

TOLSTOI'S SOUVENIRS.

PARIS, February 25, 1886.

It is impossible not to take an interest in whatever is written by Tolstoi. There is so much genius in 'War and Peace,' in 'Anna Karénine,' that you cannot help expecting some pleasure from whatever falls from the hands of the great Russian writer. I lately gave an account of his last work, 'My Religion,' and I could not help thinking, in analyzing it, of the old saying: "Aliquando dormitat Homerus." Now, I feel that I ought to give some account, not of the last works of Tolstoi, of the feelings and emotions of his old age, but of his early days and of his youth. There are few people who do not like to begin, so to speak, their lives over again. I confess that I have always admired the minuteness of the writers of memoirs, their extraordinary memory, the precision of their facts; to me, many years of the distant past are enveloped in a sort of dream, and I have great difficulty, when I wish to be perfectly sincere, and not to help my memory with my imagination, in reconstructing the past so as to give to it perfect life.

It is not so with Tolstoi; but Tolstoi is a man of genius, and distinctness of perception is one of his great attributes. He begins his 'Souvenirs' at the age of ten, and we learn much from him on the development of his mind. There is something quite childish in the first part of these 'Souvenirs.' Tolstoi had a preceptor, Karl Ivanitch, a German:

"Karl, with his spectacles on his nose, and a book in his hand, was sitting in the accustomed place. At the left of the door were two tables, one for the children, and his, the table of Karl Ivanitch. On ours were all sorts of books, some upright, others lying flat. . . . We were always ordered, before the recess, to put the library in order (this was the name which Karl Ivanitch gave to the table). As for his collection, if it was not as numerous as ours, it was more varied. I remember three volumes—a German pamphlet, unbound, upon the best manure for cabbages; a volume in parchment, with one corner burned, on the Seven Years' War; a complete treatise on hydrostatics. Karl Ivanitch spent most of his time in reading, so as even to hurt his eyes; but besides the books on his table and the paper, the *Northern Bee*, he read nothing."

Karl Ivanitch was old, he had a pure conscience and a peaceful soul, and Tolstoi loved him. "I sometimes said to myself: 'Poor old man! We children are many, we play, we amuse ourselves; he is alone and nobody fondles him. To be sure, he is an orphan. And how dreadful is his history! he once told it to Kolia.' Nothing can be more charming than the description which Tolstoi gives of his mother, sitting by the samovar amidst her children, with the good old Karl, and the governess, Maria Ivanovna, or Mimi. "When mamma smiled (mamma was very handsome) she became even handsomer.

If I could only see that smile again in the difficult moments of life, I should not know what sorrow means. It seems to me that what is called beauty resides chiefly in the smile. If the smile embellishes, the face is handsome; if it does not change it, the face is ordinary; if it spoils it, the face is ugly."

Papa was a true Russian nobleman of the old school (he must often have been in Tolstoi's mind when he wrote his great novels), handsome, amiable, a man of pleasure, always in money difficulties, always mortgaging his estates. "He was," says Tolstoi, "a man of the last century, and, like all his contemporaries, he had in him something chivalrous, enterprising, confident, amiable, a passion for pleasure. He felt a great contempt for the men of our century. . . . His two great passions were cards and women. He gained or lost at cards, in the course of his life, several millions, and he was in love with an incalculable number of women, in all classes of society. . . . Nothing astonished him; in

whatever situation he might have been placed, he would have seemed to be born for it." Here is another good trait: "He knew exactly the precise degree of pride and of presumption which raises a man in public opinion without giving offence to anybody." This gentleman of the last century belonged to the school of what was called then "sensibility"—he was emotional, he cried easily. When he read aloud he often became very pathetic. "He was one of those men who, when they wish to do a good action, must indispensably have a public." "There was no good in his eyes except what the public thought good." He could tell a story in a charming manner. "This," says Tolstoi, "is perhaps the reason why his principles were so elastic; according to the turn he gave to his talk, the same action became an amiable pleasantry or the greatest of horrors." It is clear that Tolstoi's father, whom he describes with so much impartiality, was not a family man, though he was adored by his wife. In the novels of Ivan Turgeneff, in the memoirs of Hertzgen, we find the same type; the father of Tolstoi was a courtier of the time of the great Catharine.

