promise me, my dear sir, not to trouble yourself with unnecessarily exciting thoughts; confine yourself strictly to the narrative of *facts*; and recollect, above all, that even if the thing that infests you be, as you seem to suppose, a reality with an actual independent life and will, yet it can have no power to hurt you, unless it be given from above: its access to your senses depends mainly upon your physical condition—this is, under God, your comfort and reliance: we are all alike environed. It is only that in your case the '*paries*,' the veil of the flesh, the screen, is a little out of repair, and sights and sounds are transmitted. We must enter on a new course, sir,—be encouraged. I'll give tonight to the careful consideration of the whole case."

"You are very good, sir; you think it worth trying, you don't give me quite up; but, sir, you don't know, it is gaining such an influence over me: it orders me about, it is such a tyrant, and I'm growing so helpless. May God deliver me!"

"It orders you about—of course you mean by speech?"

"Yes, yes; it is always urging me to crimes, to injure others, or myself. You see, Doctor, the situation is urgent, it is indeed. When I was in Shropshire, a few weeks ago," (Mr. Jennings was speaking rapidly and trembling now, holding my arm with one hand, and looking in my face), "I went out one day with a party of friends for a walk: my persecutor, I tell you, was with me at the time. I lagged behind the rest: the country near the Dee, you know, is beautiful. Our path happened to lie near a coal mine, and at the verge of the wood is a perpendicular shaft, they say, a hundred and fifty feet deep. My niece had remained behind with me—she knows, of course, nothing of the nature of my sufferings. She knew, however, that I had been ill, and was low, and she remained to prevent my being quite alone. As we loitered slowly on together, the brute that accompanied me was urging me to throw myself down the shaft. I tell you now—oh, sir, think of it!—the one consideration that saved me from that hideous death was the fear lest the shock of witnessing the occurrence should be too much for the poor girl. I asked her to go on and take her walk with her friends, saying that I could go no further. She made excuses, and the more I urged her the firmer she became. She looked doubtful and frightened. I suppose there was something in my looks or manner that alarmed her; but she would not go, and that literally saved me. You had no idea, sir, that a living man could be made so abject a slave of Satan," he said, with a ghastly groan and a shudder.

There was a pause here, and I said: "You *were* preserved nevertheless. It was the act of God. You are in His hands and in the power of no other being: be therefore confident for the future."

## CHAPTER X.

### HOMÉ.

I MADE him have candles lighted, and saw the room looking cheery and inhabited before I left him. I told him that he must regard his illness strictly as one dependent on physical, though *subtle* physical causes. I told him that he had evidence of God's care and love in the deliverance which he had just described, and that I had perceived with pain that he seemed to regard its peculiar features as indicating that he had been delivered over to spiritual reprobation. Than such a conclusion nothing could be, I insisted, less warranted; and not only so, but more contrary to facts, as disclosed in his mysterious deliverance from that murderous influence during his Shropshire excursion. First, his niece had been retained by his side without his intending to keep her near him; and, secondly, there had been infused into his mind an irresistible repugnance to execute the dreadful suggestion in her presence.

As I reasoned this point with him, Mr. Jennings wept. He seemed comforted. One promise I exacted, which was that should the monkey at any time return, I should be sent for immediately; and, repeating my assurance that I would give neither time nor

thought to any other subject until I had thoroughly investigated his case, and that to-morrow he should hear the result, I took my leave. Before getting into the carriage I told the servant that his master was far from well, and that he should make a point of frequently looking into his room.

My own arrangements I made with a view to being quite secure from interruption. I merely called at my lodgings, and with a travelling-desk and carpet-bag, set off in a hackney carriage for an inn about two miles out of town, called "The Horns," a very quiet and comfortable house, with good thick walls. And there, I resolved, without the possibility of intrusion or distraction, to devote some hours of the night, in my comfortable sitting-room, to Mr. Jennings' case, and so much of the morning as it might require.

(There occurs here a careful note of Dr. Hesselius' opinion upon the case, and of the habits, dietary, and medicines which he prescribed. It is curious—some persons would say mystical. But, on the whole, I doubt whether it would sufficiently interest a reader of the kind I am likely to meet with, to warrant its being here reprinted. The whole letter was plainly written at the inn where he had hid himself for the occasion. The next letter is dated from his town lodgings.)

