

We none of us wish to forget our friends to whom the "dead bid welcome and we farewell," but we draw the line at wearing memorial hats. An enterprising hatter of our city is selling the Sir John Macdonald hat, which contains inside a portrait of the late Premier, with the dates of his birth and death, and outside a piece of black and white ribbon. If it is any consolation to those who regret Sir John's death to wear this hat, we hope they will take advantage of the opportunity to get it and make it a profitable scheme for the hatter.

The Russian Jews have at last been welcomed to one country on the earth. The first to permit these poor oppressed creatures to settle in his domains is the Sultan of Turkey. The Sick Man of the East has compassion, and in this matter has shown a strictly kind moral nature which is well worthy of national imitation. Everywhere else are these miserable outcasts repelled, but in the Grand Turk's country poor and rich are alike welcomed and are permitted to compete in trade and handicraft with the subjects of that potentate. It is nothing but utter inhumanity to repulse them from any country in the manner which many nations contemplate. We all agree in condemning the cruelty of the Russian Emperor who has banished them to a small district where they will ultimately starve, but we do not recognize the equivalent cruelty which we exhibit when we wish to restrict them to that unfavorable region, by making emigration impossible. Want of sympathy, which is detested in the disposition of an individual, should also be equally abhorred in national character, for the standards in each are the same. It has been truly said that the calamity of the Russian Jews has torn the false face of hypocrisy from the distracted countenance of this age of moral rottenness.

Special numbers are a feature of modern journalism not by any means to be neglected, when there are certain objects to be compassed. The *Mercury* published a special summer number, and intends to issue a big exhibition paper at the last of next month. In connection with this the *Mercury* announces:—"The Exhibition number of the *Mercury* will be sixteen full pages in size, will be printed on an extra quality of paper, and will be fittingly illustrated. The edition of 10,000 will be by far the largest edition of a Halifax paper ever issued, and its value to business men as a medium in which to advertise their goods is apparent." Now, we do not want to boast, but facts are stubborn things, and the fact that THE CRITIC has been in the special number business a good deal deeper than the *Mercury* ought not to be forgotten. The *Mercury* promises an edition of 10,000 copies, and says it will be by far the largest edition of a Halifax paper ever issued, but this claim cannot stand against the fact that in July, 1886, THE CRITIC issued a special number for circulation at the great Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London, the edition of which numbered 80,000. This number was a 24 page paper. In 1887 we issued a Jubilee number, which was also a 24 page paper, and the edition numbered 25,000. These two were somewhat larger editions than the *Mercury* promises, but to go back to the day of small things we remember we had also a 10,000 copy edition of the XMAS CRITIC in 1885. People said they weren't bad papers either.

Canadians will likely have cause to keep Thanksgiving Day most heartily this year. The prospects for an abundant harvest were never better in our broad Dominion, and the fact that in the Old World there is serious foreboding over the failure of the grain crops makes us deeply grateful that Providence has not seen fit to afflict us likewise. The Russian ukase forbidding the exportation of rye after the 27th inst. seriously handicaps Austria and Germany, and the price of wheat has in consequence gone up tremendously. It is difficult to determine whether the situation in Russia is really as bad as is represented, or whether the move may not be political in its import. In Berlin, where the ukase has created the utmost consternation, it was at first looked upon as the outcome of the Franco-Russian civilities, but the Government has since come to the conclusion that the Czar acted upon purely economic grounds. The crops in India are a failure, and the gaunt form of famine threatens to stalk through the land. The cause of this state of affairs is the terrible heat and drought and locusts. The Government will find its resources taxed to the utmost to provide food for the multitudes and preserve thousands from actual starvation, but as, fortunately, the condition of affairs can be ascertained thus early, and the crops of America promise so well, the countries of the Old World which are in want can look about them for supplies to make up the shortage in their commissariat. It will be well, if in this crisis, those who control the food supply do not make haste to be rich by taking advantage of the necessities of others less fortunate than themselves. It would be an iniquity to raise the price of grain at this time.

The dress reform movement in the United States, after being comparatively quiescent for some time, has received a fresh impulse. The Chautauqua Society has gone to the root of the matter, and the fact that one of the leaders of the movement counsels women to study photographs of the Venus of Milo, and Titian's nude figure in the picture of Sacred and Profane Love until their beauty is literally felt, strikes the keynote of the whole thing. This recommendation is rather startling as coming from the source it does, for most pious Methodist and Baptist women heretofore have had it instilled into them that physical beauty was deceitful, and statues of nude figures are shunned or looked upon with fiendish horror. In this they followed the example of the early Christians, who in their haste to avoid evils of a fleshly nature admonished women to conceal their beauty so that it