The departure from the country to Moscow was a great event in the life of young Tolstoi. It is described with the minutest details—details which I might almost call photographic. "I still see all the domestics, and I could draw their portraits; but, strangely enough, the visage and the attitude of mamma are entirely out of my mind. This comes, perhaps, from the fact that during all this scene of the adieux I had not once the courage to look at her. It seemed to me that if I did, her sorrow and mine would surpass all bounds." The child travelled with his father, and his attention soon became absorbed by all the trifling incidents of the journey. In Moscow his education began more in earnest; but after a few months they were all recalled to the country by a grave malady of Tolstoi's mother. The child arrived in time to see her still living, but she died soon afterwards. Tolstoi describes his feelings on this occasion with great delicacy and pathos, analyzing them in a curious and almost painful way. When the service was ended,

"the face was visible, and all the assistants approached, one after the other, to kiss it. Almost at the end was a peasant woman, holding in her arms a pretty little girl five years old. God knows why she had brought her there. I had just dropped my wet handkerchief, and I stooped to pick it up, when I heard a scream, piercing, terrible, expressing such a terror that I shall never forget it if I live a hundred years; and when I think of it, I still shudder. I looked up; the peasant woman was on a footstool, next to the coffin, and tried to keep the little girl, who struggled and threw herself backwards with an expression of fear, and looked at the corpse with great screams. I screamed then even louder, I believe, and ran out of the room. . . . The idea that this face, so handsome, so amiable a few days before, the face of the person I loved above everything in the world, could inspire terror, unveiled (so to speak) the terrible truth, and filled my soul with despair."

We now come to the years of adolescence, and to the dreams which fill them. Tolstoi was a singular child. His imagination was morbid, his reflections were not much in accordance with his age. The reformer was already hidden in him. "During a whole year," says he, "I lived in an absolute moral isolation, lost in myself. The abstruse questions of human destiny, of a future life, of the immortality of the soul, offered themselves to me, and my feeble intelligence worked with all the ardor of inexperience at the solution of these great problems which human genius, in its greatest efforts, can only envisage without succeeding in solving them." He examined and tried, one after the other, all the philosophical systems. He had an abundance of ideas which gave him no rest, he lost himself in the wildest theories; and he acquired a rare faculty of incessant moral analysis. He sometimes thought

that he was born for the good of mankind, that he should be a great man; "and, oddly enough, when I found myself in the presence of common mortals there was not one before whom I did not feel timid."

One of the prettiest chapters of the 'Souvenirs' is the story of Karl Ivanitch, who had to leave Tolstoi when he advanced in his studies and prepared to enter the university. "Was it really his story, which he had invented in his imagination while he remained in our house, and which he believed in the end for having told it so many times? Had he only put fantastic colors on true events? I do not yet know." The first time that Karl deigned to tell the long tale to his pupil he began thus: "God knows all and sees all! His will be done! Yes, Nicholas, my fate is to be unhappy; I was unhappy even before I was born, and I shall be so till I die. People have always rewarded me with evil for the good which I have done, and my recompense will not be given me in this world. If you knew all I have had to suffer! I have been a shoemaker, I have been a soldier, I have been a deserter, a manufacturer, a preceptor, and now I am dismissed, I am nothing, and I do not know where to lay my head." The military adventures of Karl Ivanitch are very characteristic: "It was a terrible time, Nicholas. It was the time of Napoleon. He wished to conquer Germany, and we fought to defend our country to the last drop of our blood. I was at Ulm, I was at Austerlitz, I was at Wagram." "So you really fought?" said Tolstoi, looking at him with astonishment. "You killed people?" The good Karl hastened to reassure his pupil. "Once," said he, "a French grenadier was left behind and fell on the road. I ran to him, and I was on the point of thrusting my bayonet through him, when he threw away his gun and said 'Pardon me,' so I let him go."