I left town for the inn where I slept last night at half-past nine, and did not arrive at my room in town until one o'clock this afternoon. I found a letter in Mr. Jennings' hand upon my table. It had not come by post, and, on inquiry, I learned that Mr. Jennings' servant had brought it, and on learning that I was not to return until to-day, and that no one could tell him my address, he seemed very uncomfortable, and said that his orders from his master were that he was not to return without an answer.

I opened the letter and read:—"DEAR DR. HESSELIUS.—It is here. You had not been an hour gone when it returned. It is speaking. It knows all that has happened. It knows everything—it knows you, and is frantic and atrocious. It reviles. I send you this: It knows every word I have written—I write. This I promised, and I therefore write, but I fear very confused, very incoherently. I am so interrupted, disturbed. Ever sincerely yours, ROBERT LYNDER JENNINGS."

"When did this come?" I asked.

"About eleven last night: the man was here again, and has been here three times to-day. The last time is about an hour since."

Thus answered, and with the notes I had made upon his case in my pocket, I was in a few minutes driving towards Richmond to see Mr. Jennings.

I by no means despaired of Mr. Jennings' case. He had himself remembered and applied, though quite in a mistaken way, the principle which I lay down in my *Metaphysical Medicine*, and which governs all such cases. I was about to apply it in earnest. I was profoundly interested, and very anxious to see and examine him while the "enemy" was actually present. I drove up to the sombre house, and ran up the steps, and knocked. The door, in a little time, was opened by a tall woman in black silk. She looked ill, and as if she had been crying. She curtseyed, and heard my question, but she did not answer. She turned her face away, extending her hand towards two men who were coming down stairs; and thus having, as it were, tacitly made me over to them, she passed through a side door hastily and shut it.

The man who was nearest the hall, I at once accosted, but being now close to him, I was shocked to see that both his hands were covered with blood.

I drew back a little, and the man, passing down stairs, merely said in a low tone, "Here's the servant, sir." The servant had stopped on the stairs, confounded and dumb at seeing me. "Jones, what is it? what has happened?" I asked, while a sickening suspicion overpowered me.

The man asked me to come up to the lobby. I was beside him in moment, and frowning and pallid, with contracted eyes, he told me the horror which I already half guessed. His master had made away with himself.

I went upstairs with him to the room—what I saw there I won't tell you.

I beckoned to the servant, and we went down stairs together. I turned off the hall into an old-fashioned panelled room, and there standing, I heard all the servant had to tell.

"I concluded, sir, from your words, and looks, sir, as you left last night, that you thought my master seriously ill. I thought it might be that you were afraid of a fit, or something. So I attended very close to your directions. He sat up late, till past three o'clock. He was not writing or reading. He was talking a great deal to himself, but that was nothing unusual. At about that hour I assisted him to undress, and left him in his slippers and dressing gown. I went back softly in about half-an-hour. He was in his bed, quite undressed, and a pair of candles lighted on the table beside his bed. He was leaning on his elbow, and looking out at the other side of the bed when I came in. I asked him if he wanted anything, and he said No. I don't know whether it was what you said to me, sir, or something a little unusual about him, but I was uneasy, uncommon uneasy about him last night.

"In another half hour, or it might be a little more, I went up again. I did not hear him talking as before. I opened the door a little. The candles were both out, which was not usual. I had a bedroom candle, and I let the light in, a little bit, looking softly round. I saw him sitting in that chair beside the dressing-table with his clothes on again. He turned round and looked at me. I thought it strange he should get up and dress, and put out the candles to sit in the dark, that way. But I only asked him again if I could do anything for him. He said, No, rather sharp, I thought. I asked if I might light the candles, and he said, 'Do as you like, Jones.' So I lighted them, and I lingered about the room, and he said, 'Tell me truth, Jones; why did you come again—you did not hear anyone cursing?' 'No, sir,' I said, wondering what he could mean.

"No," said he, after me, 'of course, no'; and I said to him, 'Wouldn't it be well, sir, you went to bed? It's just five o'clock'; and he said nothing but, 'Very likely; good-night Jones.' So I went, sir, but in less than an hour I came again. The door was fast, and he heard me, and called as I thought from the bed to know what I wanted, and he desired me not to disturb him again. I lay down and slept for a little. It must have been between six and seven when I went up again. The door was still fast, and he made no answer, so I did not like to disturb him, and thinking he was asleep, I left him till nine. It was his custom to ring when he wished me to come, and I had no particular hour for calling him. I tapped very gently, and getting no answer, I stayed away a good while, supposing he was getting some rest then. It was not till eleven o'clock I grew really uncomfortable about him—for at the latest he was never, that I could remember, later than half-past ten. I got no answer. I knocked and called, and still no answer. So not being able to force the door, I called Thomas from the stables, and together we forced it, and found him in the shocking way you saw.

