

We owe our readers an apology for the shortening of our reading columns last week, and to a less extent this week. Last week we had actually no space to squeeze an apology in, and that fact decided a question which has been presenting itself to us for some time past. We have accordingly made arrangements to add four pages to THE CRITIC next week, and give our readers a more liberal quota of matter in our several departments. We shall continue this enlargement for several weeks, and then, if we find it feasible, shall make a permanent addition to our space.

Canadians as a usual thing do not take sides very strongly in English politics, and there is a generous feeling of admiration for statesmen of both sides felt among us. Mr. Gladstone, for instance, has scores, nay hundreds, of ardent admirers in this country, and they will be pleased to hear that a body of Canadians in London, wishing to mark their esteem for him, have decided to present him with a portrait of himself, and have selected a Canadian artist, Mr. J. C. Forbes, R. C. A., of Toronto, to paint it. Many of Mr. Gladstone's admirers are such altogether irrespective of politics; his high character, great achievements in statesmanship, and brilliant and versatile genius, as well as the extraordinary age at which he retains full mental vigor, making him the most striking figure in the British Empire. There are those who do not see eye to eye with the "Grand Old Man" on the vexed question of Home Rule for Ireland, but his fearless championship of Christianity against the forces of scepticism, agnosticism and atheism has endeared him to the faithful of all denominations. The selection of a Canadian artist to paint this portrait is only fitting, but it is none the less gratifying. The name of the great painter Millais was mentioned for the work, but we are glad to be able to record that the Canadians concerned preferred to have the painting done by one of their own countrymen. Hence the selection of Mr. Forbes, who will sail shortly for England, when Mr. Gladstone will sit for the portrait. It is about a year since the project was talked of and Mr. Gladstone consented to it.

In these days poets must be careful about the sentiments they express, for they are pretty sure to "catch it" from some quarter. As a case in point, take Lord Tennyson's poem "To Sleep," which appears elsewhere in this issue. By likening death to sleep—a somewhat hackneyed simile—Lord Tennyson has aroused some religious people in their wrath, and this ten-dollar-a-word poem has been stamped with their disapproval. It appears like straining at a gnat to pretend to find anything unchristian in this comparison. The only wonder is that even a poet laureat could ring the changes upon it again to the tune of ten-dollars-a-word, or more, according to some authorities. Shakespeare put in Hamlet's mouth "To die, to sleep!" and no one even called him an agnostic because of it, so why should the author of "In Memoriam" and "Crossing the Bar" be called in question. One of our own poets, now a clergyman of the Church of England, in a beautiful sonnet entitled "Sleep," published first in *King's College Record*, and later in THE CRITIC, expresses the same sentiments, only we think—begging the laureat's pardon—more beautifully. As for the price paid for "To Sleep," *New York Truth* says that Lord Tennyson arranged for the sale of it to a certain famous publishing house in England. It sold the right to print it to a London paper, and separately to each large city in Great Britain. Australia also purchased the privilege, and *Truth* took the exclusive right for the United States. It is difficult to estimate the exact revenue from all these sources, but a conservative estimate, based on the sums paid in England and America, indicates that Lord Tennyson was paid for the poem at the rate of \$45 a word. The general impression is, however, that it cost ten-dollars a word, and as the word "sleep" is used twelve times, and there are only nine lines in the poem, it appears to be ample remuneration.

The necessity for the abolition of the stove as a means of heating Railway cars is again forcibly brought to our minds by the terrible details of the collision in the Fourth Avenue Tunnel, N.Y., and again by the accident on the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad on March 8th. In the latter case the track was obstructed by snow, and the engine struck the curve where the accident occurred, at the switch, and left the track, followed by the cars, which piled up in confusion one upon the other. One man was killed instantly, and a number of others were fatally injured by burning and crushing. The wreck took fire immediately, and the corpse of a Mrs. Wood in the baggage car was cremated. It is not for us to suggest what means of heating shall be substituted for the car stove, but the fact that the horrors of railway accidents are rendered tenfold by fire ought to move the people through their representatives in Parliament to make some decided move towards the abolition of stoves and oil lamps in railway cars. The *Week* wisely suggests that now that a new Parliament is about to meet, it would be well for the matter to be brought up. The *Week* also endorses the suggestion of a correspondent that a Canadian Railway Commission should be appointed to decide business questions between the railways and their patrons, and compel railway corporations to take better precautions for the protection of their employes from maiming in the discharge of their duties. It appears to us that there have been, both in the United States and Canada, an unusual number of accidents on railways during the past year, and in some of them the terror of fire has added greatly to the sufferings of the victims. By all means let some action be taken towards compelling the removal of the stoves and the oil lamps. In these days of electricity and steam the heartlessness of corporations is evidenced by the continuance of the present system so costly in the lives of travellers. When once the change is effected we will look back and wonder how it was that we were so callous to the cries repeatedly made. The feasibility of safe heating has been sufficiently proved, so that there need be no hesitation on that score.

