

The practice of hissing at theatres has been recently discussed. It is surprising that it finds advocates. Strong disapprobation is no doubt conveyed by it, but in an insulting, uncouth and essentially vulgar manner. Disapproval is expressed not only with more dignity by silence, but with more actual force, which last is always more marked where there is a reserve of force, stopping short of violent demonstration.

According to M. Max de Nansouty, if Paris had possessed the Eiffel Tower in 1870 the issue of the great siege might have been different. "The optical telegraph, whose functions, combined with secret correspondence, have attained remarkable perfection, would have established permanent communication between Paris, Rouen, and the provinces. Nothing could have stopped or interrupted these signals, which would have contributed to unite all the armies organised in the provinces against the invading forces." M. de Nansouty may possibly be right, but it seems to us that had the tower existed it would at once have become the mark at which the German artillery would have been pointed till it was destroyed, for we do not think any facility for distant communication would have availed to prevent the massing of the Imperial armies before Paris in sufficient force to have maintained their ground, and developed and maintained their artillery fire.

A paragraph, which originally appeared in the *Halifax Chronicle*, has gone the rounds of the Press to a considerable extent, and we propose, by reproducing it, to add our mite to its circulation:—"We had cherished the conviction and the hope that Nova Scotia was behind every other country on the face of the earth with respect to the laws relating to debtor and creditor. But it appears that we have been mistaken. We read that a Montreal man who borrowed \$35 at the rate of 180 per cent. per annum, was proceeded against and finally imprisoned, his debt, including legal costs, then amounting to \$78, for which he spent 209 days in jail. It is hard to know, as a contemporary well says, which to condemn—the law which permits the imprisonment or that under which such a rate of interest is possible." We commend the paragraph to the serious consideration of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia, which thought fit to throw out last session the bill sent up by the Assembly for the abolition of the anachronism of imprisonment for debt.

Following his little diatribe on the alarming prospect of Church and Aristocracy, Mr. Longley indulges in a little sarcasm, which it is not necessary to reproduce or comment on. But what we wish to point out is that the assumed fear of Hereditary Aristocracy or Established Church is the assumed distrust of an impossibility. Under any conceivable aspect of Federation, should it ever assume a tangible shape, it is not in the nature of things that such institutions should ever gain a footing in Canada. Even their existence in the old country itself is fast becoming more and more precarious. Neither is a standing army more on the cards. Canada already supports her own modest but sufficient land forces, and as we have often pointed out, all that could be required of her would be some such contribution to the Navy as has been nearly on the point of accomplishment in Australia. We take it that any material aid to England, in the possibility of European war, could not be other than purely voluntary. If our politicians and publicists would devote their patriotic and disinterested attention to the present of Canada, the future would by and by be in a better position to take care of itself.

Scientists have assigned to the period of man upon earth antiquities varying by hundreds of thousands of years. The consensus of opinion places his advent, or at all events his recognizable presence, at the beginning of the present—the past glacial—period. Again there is variation of many thousands of years as to the antiquity of this era. But, differ as they may as to the approximate date of the epoch, in one thing they are in accord—that the chronology of Archbishop Ussher, which places the creation of man within 6,000 years, is not worth serious attention. No one need be shocked at this. The Bible is not a manual of geology, and, as an Evangelical paper, the *Christian at Work* sensibly remarks:—"It is one of the errors which have extended to our own time, that the maintenance of the Scriptures requires the acceptance of Archbishop Ussher's chronology. We know that it discloses the mind of God as to the duties God requires of man. And accepting this, it only remains to be said that if we obey its commands in this regard, the teachings, the discoveries, and, we may add, the mistakes of science may all be left to that time which tests all ambiguities, sifts error, and establishes the truth."

Discussing the question of Provincial autonomy, Dr. Bourinot, in one of his recent lectures, is reported as follows:—"The weight of authority now seems to rest with those who have always contended that in entering into the federal compact the Provinces never renounced their distinct existence as 'political entities.' This separate existence was expressly reserved for all that concerns their internal Government; and in forming themselves into a federation, under political and legislative aspects, they established a central Government for inter-provincial objects only. Far from the federal authority having created the Provincial powers, it is from these powers that there has actually arisen the federal Government to which the Provinces ceded a portion of their rights, property and revenues for general purposes." There can scarcely be a doubt of the correctness of this view. Quebec could not entrust her race, creed, language, customs, manners and ideals to a majority differing from her in those matters, and although not possessing the same absolute distinctions, the other Provinces practically took the same position when entering into Confederation. In receiving subsidies they but receive back a part of the revenues they surrendered for the general good and advancement of the nation.