You can recognize easily in the story of Karl Ivanitch the author of 'War and Peace.' There is a curious chapter called "Eclipse," in which Tolstoi explains how, during his adolescence, his moral nature became, so to speak, eclipsed, and he was haunted by all sorts of bad ideas. He tells us the history of his crimes, as well as of his punishment. His new preceptor—a Frenchman, Saint-Gérôme—once shut him up in a dark room, and "'Basil,' he screamed, with a hideous and solemn voice, 'bring me the whip!'" This eclipse did not last long, and the 'Souvenirs' end with the account of Tolstoi's first friendship. He brought to it all the enthusiasm and ardor of his nature; he formed magnificent plans for the future of his friend and of himself. Alphonse Karr says that, in every affection, one loves, the other allows himself to be loved; one gives a kiss, the other offers the cheek. The friend of Tolstoi was of a passive disposition. Prince Dimitri Nekhludoff, then a student, formed great plans for the regeneration of humanity, and, on the whole, his influence seems to have been good. Once in the University, Tolstoi enters into a new field of what he calls *rêveries*. He describes minutely his state of mind, his ambitions, his hopes, his family circle, the rules of life he made for himself. But the charm of all these confidences is entirely in the details, and I must refer the reader to the 'Souvenirs' themselves. On the whole, though they will add nothing to the fame of the writer, they are interesting as documents concerning the first stages of development of a great and noble mind.

Correspondence.

THE KENTUCKY RESOLUTIONS OF '98.
TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Sharing with you the interest you take in Mr. Durrett's valuable contribution to the history

of the "Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 and 1799," as found in the March number of the *Southern Bivouac*, I beg leave to subjoin to your note on that paper (*Nation*, No. 1080, p. 219) that the method of research to which you refer, as affording a probable means for ascertaining the genuine text of the earlier series, has already been brought to this inquiry by Prof. N. S. Shaler, in his recently published history of Kentucky. Prof. Shaler says: "Knowing that a copy of the document [the Resolutions of 1798] had been sent to the Governor of Massachusetts, it seemed to me worth while to search for it in the archives of the Secretary's office of that Commonwealth. The search was kindly undertaken by the present Secretary, Henry B. Pierce, Esq., and fortunately resulted in the discovery of the copy given below. The document is neatly printed, and in a perfect state of preservation. It may therefore fairly be taken as an exact copy of the original" (Shaler's 'Kentucky,' p. 409).

On comparing the text of the *Bivouac* reprint with the copy reprinted from the Massachusetts archives, I find the two to be identical in point of contents, the variations being such as result from the different spelling of certain words and from a difference in the frequency with which italic and capital letters are used. In Mr. Shaler's copy the punctuation and orthography are modernized. Mr. Durrett's copy seems to be the facsimile reprint of some copy which, in point of typography at least, must be closely related to the year 1798. In one of its passages, the blurred aspect of some of the characters in the original seems to have been reproduced.

Both of these copies contain in the first resolution of the series a clause—"its co-States forming, as to itself, the other party"—which has been dropped out in editions of Elliot's Debates published since the year 1832. As you remark that "varying versions of the Resolutions got early into print with every apparent mark of authenticity," I would be exceedingly obliged to you, or to any of your readers, if you or they will refer me to any publication prior to the year 1832 in which the above-cited clause does not form an integral part of the first resolution. I make this inquiry for purely historical reasons, because I suppose myself to have discovered the time and place in which the text was for the first time corrupted.

JAMES C. WELLING.

WASHINGTON, March 13, 1886.

CHALLENGE AND BANTER:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Respecting the use of "banter" in the sense of "challenge," I would say that the word has that familiar meaning in southern Ohio, especially on the Ohio River, where I was reared. It was a favorite sport with the boys of my time to "play banner"—for thus the word was commonly pronounced. A leader would start off on a series of adventurous acts, in which he would be imitated in regular turn by his Indian file of followers. These performances were often reckless and dangerous, and many a ducking or bad fall was the fate of the unskilful or unfortunate.

Also, one boy would "banner" another to do something, like: "I'll 'banner' you to skate over that thin ice after me," or, "to 'run' those loose logs."

I agree with "W. H. J.," in your issue of March 4, as to the distinction he draws between "challenging" a rival base-ball nine and one boy "bantering" another for a race. But the latter expression was not commonly used, our "banner" being more like a challenge of a "dare"—a test of skill, activity, or nerve. But the preposition "for" was not a necessary adjunct of the verb "banner." The preposition "to" with the infinitive of the act, or the present participle, like

"skating," was the general use. We also said "doing 'banners'"; and to "make a 'banner'" was to make the break in the performance, or establish the route of ventures to be followed.

C. B., Jr.

DENVER, COL., March 8, 1886.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have been surprised to find abundant confirmation of Mr. Utter's statement in your issue of February 18, that "banter" is generally used for "dare" in southern Ohio. Old residents in this neighborhood and in Cincinnati tell me such use is common. But I was much more surprised to-day to read, in an account of 'A Crosby Family,' page 61, printed in Lowell, Mass., the following:

"My father found a competitor in Moultonboro in Doctor Morse, but after a little while he bantered the doctor to sell out, which he did," etc.