Jones had no more to tell. Poor Mr. Jennings was very gentle, and very kind. All his people were fond of him: I could see that the servant was very much moved.

So, dejected and agitated, I passed from that terrible house, and its dark canopy of elms, and I hope I shall never see it more. While I write to you I feel like a man who has but half waked from a frightful and monotonous dream. My memory rejects the picture with incredulity and horror. Yet I know it is true. It is the story of the process of a poison, a poison which excites the reciprocal action of spirit and nerve, and paralyses the tissue that separates those cognate functions of the senses, the external and the interior. Thus we find strange bed-fellows, and the mortal and immortal prematurely make acquaintance.

### CONCLUSION.

#### A WORD FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER.

My dear Van L—, you have suffered from an affection similar to that which I have just described. You twice complained of a return of it. Who, under God cured you? Your humble servant, Martin Hesselius. Let me rather adopt the more emphasised piety of a certain good old French surgeon of three hundred years ago: "I treated, and God cured you."

Come, my friend, you are not to be hippish. Let me tell you a fact. I have met with, and treated, as my book shows, fifty seven cases of this kind of vision, which I term indifferently "sublimated," "precocious," and "interior."

There is another class of affections which are truly termed—though commonly confounded with those which I describe—spectral illusions. These latter I look upon as being no less simply curable than a cold in the head or a trifling dyspepsia.

It is those which rank in the first category that test our promptitude of thought. Fifty-seven such cases have I encountered, neither more nor less. And in how many of these have I failed? In no one single instance.

There is no one affliction of mortality more easily and certainly reducible, with a little patience, and a rational confidence in the physician. With these simple conditions, I look upon the cure as absolutely certain.

You are to remember that I had not even commenced to treat Mr. Jennings' case. I have not any doubt that I should have cured him perfectly in eighteen months, or possibly it might have extended to two years. Some cases are very rapidly curable, others extremely tedious. Every intelligent physician who will give thought and diligence to the task, will effect a cure.

You know my tract on "The Cardinal Functions of the Brain." I there, by the evidence of innumerable facts, prove, as I think, the high probability of a circulation arterial and venous in its mechanism, through the nerves. Of this system, thus considered, the brain is the heart. The fluid which is propagated hence through one class of nerves, returns in an altered state through another, and the nature of that fluid is spiritual, though not immaterial, any more than, as I before remarked, light or electricity are so.

By various abuses, among which the habitual use of such agents as green tea is one, this fluid may be affected as to its quality, but it is more frequently disturbed as to equilibrium. This fluid being that which we have in common with spirits, a congestion found upon the masses of brain or nerve, connected with the interior sense, forms a surface unduly exposed, on which disembodied spirits may operate; communication is thus more or less effectually established. Between this brain circulation and the heart circulation there is an intimate sympathy. The seat, or rather the instrument of exterior vision, is the eye. The seat of interior vision is the nervous tissue and brain, immediately about and above the eyebrow. You remember how effectually I dissipated your pictures by the simple application of iced eau-de-cologne. Few cases, however, can be treated exactly alike with anything like rapid success. Cold acts powerfully as a repellant of the nervous fluid. Long enough continued it will even produce that permanent insensibility which we call numbness, and a little longer, muscular as well as sensational paralysis.

I have not, I repeat, the slightest doubt that I should have first dimmed and ultimately sealed that inner eye which Mr. Jennings had inadvertently opened. The same senses are opened in delirium tremens, and entirely shut up again when the over-action of the cerebral heart, and the prodigious nervous congestions that attend it, are terminated by a decided change in the state of the body. It is by acting steadily upon the body, by a simple process, that this result is produced—and inevitably produced—I have never yet failed.

Poor Mr. Jennings made away with himself. But that catastrophe was the result of a totally different melody, which, as it were projected itself upon that disease which was established. His case was in the distinctive manner a complication, and the complaint under which he really succumbed, was hereditary suicidal mania. Poor Mr. Jennings I cannot call a patient of mine, for I had not even begun to treat his case, and he had not yet given me, I am convinced, his full and unreserved confidence. If the patient do not array himself on the side of the disease, his cure is certain.

THE END.

PROFESSOR MAX MULLER, the greatest of living philologists, is so much better that he is able to make the journey to Germany. He appears, however, to suffer from a settled melancholy, and his friends have very gloomy forebodings about him.