It must be rather painful for Emperor William to find his cherished scheme of a great navy falling short of approval by the Reichstag. Popular opinion is against it, and the Emperor lays the blame for the failure to secure the grants for naval purposes to the indiscretion of Admiral Hollman in making his disclosures, and to Chancellor Von Caprivi's want of Parliamentary tact. The position of the latter is critical, and it is thought that he will not be able to control affairs. Count Von Waldersee has been openly taken into favor by the Emperor, and it is not unlikely that in the event of Caprivi's downfall he will succeed as Chancellor.

The United States Postal Subsidy Bill, which authorizes the expenditure of \$1,200,000 a year, has passed both houses of Congress, and will probably shortly become law. It is to be enforced first with those lines of steamers plying between the ports of the United States and those of South American nations, and is supplementary to Mr. Blaine's Reciprocity policy. It will, however, pour out its greatest benefits upon the lines of steamers already running and coming under its provisions, and will have the evil effect of crushing out competition and enabling the beneficiaries to monopolize the carrying trade on their lines and keep up prices too. It is contended by its promoters that it will stimulate American shipbuilding, and this, as the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* says, will not be a very depressing sight. On the whole the feeling is one of dissatisfaction, but as the passage of this Act was a sort of sop to those who promoted the larger measure of the Shipping Subsidy Bill which was defeated, a "Hobson's choice" acquiescence has been given to it.

The United States after the passage of the McKinley Bill signified its disapproval of such a high tariff wall being raised by electing a Democratic majority for the next Congress. The high tariff nevertheless exists at the present, and Mr. Blaine, with a keen insight into the needs of the country, set to work to form reciprocity treaties with South American countries. The treaty with Brazil was the first proposed and it was followed by one with Venezuela. The Brazilian treaty is looked upon with general favor in the United States, the free-traders regarding it as a step in the right direction. But it now appears that the undoing to the work of the McKinley Bill to this extent is receiving a check from the other party to the treaty, Brazil. The sentiment against it is so pronounced that on February 12th, when the action of the Government in celebrating the treaty was being defended by one of the deputies, the greater number of Congressmen left the hall. A despatch from Brazil states that from the present feeling against the treaty it is not improbable that the decree establishing it will, after the constitution is approved, be dropped by Congress as many other of General Deodoro's decrees have been. Those opposed to it see in its acceptance a great blow dealt to home agricultural interests and home industries, with a diminished source of revenue for the Government. They reason that it means an increased trade with the United States; and increased trade with the United States, with a large number of products entered free and a reduction of duty on certain manufactured goods, means a diminution of the revenue from this source, because of a less trade with European nations that would pay a higher duty. It is causing not a little uneasiness, too, among the British and German merchants. They see in it, if successful, a large withdrawal of their trade from Brazil and a necessity for them to seek new pastures. The British residents pronounce the scheme on the part of the United States sharp practice, and think England should lose no time in providing some measures to nip the Yankee scheme in the bud. Unless under discussion this reciprocal treaty should grow more fair to the Brazilians, the Provisional Government of that new republic may find that it acted too hastily in the matter.

Papers from Jamaica make most flattering comments upon the Canadian exhibits at the exposition. In fact it is admitted that one half the interest felt in the exhibition and a similar proportion of the success which has attended it are due to the Canadian exhibits and to the zeal and energy of the gentlemen in charge of them. Everyone in Canada ought to know that the great efforts made to have a creditable showing at this exhibition were due to a desire to see a mutually profitable commerce spring up between our small sister and ourselves. That our well meant overtures have been well received is patent from the tone of the Jamaica papers. Our representatives there, Hon. Adam Brown, Honorary Commissioner, and Mr. W. D. Dimock, Superintendent of the Canadian Court, are highly spoken of as fortunate selections for the positions assigned them. The *Colonial Standard and Jamaica Despatch* says: "Whoever goes into the Canadian Court is greeted with courteous smiles and finds persons to whom it is a labor of love to afford him all the information in their power." The same paper speaks of the fur exhibit as follows:—"A magnificent assortment of furs, in which Canada surpasses almost every other country in the world, is hung around North go to make up the display. A splendid bear's head, which has been the balustrade of the gallery and in other parts of the Court. The skins of the bears, miniver, ermine, arctic foxes, brown foxes, and nearly every other animal whose habitat is the far the admiration of everyone who has seen it, has, we believe, been presented to His Excellence the Governor, by Mr. Dupuy, the Quebec Commissioner." Canadian bread and butter has also highly pleased the Jamaicans; a general tasting match being held a few weeks ago. Kingstonians and Jamaicans generally have treated Canadian visitors most courteously, and it is to be hoped that the cordial feeling thus started between the inhabitants of the "Pearl of the Antilles" and this "True North" may increase to our mutual advantage. The *Kingston Daily Gleaner*, of February 21st, containing two pages descriptive of the Canadian exhibits, has reached us. The article is well illustrated, and calculated to impress all who see it with the variety and importance of our resources, products and manufactures.