The employment of the word in this peculiar sense by Judge Crosby, of Lowell, whose whole life was spent in New Hampshire and Massachusetts—the whole early part of it in remote country towns—seems to show that even in some towns of New England "banter" is used in a sense kindred, at least, to "challenge."

Respectfully,

WILLIAM F. BRIDGE.

FOSTERS, OHIO, March 10, 1886.

[We will close the discussion of this interesting locution by referring our correspondent to p. 172 of the 'Writings of N. P. Rogers,' a native and life-long resident of New Hampshire, editing the *Herald of Freedom* when he wrote (issue of October 1, 1841, italics ours): "Two scientific pedestrians halted here . . . and . . . bantered one another to jump in."—ED. NATION.]

"AUTHOR"—EDITOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Every person who is interested in having the New English Dictionary made complete and accurate owes you thanks for your conclusive answer to "J. P." in the issue of the *Nation* for March 4. Your timely caution to the editors and "more than 1,300 readers," said to be engaged on that work, will, it is to be hoped, make them more thorough and sharp-sighted. At all events, there ought not to have been any occasion for reminding them that the word "author" was used in the eighteenth century, both in America and England, in the sense of *editor* of a periodical. As you more than intimate, for the editors of the work to overlook the newspapers and magazines published in the eighteenth century, would be to overlook the department of literary production which best shows the remarkable growth and modifications of our language in that period.

In regard to the use of "author" in the sense mentioned above, permit me to make an inquiry. Instances of this usage can be found in Massachusetts newspapers as late as 1773; can an instance subsequent to that date be pointed out in any American publication?

A. H. H.

BOSTON, March 8, 1886.

AN APPEAL FROM MISSISSIPPI.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As the discussion of the Blair bill, in and out of Congress, is one of the most interesting topics at present, it occurred to me that the views of parties living in the illiterate section might be of interest to your readers.

Wilkinson County, of which Woodville is the county seat, has a population made up of about two-thirds black and one-third white people. The State and county taxes are 18 mills, of which the school tax is 3 mills. It would be a

fair estimate that the taxes represent 15 per cent. of the net income of property-holders. With the low price of cotton prevailing, it would be impossible to increase the taxes. The white people pay 90 per cent. of the taxes and receive 35 per cent. of the benefit of the school tax. The black people pay 10 per cent. of the taxes and receive 65 per cent. of the benefit.

As the present working of the school system is the very best that we are able to have under existing circumstances, let us examine the condition of the public schools. The school fund enables us to run the public schools during four months of twenty days each annually. The teachers are paid, according to the number of scholars, from \$8 to \$50 per month; a fair average would fall below \$25 per month, equivalent to \$100 per scholastic year. Now, what kind of material can be had for such a salary? Our worthy Superintendent of Public Schools examined candidates for positions as teacher who were looking for the West Indies among the Rocky Mountains, and who had no idea of fractions. Can this material be depended upon to dispel the literary darkness around us? Is not our situation desperate? In our impoverished condition to educate the white children and twice the quantity of black children thrust upon us, may we not, without being considered paupers, exclaim: "Help us, or we perish!"

P. MÖLLER.

WOODVILLE, MISS., March 1, 1886.

[This is a dark showing, truly, and still not the worst that the South might make. There are corresponding degrees of school privileges, or lack of them, and of teaching capacity at the North. They furnish a ground of compassion, but they do not affect the general principle involved in opposition to the Blair bill—the danger of fostering a fatal dependence on external aid, especially in a State which is making notable educational progress by its own impulse.—ED. NATION.]

STATE AID TO EDUCATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Will you allow me to call attention to a point which seems to have been forgotten in the recent discussions as to the advisability of making national grants in aid of education? Your position, that gifts of money to the South for this purpose would in the long run prove a detriment to the self-reliance of the people, and consequently to education itself, is undoubtedly correct. The testimony of Connecticut would, at first thought, seem to confirm your objections to all national aid whatsoever. It is, indeed, a "fact," as you say, and facts, as all know, go a great way with Americans. We should not, however, so completely yield our allegiance to them as to forget to try to understand them. That State money has been and may still be badly used is no proof, though, that it can be made to do no good. The whole question turns on its administration. If the administration is bad, State or national grants in aid of education are likely to do more harm than good, as in the case of Connecticut. But if the administrators of that fund had been wise enough to make its distribution to the districts depend upon a reasonable amount of local effort, the State Commissioner would now have a different story to tell.