## BURNS IN DUMFRIES.

TOWARDS the close of 1791 Dumfries could number among its citizens a man who had already made some noise in the world, and who came to be recognized as one of Scotland's most illustrious sons. His figure was remarkable; so that even a cursory observer must have at once seen that it was the outward framework of an extraordinary individual. Five feet ten inches in height, firmly built, symmetrical, with more of the roughness of a rustic than the polish of a fine gentleman, there was a something in his bearing that bespoke conscious pre-eminence; and the impress thus communicated was confirmed by his swarthy countenance, every lineament of which indicated mental wealth and power: the brow broad and high; the eyes like orbs of flame; the nose well formed, though a professional physiognomist would have said that it was deficient in force; the mouth impassioned, majestic, tender, as if the social affections and poetic muse had combined to take possession of it; and the full, rounded, dimpled chin, which made the manly face look more soft and lovable. When this new denizen of the burgh was followed from his humble dwelling in Bank Street to some favourite friendly circle where the news of the day or other less fugitive topics were discussed, his superiority became more apparent. Then eye and tongue exercised an irresistible sway: the one flashing with emotional warmth and the light of genius—now scathing with its indignant glances, anon beaming with benignity and love; the other tipped with the fire of natural eloquence, reasoning abstrusely, declaiming finely, discoursing delightfully, satirizing mercilessly, or setting the table in a roar with verses thrown off at red heat to annihilate an unworthy sentiment, or cover some unlucky opponent with ridicule. Need it be said that these remarks apply to the ex-tenant of Ellisland, Robert Burns?

His first appearance in Dumfries was on the 4th of June, 1787, two months after the second edition of his poems had been published. He came, on invitation, to be made an honorary burghess; neither the givers nor the receiver of the privilege dreaming, at that date, that he was destined to become an inhabitant of the town. All honour to the council that they thus promptly recognized the genius of the poet. Provost William Clark shaking hands with the newly-made burghess, and wishing him joy, when he presented himself in the veritable blue coat and yellow vest, that Nasmyth has rendered familiar, would make a good subject for a painter able to realize the characteristics of such a scene. The burghess ticket granted to the illustrious stranger bore the following inscription:—"The said day, 4th June, 1787, Mr. Robert Burns, Ayrshire, was admitted burghess of this Burgh, with liberty to exercise and enjoy the whole immunities and privileges thereof as freely as any other does, may, or can enjoy; who, being present, accepted the same, and gave his oath of burghess-ship to his Majesty and the Burgh in common form."

Whilst tenant of Ellisland farm, about six miles distant from Dumfries, Burns became, by frequent visits to the town, familiarly known to its inhabitants. Soon after Martinmas, 1791, accompanied by Bonnie Jean, with their children, Robert, Francis, and William, he took up a permanent residence in the burgh, and there spent the remainder of his chequered life; so that Dumfries became henceforth inseparably connected with his latest years. He had just seen thirty-one summers when he entered upon the occupancy of three small apartments of a second floor on the north side of Bank Street (then called the "Wee Vennel"). After residing there about eighteen months—or, according to another account, two years and a half—he removed to a self-contained house of a higher grade, in Mill Street, which became the scene of his untimely death in July, 1796.

What varying scenes of weal and woe, of social enjoyments, of literary triumphs, of worldly misery and moral loss, were crowded within the Dumfries experiences of the illustrious poet! There he suffered his severest pangs, and also accomplished many of his proudest achievements. If the night watches heard at times his sorrowful plaint, and the air of the place trembled for a moment with his latest sigh, it long burned and breathed with the immortal products of his lyre; and when the striking figure we have

faintly sketched lay paralyzed by death; its dust was borne to old St. Michael's, and the tomb of the national bard became a price-less heritage to the town forever.

Dr. Burnside says of his parishioners, at the time when Burns became one of them:—"In their private manners they are social and polite; and the town, together with the neighbourhood a few miles around it, furnishes a society amongst whom a person with a moderate income may spend his days with as much enjoyment, perhaps, as in any part of the kingdom whatever." Other evidence tends to show that the society of the burgh was more intellectual than that of most other towns of the same size in Scotland. Soon after Burns came to reside in it, various circumstances combined to make it more than at any former period perhaps, a gay and fashionable place of resort. A new theatre was opened, which received liberal patronage from the upper classes of the neighbourhood, several regiments were at intervals stationed in the burgh, the officers of which helped to give an aristocratic tone to its society; and the annual races in October always drew a concourse of nobles, squires, and ladies fair to the country town.

