

# THE CRITIC:

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## THE CRITIC,

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The editor of THE CRITIC is responsible for the views expressed in Editorial Notes and Articles, and for such only, but the editor is not to be understood as endorsing the sentiments expressed in the articles contributed to this journal. Our readers are capable of approving or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper, and after exercising due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

About forty widows in the city of Halifax feelingly observed Thanksgiving Day, by decorating their husbands' graves in Camp Hill Cemetery with choice flowers. The foregoing item will be of interest to those who appreciate the eternal fitness of things.

We are glad to note the appointments in the 66th P. I. F., Battalion of three Lieutenants who have passed the Infantry School to be Captains. Captain Menger appointed Adjutant in the room of Major Weston, is also a graduate of the School—at least we so understood the letters appended to the appointment, though there is a difference in them which should not exist. Thus the first three are noted in the *Militia Gazette* as S. I. Capt. Menger as R. S. I. The new Captains are Henry King, H. F. W. Fishwick, and W. M. Black.

The crisis in France, brought about by mischievous and unscrupulous corruptorists, threatens to be very troublesome. All sorts of factionists, including Prince Napoleon, are bringing pressure to bear on the President to compel him to resign, and M. M. Clemenceau, Goblet, and DeFreycine have each declined to attempt the formation of a Ministry. The resignation of M. Grévy could scarcely, we think, fail to be detrimental to France, and she sustains an almost equally serious loss in relinquishing the services of M. Flourens, who has proved himself an able and temperate Foreign Minister.

We are glad to see that Militia officers are again to get imported uniforms free of duty. A more unjust and senseless fad than the rescension of that slight privilege, was never conceived or carried into execution. In the first place, the Militia officer's service is always expensive to him, in the second place, his uniform cannot enter into his ordinary wear. We are glad the Government has come to its senses again on this point, and has passed an Order in Council providing for the payment of drawback in the case of importers in the trade, and free importation in the case of officers importing for their own use and that of their battalions. To obtain the certificates required by the Customs Department, applications, accompanied in all cases by the invoice, must be made direct to the Minister of Militia.

Electricity is fast coming to the front as a motive power, and already sewing machines, printing presses, and tram-cars, are being operated by it. It is estimated that at the present time there are at least 10,000 electric motors in operation in the United States.

Mr. Swinburne has published a new tragedy, which is, as usual, more poem than drama. The plot is of the "Fair Rosamond" type. The dramatic personæ are Loecrine, a King of Ancient Britain; Gwendolyn, his Queen; Estrild, a widowed German Queen; Sabina, the natural daughter of Loecrine and Estrild; Madan, son of Loecrine and Gwendolyn; a King of Wales, brother to Loecrine; a chamberlain, &c. This is "Fair Rosamond" a good deal complicated, and the piece is marked by some of the peculiar beauties, and perhaps more of the peculiar defects of the poet, and is not equal in power to his so-called plays, "Chastelar," "The Queen Mother," and "Bothwell."

A career, which even in a time unmarked by any great war, promised to be one of high distinction, but which was miserably marred by want of self-restraint, has just come to a premature close. The death of Baker Pasha (Col. Valentine Baker) sadly recalls to us the time when the deceased officer enjoyed the reputation of being, *facile princeps*, the first Cavalry officer in the British army. Idolized by his own crack regiment, the 10th Hussars, and deferred to by those contemporaries who were both in rank and ability nearest to being his equals, everything seemed to be before him; and, but for the wretched misdemeanor which ruined him, there is no doubt he would have been the officer selected to command the Cavalry in Egypt in 1882. It was impossible that he should fail of distinction in war, and a heavy defeat at the hands of the Arabs could no more damage his prestige, than could his errors and misfortunes alienate his friends. Whatever these were, he was a gallant soldier.

It is contemplated to erect a statue to Leif Ericsson, the discoverer of America in the year 1001. There is but little question of this historical fact, and there is reason to believe that Columbus knew something about it, if only as a legend. The statue is to be from the chisel of the noted American sculptress, Miss Whitney, who is, it is said, 70 years of age. Apropos of statues, some of which have been credited with remarkable powers of putting malevolence into practice—as in the old legend of the statue and the wedding ring—there is one modern one which exacts its full tribute of sacrifices, and at certain times particularly, in a continuous stream or flight. The great statue of Liberty, which guards and illumines New York harbor, attracts, by the brilliant light she holds aloft, birds, in the seasons of transit, by myriads. These unfortunates dash themselves against the lantern, and are found in the morning dead at its feet, by hundreds at a time. At least so says the inventive American newspaper man. We have, ourselves some doubts about such extensive flights of birds after dark.

## DIRECT TAXATION.

On many, and those very important points, we differ, *ad. calo*, from the Attorney-General of Nova Scotia; but when Mr. Longley addresses himself to the consideration of great topics, he is always worth reading. In the first place he manifests a certain breadth of view, on subjects such as the "English-Speaking World," which, if a little Utopian, yet invites consideration; and, in the second place, his speculations recommend themselves by a studied moderation of tone.

Mr. Longley has lately, in the columns of the *Week*, discussed the subject of Commercial Union, but it is not directly with that contention that we are just now concerned, beyond the unavoidable temptation to remark that, after stating at length the difficulties in the way of adjusting a common tariff satisfactory to both nations, which, he admits, are "substantial" and "practical," he desires it to "be kept in mind that this objection is one to form, not substance," and "a mere matter of detail."

We are quite unable to resist the conviction that Mr. Longley here directly reverses the fact, and that, by his own showing, the objection is to "substance," of which no "form" can alter the impracticable character.

But where we are in perfect accord with Mr. Longley, is in the opinion expressed by him in the following paragraph.—

This very difficulty suggests the folly of tariffs of all kinds. Who can doubt that the world would be better and the whole human race be brought nearer to the realization of a common brotherhood if there were no such things as custom-houses? Who also will undertake to controvert the fact that tariff revenues are the foundation of national extravagance and official jobbery? It is a vulgar impression that a revenue collected through the