We have, for instance, in Illinois, an example of the good State money may do in stimulating local effort even with very light conditions. In that State the income from public-school funds, together with the direct State school tax, is 20 per cent. of all money expended for education in

the State. The distribution to the districts is made on the one condition of their supporting a school for six months each year. This condition is always complied with, and at a present cost of over \$29.00 per pupil in average attendance. A much smaller grant from the State would secure the fulfilment of the imposed condition. Similar results follow the administration of the income from State funds in other States. Again, the Peabody fund is administered on the same principle; yet nobody claims that this tends to demoralize the people, for it helps only those who help themselves.

But the most striking example of enormous State subsidies to education, which at the same time have no tendency to produce stagnation and helplessness among those who receive their benefits, is found in England. The total Parliament grant for elementary education in England and Wales alone was, in 1884-85, £3,110,912, and was made not only to public schools, but, startling as it may seem, most largely to schools organized and managed by religious societies. That which at first view looks like subsidizing religious bodies at public expense, excites neither alarm nor serious opposition in England, yet this is perhaps the most thoroughly non-paternal government in the world. As in the United States so here, everything turns on the administration. Grants are made chiefly on these conditions, viz.:

1. That at least an equal amount of money be provided by local effort.
2. That the school be held in approved premises and taught by duly certificated teachers.
3. That a portion of the grant depend upon the individual examination of pupils by Government inspectors.

Subject to these conditions, the various classes of schools receive from Government subsidy the following per cent. of their whole school expenditure:

	Pupils.	Per cent.
1. Church of England Schools.....	1,007,823	43.5
2. Wesleyan Schools.....	128,584	45.3
3. Roman Catholic Schools.....	167,841	48.7
4. British Undenominational and Other Schools.....	253,044	42.5
5. School Board Schools.....	1,115,832	36.1
Total for Elementary Schools.....		41.04

Twenty years ago England was one of the worst educated of civilized countries; now, under the action of State aid, it is one of the best. Further, under the beneficial action of well-administered school subsidies, it has raised teaching from a poor calling to a respected and profitable profession. So it might be in America. A well-administered national grant for public schools would be as beneficial in its action as similar grants have been to elementary education in England. A national gift would do more harm than good.

CHAS. DE GARMO.

HALLE, February 26, 1886.

YALE COLLEGE AND THE SCIENTIFIC SCHOOL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It is a common assumption, among the defenders of the "old régime" at Yale, that they are entitled to whatever credit may accrue from the progress of the Scientific School. They claim that since it is an undergraduate department of the University, its numbers should be added to those of the similarly undergraduate Academical Department, in any comparison with the progress of rival institutions.

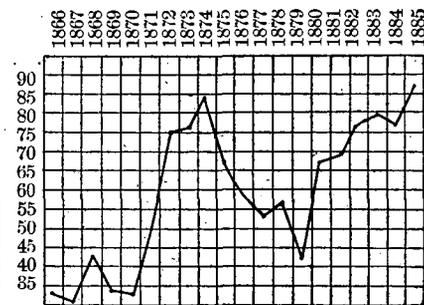
It was with full foresight of this probable but illusive objection that I determined to exclude the Scientific School from the larger part of my previous comparison. The baselessness of the objection is apparent to any graduate of the School; but to the alumni of the other department a few words of explanation may be necessary.

The first and most obvious reason for its exclu-

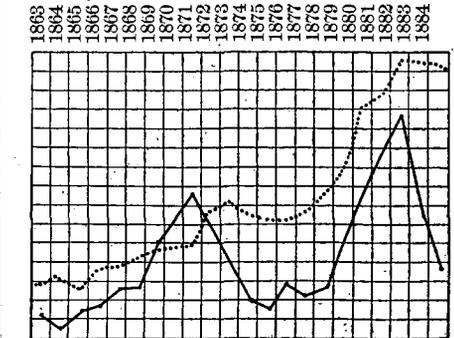
sion is the fact that the President and Fellows of the College have had nothing whatever to do with the progressive management of the School. The credit of its success belongs elsewhere, as is well known.