A gay, refined, intellectual town enough, truly; and quite suitable, therefore, as a place of sojourn for Burns, the sentimental bard. But inasmuch as it was fashionable, aristocratic, courtly, given up in no small measure to the idolatry of rank, and fanatically afraid of anything that could be called ungentle or democratic, it was no congenial home for the man who dared to say—

"Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord  
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;  
Though hundreds worship at his word,  
He's but a coof for a' that:  
For a' that, and a' that,  
His riband, star, and a' that,  
The man of independent mind,  
He looks and laughs at a' that."

In another respect the town was but too congenial to the poet's tastes and habits. "John Barleycorn," to use his own metaphor, bore potential sway with it. "The curse of country towns," says Robert Chambers, writing in 1852, "is the partial and entire idleness of large classes of the inhabitants. There is always a cluster of men living on competencies, and a greater number of tradesmen whose shop duties do not occupy half their time. Till a very recent period, dissipation in greater or less intensity was the rule, and not the exception, amongst these men; and in Dumfries, sixty years ago, this rule held good." Thrown into company of this kind, sought after and lionized by all casual visitors, is it at all wonderful that a man of Burns's temperament should have often indulged too deeply? It was no disgrace then for either lords or commoners to fall drunk below the Bacchanalian board. More's the pity that poor Burns, so supreme in many things, was not superior to the jovial drinking customs of his day. Had he lived in a disreputable age, he would have been a better and a happier man. Whilst the burgh had its full share of jovial fellows, who habitually caroused and sang, in a doubtful attempt "to drive dull care away," and called the marvellous gauger, nothing loath, to their assistance, he had frequent opportunities, which he willingly embraced, of breathing a purer atmosphere, and enjoying a higher communion than theirs. Burns was a man of many moods; he was mirthful and gloomy by turns: the pride and paragon of a refined circle at Woodley Park, Friar's Carse, or Mavis Grove, one day; and on some not distant night, the hero of a merry group, fuddling madly in the Globe Tavern, singing in all tipsy sincerity the challenge of his own rollicking song:—

"Wha last frae aff his chair shall fa',  
He is the king among us three."

At Ellisland he had never lost the reputation of being a sober man, though he was fond of company and sometimes drank to excess. He indulged more frequently, however, when he ceased altogether to be a tiller of the soil, "turning down no more daisies," "binding" no more "after his reapers," tied to town life and an uncongenial occupation. More exposed to temptations, and less able to resist their influence, he too often sank deeply in the mire; but he did not wallow in it. In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, we feel justified in stating that he never became habitually intemperate, or a lover of the bottle for its own sake. His extreme sociality often led him into excess; none can

tell how often he drained the intoxicating cup in order to purchase a momentary forgetfulness of his disappointments and his cares. And when Burns sinned in these respects, how he did suffer! the very poetry of his nature giving a keener edge to his remorse.

One summer morning, while Burns, after an experience of this sad kind in the King's Arms, was proceeding homewards, he met with his neighbour, Mr. Haugh, who had risen to his work somewhat earlier than usual: "O, George!" said the poet, more penitent than elated, "you are a happy man; you have risen from a refreshing sleep, and left a kind wife and children; while I am returning like a condemned wretch to mine."

Burns, unlike most of his fellow-townsmen, did not deplore the French Revolution; on the contrary, he heartily sympathized with it, and was not the man to conceal his sentiments on any question at the dictate of prudence. "He was," says Lockhart, "the standing marvel of the place; his toasts, his jokes, his epigrams, his songs, were the daily food of conversation and scandal; and he, open and careless, and thinking he did no great harm in saying and singing what many of his superiors had not the least objection to hear and applaud, soon began to be considered, among the local admirers of the good old King and his minister, as the most dangerous of all the apostles of sedition, and to be shunned accordingly." A curious and characteristic illustration of the way in which the poet gave vent to his political views may here be recorded. A public library was opened in the burgh towards the close of 1792; and Burns, who had assisted in establishing it, was admitted a member on the 5th of March, 1793; the minute of the proceedings stating that the committee had, "by a great majority, resolved to offer him a share of the library free of the usual admission money (10s. 6d.) out of respect and esteem for his merits as a literary man." Reciprocating this kindness, Burns, on the 30th of the same month, presented four books to the library—*Humphrey Clinker*, *Julia de Roubigné*, *Knox's History of the Reformation*, and *De Lolme on the British Constitution*.