would not attract the beholder, but it is well that a healthier movement is underway. We have no higher ideals of beauty than are furnished by Greek art, and when this is recognized fully by women generally their emancipation from clothes which are physically injurious will speedily follow. "The sickly forms which err from honest nature's rule" will no longer be considered beautiful, and pinched waists and feet will not be common. While Chautauqua is holding up the Greek as a model, practical Boston women have organized—according to the *Post*—a dress reform club which intends to do something besides talk. It is seriously proposed, and the members of the club are pledged to appear in it, to adopt a sensible rainy day dress. The skirt is to be killed and reach a little below the knee, and high boots or gaiters will be worn. The membership of this club is 200, and the day on which the dress is to be worn is the first rainy Saturday in October. Business women cannot possibly dress in accordance with the present styles and be comfortable, and the simultaneous adoption of a change such as this by a large number of women will make the alteration comparatively easy.

There cannot be any doubt that the visit of the French Fleet to Cronstadt, and the reception given to its officers by the Czar, is an event of considerable importance. Its importance lies chiefly in the fact that, whether intentionally or not, it has, from the circumstances under which it took place, all the appearance of being a counter demonstration to the visit of the German Emperor to London. That such is the current impression in France is apparent from the articles of the French press, and it is by no means certain that that view is a wrong one. One thing, however, is perfectly clear. Alexander III has at length overcome his reluctance to be brought, as Emperor of Russia, into actual, visible, friendly and almost ostentatious relations with the French Republic. It is true that the word Republic was carefully suppressed in the programme of the ceremonies that took place at Cronstadt; the Czar on board the Imperial yacht, where he entertained the French Admiral, the French Ambassador, and other distinguished naval and diplomatic personages at luncheon, proposing the health of "President Carnot," but on the other hand, the long prohibited "Marschallaise" was played, not only in Russia, but in the presence of the Czar, who stood up while it was being performed. Strange though it may seem to western minds, it was no small matter for the Emperor of Russia to have consented to occupy so prominent and intimate an attitude towards a Naval Squadron carrying the colors of the French Republic. The very existence of a French Republic is an outrage on the political and theocratic doctrines on which the Russian Throne and the Russian Empire repose. Only reasons of state of supreme moment could ever have induced the Czar to have taken the course which he has taken. It is his reply to the renewal of the Triple Alliance. Russia cherishes great schemes, against the execution of which the Triple Alliance exists as a barrier. A powerful ally is therefore of inestimable value to Russia; and France is very powerful. Some little time ago, in the course of conversation, M. Jules Ferry said:—"A great deal may be done by diplomacy now-a-days, but it is a *sine qua non* that diplomacy has a backing of a couple of million bayonets. If there were a serious understanding between France and Russia their power would be very great, indeed, without its being necessary to draw the sword." France has long been holding out the hand of friendship to the Czar; and at last the Czar has grasped it. It is not alleged that Russia has concluded an express Treaty and Alliance with France, but it is manifest that Alexander III is willing to enter into such a compact at the suitable moment.

By the death of James Russell Lowell the United States loses one of the brightest lights of her literature. Not only in his own country will his death be mourned, but wherever his works are known kindred spirits will regret their loss. One by one the distinguished names of American literature are being carved on the tombs that cover the dust of departed greatness. Hawthorne, Motley, Bryant, Longfellow and Emerson have gone before; now the nation mourns the death of perhaps the grandest of them, and only two, John G. Whittier and Oliver Wendell Holmes, are left of the great New England group of singers. Mr. Lowell was not only a poet and critic, but he was a statesman and a diplomatist of the highest rank. He studied law in the early part of his life, but soon abandoned it for Belles Lettres. Mr. Lowell published his first book of verse when he was 22 years of age, and three years later "A Legend of Brittany," "Prometheus" and other poems, was produced. Other works, notably "The Vision of Sir Launfal," and "A Fable for Critics," were brought out about 1848, and then the "Bigelow Papers," his masterpiece, was published. Mr. Lowell went to Spain as Minister, and was afterwards transferred to the Court of St. James, where he remained for five years. The great English, Scotch and American Universities bestowed on him their highest honors, and he succeeded Longfellow as Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard University. He acted for some time as editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and subsequently for two years edited the *North American Review*. Mr. Lowell was an ardent abolitionist and a follower of Lincoln. Notwithstanding he was a Republican, in 1888 he supported Mr. Cleveland for the Presidency. As an eloquent and cultured speaker, a graceful and charming writer, an unrivalled humorist, and a man regarded with esteem and respect by all who came in contact with him, it is not strange that Mr. Lowell's demise should draw forth expressions of regret from all sides. The deceased statesman, diplomat and literateur closed his earthly career in his home in Cambridge on Wednesday, August 12th, at the age of 73 years. He had been twice married, but at the time of his death was a widower.

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