A second objection is found in the fact that the comparison is drawn between two systems of education, as well as between two colleges that practise them. It could only confuse the solution to make the Scientific School, with its three years' course and strictly technical education for an average of 74 per cent. of its students, a factor in the problem. It is designed to educate good civil and dynamical engineers, chemists, and metallurgists. President Eliot's annual report for the college year 1884-85 shows that nobody goes to the Academical Department of Harvard College for this class of instruction. And besides, while every Harvard undergraduate receives the full benefit of all the instruction offered in the Academic Department of the University, no academical undergraduate at Yale can share in any way the instruction so admirably given in the Scientific School. To include the Scientific School in the comparison of numbers would therefore vitiate the force of the whole argument with respect to instruction.

In the third place, just as the management of the Scientific School has had nothing in common with that of the College, so has its growth been determined by other and entirely extrinsic causes. The following diagram shows the fluctuations in the number of students entering the Freshman classes of the Scientific School every year of the last twenty:



It will be found instructive to compare these lines with those that display the same facts for the Academic Department (*Nation*, p. 148). And the causes of the contrast are as different as the results. The Scientific School sends the bulk of its graduates into the great technical professions. It furnishes the supply for a certain demand; and the number of its students is dependent upon the progress of the industries in whose development these technical professions play a part. The following diagram shows the progress of railway construction and the output of the iron and Bessemer steel trades for the twenty-two years 1863-1884:



The solid line shows the fluctuations in the miles of new railway annually constructed, while the dotted line denotes the number of tons of steel and iron annually produced. It will be observed that there is a remarkable relationship be-

tween this diagram and that which precedes it, indicating that the fluctuations of the classes follow, accurately enough, the fluctuations of these great industries, at an average distance of two or three years. No such relationship is apparent in the figures of the Academical Departments of either college.

The fact is, that any attempt to mix more than about 26 per cent. of the Scientific School figures with those of the Academical Department is a simple attempt to obscure the real causes of Yale's decline. Had the cases been reversed, and were it a question of adding one of Harvard's professional schools to the College in order to enable it to make a fair showing alongside of Yale, the Yale apologists would have made a terrible outcry against it. And yet it would be almost as fair to add the Harvard Law School to the College figures as the Sheffield Scientific School to Yale's.

For the accuracy of my statement with regard to elective studies at Harvard in 1841, I shall cite President Eliot as authority. He shows, in his annual report for 1883-4, page 13, that a system of elective studies was opened by vote of the Faculty, May 24, 1841, not only to juniors and seniors, but even to sophomores. These reports also afford information concerning the influence and functions of the Board of Overseers which the College catalogues do not supply.

EDWARD D. PAGE.

NEW YORK, March 11, 1886.

THE TARIFF ON DIRT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Referring to your editorial of the 11th inst., on the "great struggle over the tariff on dirt," permit us to call your attention to the fact that, inasmuch as the scoured wool loses nearly 50 per cent. of its weight in being cleansed, a duty of two and one-half cents per pound on unwashed wool is equivalent to five cents per pound on scoured wool—i. e., the same quantity of wool as it left the sheep's back unwashed at two and one-half cents per pound would bring into the Treasury, when scoured and charged five cents per pound, no more duty. Therefore, the difference between two and one-half cents on unwashed and five cents on scoured wool is practically one and the same thing, and wherein it is a tax on dirt is not apparent.

The other two and one-half cents per pound on scoured wool (making the entire duty seven and one-half cents) is no more than a fair equivalent, in view of the fact that the thorough cleansing or scouring has made an article fitted for other uses than those for which unwashed wool can be employed. The scoured wool is ready for immediate use by the manufacturer, and will take dyes without further cleansing. This is not the case with either unwashed or washed wools, both of which require further cleansing.

The statute imposes a certain duty on wools in a certain condition, e. g., scoured. It matters not how they got to be scoured, whether by the use of chemicals and machinery or by hand labor and hot water. It is the condition, and not the process, which governs. Now, in the case of the Donskoi wools, it is undisputed that they are so thoroughly cleansed that nothing more is requisite to fit them for dyeing and manufacture.

Truly yours, DALLAS SANDERS,
JAMES W. M. NEWLIN.

NEW YORK, March 13, 1886.

[It seems, then, that the duty on wool is two and one-half cents per pound, and the duty on scouring two and one-half cents per pound more, and the duty on immediate usefulness two and one-half cents per pound more. We are no sticklers for terms, but it looks to us as though

the last two and one-half cents were a premium on the importation of dirt. This is the view taken by Mr. John L. Hayes, a great tariff authority, in a recent humorous publication.—ED. NATION.]