The last-named volume contained a frontispiece portrait of the author, the back of which displayed these words, written in the poet's bold, upright hand:—"Mr. Burns presents this book to the library, and begs they will take it as a creed of British liberty till they find a better.—R. B." Very simple, innocent words in themselves; but awfully daring at that time, and excessively imprudent when proceeding from a government officer. Burns, on reflection, quailed before the danger he had thus rashly incurred; and, hurrying next morning to the house of Mr. Thomson (afterwards provost of the town), with whom the books had been left, he expressed an anxious desire to see De Lolme, as he was afraid he had written something upon it "which might bring him into trouble." On the volume being produced, he, before leaving, pasted the fly-leaf to the back of the engraving, in order to seal up his seditious secret; but any one holding the double leaf up to the light may easily find it out, the volume being still in the library, and its value immeasurably enhanced by this inscription.

In the same library, now the property of the Dumfries and Maxwellton Mechanics' Institution, there is another book, the thirteenth volume of Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical Account of Scotland*, which reveals another glimpse of the poet in Dumfries. Under the head "Balmaghie," a notice is given of several martyred Covenanters belonging to that parish, and the rude yet expressive lines engraved on their tombstones are quoted at length. The pathos of the simple prose statement, and the rugged force of the versification, seem to have aroused the fervid soul of Burns; for there appears, in his bold handwriting, the following verse pencilled on the margin by way of foot-note:—

"The Solemn League and Covenant  
Now brings a smile, now brings a tear;  
But sacred Freedom, too, was their's:  
If thou'rt a slave indulge thy sneer."

We had occasion, in December, 1859, to consult this volume; and, on discovering the lines, which had never before been brought to light, we recognized the poet's caligraphy at once, and had no difficulty in concluding that they constituted the first rough draft of his well-known epigram in praise of the League and the Covenant. The matured lines are usually represented as an impromptu

rebuttal by Burns to some scoffer at the Covenant: but this precious holograph demonstrates the real circumstances under which they were originated.

Burns identified himself by more than rash words with the democrats across the Channel. A vessel engaged in the contraband traffic from the Isle of Man having entered the Solway, was watched by a party of excise officers, including the poet. She became fixed in the shallows, but her crew were so numerous and well-armed that the party durst not attempt her capture unaided; and Mr. Lewars, the poet's friend and brother-excise-man, was sent to Dumfries for a guard of dragoons. Burns, with a few men under his orders, was meanwhile left on the look-out in a wet salt marsh; and as the time thus passed wearily away, Lewars was alarmed by the impatient watchers for his seeming tardiness, one of them going as far as to wish that the devil had him in his keeping. Burns saw a humorous ingredient in the irreverent desire, and in a few minutes expanded it into the well-known ditty, "The Deil's awa wi' the Exciseman," with which he diverted his colleagues till Lewars arrived with the soldiers. Our poet could, when occasion required, play the part of Captain Sword as well as Captain Pen. Putting himself at the head of the force, he waded sword in hand to the vessel's side, and was the first to board her and call upon her lawless crew to surrender in the King's name. Though outnumbering the assailing party, the smugglers quietly submitted. The vessel was condemned, and, with all her arms and stores, sold at Dumfries.

Had the matter ended here, the poet's services might have secured his promotion; but unfortunately he sinned them all away, by purchasing four of the captured carronades, and sending them, with a eulogistic epistle, as a present to the French Convention. The carronades and letter were intercepted at Dover; and forthwith the commissioners of excise ordered an inquiry to be made into the conduct of their officer. Burns, in a letter to his patron, Mr. Graham of Fintry, stated that he was "surprised, confounded, and distracted" on hearing of the threatened investigation. He warmly repudiated the interpretation put upon his behaviour, declared his devout attachment "to the British constitution on Revolution principles;" and closed with the touching appeal: "I adjure you to save me from that misery which threatens to overwhelm me, and which, with my latest breath, I will say I have not deserved."

It was long believed that the poet's official prospects were utterly blighted by the inquiry; and that, as a consequence, he became more dissipated and reckless. Some of his biographers have gone further, and attributed his early death to the same cause; but what says Burns's superior in the Dumfries excise district, Mr. Findlater? In a letter on the subject that gentleman says:—"I may venture to assert that when Burns was accused of a leaning to democracy, and an inquiry into his conduct took place, he was subjected in consequence thereof to no more than perhaps a verbal or private caution to be more circumspect in future. Neither do I believe his promotion was thereby affected, as has been stated. That, had he lived, would, I have every reason to think, have gone on in the usual routine. His good and steady friend, Mr. Graham, would have attended to this. What cause, therefore, was there for depression of spirits on this account? or how should he have been hurried thereby to a premature grave? I never saw his spirit fail till he was borne down by the pressure of disease and bodily weakness; and even then it would occasionally revive, and, like an expiring lamp, emit bright flashes to the last."