Yesterday was the 52nd anniversary of the Queen's Accession. To-day is the longest day of the year, and to many it seems almost incredible that nearly half of the year 1889 has already slipped quietly away. It is also the 140th anniversary of the foundation of Halifax in 1749, and if the progress of the good old city has been a little slow, it has been very solid and steady, and it is probably within the last twelve months that, more than in any previous given period, signs of more rapid advance have been perceptible to the interested observer. The population of the city has now reached a figure at which natural increase will tell in a more marked degree, and by the time the census of 1891 is taken we shall no doubt see a more decided state of advance, and an improved basis for more rapid progress. While the city is multiplying dwellings and other buildings at a very fair rate, there have recently been numerous indications of a decided awakening of enterprise among our citizens. "The old order changeth," and the consciousness of the change should add an extra stimulus to the enjoyment by the people of Halifax of the holiday held to-day in honor of her Natal Day.

In an article on Thomas Chandler Haliburton, in *The Dominion Illustrated* of June 15, Mr. A. Stevenson observes that "during the last few years there has been a remarkable display of literary activity in our Maritime Provinces. In proportion to the number of the population more good writing has been published from there recently than in Ontario." To the names which he mentions in supporting this statement, Mr. Stevenson might have added, among others, that of Miss Eliza Ritchie, of Halifax. "The Problem of Personality" (Andrus & Church, Ithaca, N. Y., 1889), is a thesis presented by Miss Ritchie for the degree of Ph. D., which has recently been conferred upon her, *cum laude*, by the Cornell University. This is an essay in the higher realms of thought, where not many readers can follow her continuously, notwithstanding that few met physical writers express themselves so lucidly as Miss Ritchie. She has divested herself of all bias, and entered on her investigation with true philosophic impartiality. Her observations on the interaction of body and mind are both subtle and clear, and her last chapter contains strong arguments for the personality of "that Infinite Being which philosophy knows as the Absolute or U conditioned, but which the religious consciousness of mankind recognizes as God." We must confess to feeling a little dizzy from our unwonted mental exertions in the sublimo regions traversed by our authoress. It rests us to repeat the Philistine conundrums and their answers:—"What is mind?" "No matter." "What is matter?" "Never mind." "What is self?" "This is self-evident."

The Hon. J. W. Longley has an article in the *Week* of the 7th inst., on that much-vexed topic, "The Future of Canada." There is always in Mr. Longley's writings a great deal of practical common sense, and they are pervaded by a tone of carefully maintained moderation. We are therefore a little surprised that he should ever be betrayed into anything like clap-trap. "Great Britain," says Mr. Longley in adducing the pros and cons of the maintenance of the British connection, with the idea in his mind of Imperial Federation, "to-day has still an Established Church and an hereditary aristocracy. Would it suit Canadian ideas or interests to accept these? For myself, on this point I give an emphatic negative. Great Britain has still a place in European diplomacy, and has to maintain a standing army and a navy which national interests seem to demand shall be made greater and more costly every year. Is there anything in Canadian life which points to it as a wise policy that we should take a share of those burdens upon us? In North America we can get on very well without those things. Here every man is a bread-winner and a wage-earner, and contributes something to the development of the country. Would it be a mark of wisdom to seek a policy which would involve the conversion of a large percentage of the able-bodied men of the state into a band of hired loafers supported at the public expense? Are there not many considerations which induce one to believe that if Canada is ever to thrive and grow and achieve a great destiny she can do this best in the atmosphere of her own continent rather than stifled with the remain of European feudalism?"

It is undoubtedly true that the existing relations between the United States and Canada are far from satisfactory. Some important questions have been long pending and still remain unsettled while new complications continue to arise, others threaten, and commercial rivalry is embittered by party ends. So numerous indeed are the questions demanding, and likely to demand settlement, that a suggestion we find in the *Montreal Witness*, that negotiations might be entered into for the establishment of an International Court of Arbitration, seems in itself a very sound one. "Would it not be practicable," says our contemporary, "to constitute an International Court, with one or two of the most exalted judges of each land, with a third or fifth chosen by them from among the judges of some foreign land? Either a German, a French, a Danish or an Italian judge should be satisfactory to either nation. The evidence upon which the questions in dispute between the United States and Canada can only justly be settled is of a purely legal character, consisting of documents, treaties for the most part, and judgments rendered upon various interpretations of these. In such cases the judgment of the majority in a Court so constituted ought to be of a perfectly decisive character. In any case the judgment of such a Court could be accepted without sense of humiliation by either side, and no political party in either land would be able to make political capital out of the rejection of a settlement arrived at by a purely legal tribunal. Such an International Court, if once formed, should constitute a very useful precedent for the settlement of other International questions." The advantages of such a tribunal are unquestionable, but it is to be feared the spirit of the United States is not at present amenable to the highest methods of settling International questions.