POSTAL SAVINGS BANKS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION :

SIR: The failure of the "Dime Savings Bank" at New Brunswick, with the widespread suffering that it entails, affords another proof, if any were needed, of the pressing call for Congressional action in the matter of postal savings banks. An event like this failure operates as a discouragement to thrift in every town and village through the country to which the news penetrates. The poor have little opportunity of discriminating in such matters; they learn that those who placed the fruits of self-denial for years in the New Brunswick bank found it swept away in a moment; the depositors had economized in order that a dishonest cashier might speculate in Wall Street. To the poor, laying up money involves a multitude of sacrifices, and, at least, when laid by it should be made safe for them. But through a very large portion of this country this can only be accomplished by the action of the Government. The matter is now under discussion by a Congressional committee, and public opinion should be brought to bear upon the committee in a very emphatic way. L.

DUTY AND HONOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION :

SIR: I have, by chance, in the same half-hour, come across two stories, each interesting in itself from the men concerned, and both together so singularly emphasizing an excellence of English character and a peculiar form of moral discipline connected with English Parliamentary life, that it is perhaps worth while to bring them in connection with one another before your readers. The one is to be found in Mr. Leslie Stephen's 'Life of Fawcett,' the other in Mr. J. Cotter Morison's study of Macaulay—both works of much interest in all respects.

Mr. Stephen, in relating Mr. Fawcett's action with regard to the preservation of Commons, describes the incessant vigilance on Fawcett's part needed to secure the legislation desired. At one moment the struggle (which was between the Government and Fawcett and his supporters) resolved itself into a determination on Fawcett's side to prevent the passage of a proposed bill :

"The third reading of the bill was set down for every Government night. It did not come on for discussion till the end of the evening's debates—that is, often at 2 or 3 A. M. If Fawcett or his supporters had failed to be in their places, the third reading might have been achieved without opposition. But night after night he was ready, and the motion for the third reading postponed. On one occasion Fawcett, as he used often to relate, had caught a bad cold. He sent a message to the Government whip asking that the motion might be once more postponed as it had been so often before. He received no answer; but fancying that his request would be granted as a matter of course, he was retiring to bed. A friend happening to call suggested that it would be safer not to relax even for a night. Fawcett struggled into his wraps, went to the House and found that business had been so arranged as to secure the passage of the Enclosure Bill. The whip started 'like a guilty thing surprised' on the apparition of Fawcett in the lobby, but good-humoredly admitted the failure of his little bit of dexterity, and gave a formal undertaking which enabled Fawcett to get once more into bed with a safe conscience."

It was not he alone who would not go to bed except "with a safe conscience." After the breakdown of Macaulay's health in July, 1852, he was constantly oppressed with asthma and

heart disease, and so weak at times that he could hardly walk, even with a stick. But as long as he was a member of the House of Commons, although his constituents were willing to grant him every indulgence, his attendance in the House often took little heed to prudence. On one occasion, as he wrote in his diary,

"I was in pain and very poorly. I went down to the House and paired. On my return, just as I was getting into bed, I received a note from Hayter to say that he had paired me. I was very unwilling to go out at that hour [it was in January], and afraid of the night air; but I have a horror of the least suspicion of foul play, so I dressed and went again to the House, settled the matter about the pairs, and came back at near 12 o'clock."

It is such men as these who not only "command the applause of listening senates," but who may proudly "read their history in a nation's eyes."

In speaking of this devotion to duty as an excellence of English character, let it not be supposed that I would imply it to be peculiar to the English; but with what kind of emotion does an American read on another of Mr. Stephen's pages this passage, which, perhaps, I may also be allowed to quote?

"Fawcett frequently remarked to me [while Postmaster-General] upon the high standard of honor in the public service, observing that officials in receipt of moderate salaries had often to decide upon questions, such as mail contracts, involving large sums of money, and that there was never the slightest suspicion of their turning their opportunities to private profit." **

SLEET OR HAIL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION :

SIR: It is curious to note that there is a wonderful lack of uniformity as to what is understood by the term "sleet." If you merely announce that "it is sleeting," and refer to an ordinary Physics or Physical Geography to see what sort of information you have really given, you will no doubt be astonished, if not amused, to learn that no less than six varieties of phenomena are described by Geikie, Maury, Steele, Webster, and the leading encyclopædias.