Besides Burns, the very year before he died, actually officiated as a supervisor; and there is every reason to conclude that he would soon have been permanently promoted to that rank had not death intervened. Whilst we think that the charge against the excise board, of neglecting or ill-using Burns, is undeserved, we are decidedly of opinion that the treatment he received from the superiors of the board and the government of the day was infamous. It was a disgrace to them, and must ever be a source of the deepest regret to all admirers of the poet, that they allowed a few random sparks of disaffection to rise up between them and the lustre of his genius; and that, too, when it was pervaded and intensified by the purest patriotism. When the war between

Britain and France broke out, in 1793, Burns joined a volunteer company that was formed in Dumfries; and, according to the testimony of his commanding officer, Colonel de Peyster, he faithfully discharged his soldierly duties, and was the pride of the corps, whom he made immortal by his verse, especially by the vigorous address beginning—

“Does haughty Gaul invasion threat?”

Burns was the laureate of the company, “and in that capacity,” says Lockhart, “did more good service to the government of the country, at a crisis of the darkest alarm and danger, than perhaps any one person of his rank and station, with the exception of Diddin, had the power or the inclination to render.”

His “Poor and Honest Soger,” says Allan Cunningham, “laid hold at once on the public feeling; and it was everywhere sung with an enthusiasm which only began to abate when Campbell’s ‘Exile of Erin’ and ‘Wounded Hussar,’ were published. Dumfries, which sent so many of her sons to the wars, rung with it from port to port; and the poet, wherever he went heard it echoing from house and hall. I wish this exquisite and useful song, with ‘Scots wha hae wi’ Wallace bled,’ the ‘Song of Death,’ and ‘Does Haughty Gaul Invasion Threat!’—all lyrics which enforce a love of country, and a martial enthusiasm into men’s breasts—had obtained some reward for the poet. His perishable conversation was remembered by the rich to his prejudice: his imperishable lyrics were rewarded only by the admiration and tears of his fellow peasants.”

In the spring of 1793 Burns addressed the following letter “To the Hon. the Provost, Bailies, and Town Council of Dumfries.”

“Gentlemen,—The literary taste and liberal spirit of your good town has so ably filled the various departments of your schools, as to make it a very great object for a parent to have his children educated in them. Still to me, a stranger, to give my young ones that education I wish, at the High School, fees which a stranger pays will bear hard upon me. Some years ago your good town did me the honour of making me an honorary burghess. Will you allow me to request that this mark of distinction may extend so far as to put me on the footing of a real freeman of the town in the schools? If you are so very kind as to grant my request, it will certainly be a constant incentive to me to strain every nerve where I can officially serve; and will, if possible, increase that grateful respect with which I have the honour to be, gentlemen, &c.,—ROBERT BURNS.”

The request was at once complied with, to the great gratification of the poet, who was devotedly attached to his children, and desirous above all things to give them a liberal education. “In the bosom of his family,” says Mr. Gray, one of the teachers in the Academy, “he spent many a delightful hour in directing the studies of his eldest son, a boy of uncommon talents. I have frequently found him explaining to this youth, then not more than nine years of age, the English poets from Shakspeare to Gray, or storing his mind with examples of heroic virtue, as they live in the pages of our most celebrated English historians. I would ask any person of common candour if employments like these are consistent with habitual drunkenness.”

But though not systematically intemperate, his habits were too lax and irregular for the community in which he lived, convivial, though it was; and many who disliked him on other grounds magnified his excesses, and made these a pretext for “sending him to Coventry.” On one well-known occasion our errant poet received the cut direct from some of the patrician citizens. During an autumnal evening in 1794, High Street was gay with fashionable groups of ladies and gentlemen, all passing down to a county ball in the Assembly Rooms. One man, well fitted to be the cynosure of the party, passed up on the shady side of the thoroughfare, and soon found himself to be doubly in the shade. It was Burns. Nearly all knew him, but none seemed willing to recognize him; till Mr. David McCulloch of Ardwell, noticing the circumstance, dismounted from the horse on which he rode, politely accosted the poet, and proposed that he should cross the street. “Nay, nay, my young friend,” said the bard pathetically; “that’s all over now!” and after a slight pause he quoted two verses of Lady Grizel Bailie’s touching ballad:—

“His bonnet stood aince fu’ fair on his brow,  
His auld ane looked better than mony ane’s new;  
But now he let’s wear any way it will hing,  
And casts himsel’ dowie upon the corn-bing.