Now, in Maryland—at least in this section—it is only "sleet" when the rain has frozen on the ground. Further south, "it sleets" when fine particles of ice (frozen rain) pepper one on the upturned face. Indeed, a professor in a university of note has told me, "Sleet is frozen rain; hail is an aggregation of sleet-drops—i. e., is always compound."

Since I am convinced that there is no little confusion in the ordinary understanding of the terms, I have thought to call forth some really reliable information through these most discriminating and satisfactory columns.

G. F. YONCE.

LUTHERVILLE, MD.

STENOLOGY (?).

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION :

SIR: Does man possess an instinctive language—not the Babel of the thousand and one tongues that divide human intercourse, but the defined form of sound of natural intuition? Has not the bee, the ant, its own language by which the common interests of the community are directed; the brute creation instinctive sounds, by which ideas are communicated? The bird also—for instance, the nightingale—has it not a language? The beautiful songster sends forth its notes without hesitation, no mistake is made, the phrase is decided on before utterance, the words conveyed to his fellow companions, to us unintelligible, though a most enchanting symphony of sound. Has man, then, no inborn language, revealed perhaps in part and dispersed in the language of the

world, to be further evolved as the human mind is developed?

This question has been suggested under the following circumstances. At the moment between waking and sleeping an imaginary conversation frequently crosses the field of the mind. It is then, occasionally, that a few syllables appear to me to express the exact idea intended to be conveyed. On waking, the words have no apparent meaning, although so precisely adapted at the moment of expression. This ideal phraseology has been repeated, at intervals, for years past, perhaps on fifty different occasions, the words differing each time. No record has been kept, as until now the writer has paid no attention to the question. The idea has suggested itself of the possible existence of an innate language. So far as memory carries me, the words, in general, were short, and the letter *a* was pronounced as in the Italian language.—Yours truly, F. C.

Notes.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT Co. have in press a new translation from the German by Mrs. A. L. Wister, 'Violetta'; a new novel by George Thomas Downing, 'The Wreckers: a Social Study'; and 'The Story of Don Miff as told by his friend John Bouche Whacker: a Symphony of Life, edited by Virginius Dabney.' This last, a subscription book (the author's address being No. 108 West Forty-ninth Street, New York), is an attempt "to portray life in the South in the old days," at first in peace time in Richmond and the lower tide-water region of Virginia; afterwards, during the rebellion, in "The Valley."

A Hancock Monograph, with a steel portrait of the late General, will be published immediately by G. P. Putnam's Sons. They have also nearly ready 'A Study of Dante,' by Susan E. Blow; 'Essays on Finance, Wages, and Trade,' by Robert Giffen, President of the British Statistical Society; the 'Physics and Metaphysics of Money,' with special regard to California, by Rodmond Gibbons; and 'Torpedoes for National Defence,' by Lieut. William H. Jaques, U. S. A.

Another reconciliation of science and theology will be attempted in 'Reason and Revelation. Hand in Hand,' by Rev. Thomas M. McWhinney, D.D., of which Fords, Howard & Hulbert are the publishers.

'The Prelate,' a story of the American colony and native society in Rome, by Isaac Henderson; 'The Sphinx's Children: and Other People's,' by Rose Terry Cooke; and 'A Stroll with Keats,' by Frances Clifford Brown, illustrated, are about to be issued by Ticknor & Co.

A missionary work is announced to be 'Triumphant Democracy,' by Andrew Carnegie, now in the press of Charles Scribner's Sons.

Ginn & Co. announce for May 1 'Our Government,' a text-book, by J. Macy, Professor of History and Political Science in Iowa College.

D. C. Heath & Co. announce 'A Short Manual of Chemical Arithmetic,' by J. Milnor Coit, of St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H.

A 'History of the Storrs Family,' compiled by the late Charles Storrs, of Brooklyn, is promised immediately by A. S. Barnes & Co.

'In Aid of Faith' is the title selected for a series of articles, by the Rev. Lyman Abbott, that appeared in the *Christian Union* last year under a slightly different caption. They have been revised for republication in book form by E. P. Dutton & Co.

Whittier's new volume of verse, which Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have nearly ready, is to be entitled, 'St. Gregory's Guest, and Other Poems.'

The same publishers have just added to their dainty little Riverside Aldine Series Warner's 'Back-Log Studies'; and have likewise produced