“O! were we young, as we aince hae been,  
We sud hae been galloping down on you green;  
And linking it over the lily-white lea;  
And werena my heart light I would dee.”

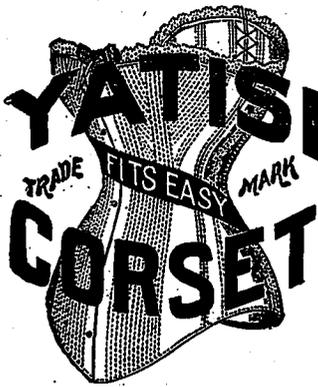
This incident has been adduced as a proof that Burns at this period (admittedly the darkest in his career) had become an object of “universal rejection.” Never was there a greater mistake; and it would be even wrong to suppose that the dejection that he felt, and expressed in Lady Grizel’s verse, was more than momentary, or otherwise than semi-dramatic. One who is overcome by real heart distress does not seek to give it vent by measured poetical quotations. Half an hour after the rencontre, Burns and Mr. McCulloch had some cheerful chit-chat over a glass of punch in the bard’s own house, the latter having thoroughly recovered his spirits; and so charming was his discourse, and so sweetly did Bonnie Jean sing some of his recent effusions, that the Laird of Ardwell left the couple with reluctance to join his fashionable friends in Irish Street.

Mr. Gray, referring to the poet about this time, states that though malicious stories were circulated freely against him, his early friends gave them no credit, and clung to him through good and bad report. “To the last day of his life,” he says, “his judgment, his memory, his imagination, were fresh and vigorous as when he composed the ‘Cottar’s Saturday Night.’ The truth is, that Burns was seldom intoxicated. The drunkard soon becomes besotted, and is shunned even by the convivial. Had he been so, he would not long have continued the idol of every party.” We have the testimony of the poet’s widow that her husband “never drank by himself at home,” and that he still continued to attend church—two facts which, apart from other more decided evidence, tell against the stigma that he had become recklessly dissipated in his latest years.

Burns’s circumstances whilst in Dumfries were humble, but not poverty-stricken. His official income was £50, extra allowances usually bringing it up to £70; and his share in fines averaged an additional £10. “Add to all this,” says Chambers, “the solid perquisites which he derived from seizures of contraband spirits, tea, and other articles, which it was then the custom to divide among the officers, and we shall see that Burns could scarcely be considered as enjoying less than £90 a year.”

If the poet would have accepted money payment for the glorious coinage of his fancy, he might easily have doubled this income or more; but, with a magnanimity which, however mistaken, illustrates the unselfishness of his nature, he steadily refused all offers of pecuniary reward for his lyrical productions. Of George Thomson’s *Musical Miscellany*, Burns was the chief minstrel, but he scorned to barter his melodious contributions for worldly gear, even when “one pound one he sairly wanted.” Thomson having ventured to send some cash to the bard on one occasion, drew down upon himself this rebuke, dated July, 1793:—“I assure you, my dear sir, that you truly hurt me with your pecuniary parcel. It degrades me in my own eyes. However, to return it would savour of affectation; but as to any more traffic of that debtor and creditor kind, I swear by that HONOUR which crowns the upright statue of ROBERT BURNS’S INTEGRITY, on the least motion of it, I will indignantly spurn the bypas transactions, and from that moment commence entire stranger to you.”

According to the testimony of the bard’s eldest son, given to Mr. Chambers, and amply corroborated by others, the house in Mill Street was of a good order, such as was occupied at that time by the better class of burghesses; and his father and mother led a life that was comparatively genteel. “They always had a maid-servant, and sat in their parlour. That apartment, together with two bedrooms, was well furnished and carpeted; and when good company assembled, which was often the case, the hospitable board which they surrounded was of a patrician mahogany. There was much rough comfort in the house, not to have been found in those of ordinary citizens; for, besides the spoils of smugglers, as above mentioned, the poet received many presents of game and country produce from the rural gentilefolk, besides occasional barrels of oysters from Hill, Cunningham; and other friends in town; so that he possibly was as much envied by some of his neighbours, as he has since been pitied by the general body of his countrymen.—*William MacDowall.*



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