

leaped up around the main-mast and toward the mizzen, and onward to the poop deck. The dismal crowd watched in fearful suspense, for they knew that deep down in the hold lay hogsheads of the same fiery spirit that had set this hellish blaze a-going. At length there was a short preliminary burst, then another, then a fierce explosion, and the wail and outcry of perishing mortality went up to Heaven through the storm, as the victims of the Drink Demon were swallowed up in the yawning mouth of the relentless ocean.

## Biotic.

### HON. PIERRE FORTIN.

The Hon. Dr. Fortin has attained to a distinguished position in the politics of the Province of Quebec. He was born at Verchères, in this Province, in 1823. After taking a classic course in the Seminary of St. Sulpice, he studied medicine at McGill College, and in 1845 took a degree of M.D. In 1847, when the epidemic broke out among the immigrants of Grosse Isle, he hastened to tender his services to the Government, and labored with great fidelity among them until he was prostrated with typhus fever, from which he narrowly escaped with his life. During the civil disorders in Montreal, in 1849, Dr. Fortin was given command of a mounted police force, in the organization and discipline of which he displayed great energy and soldierly qualities. But it is in connection with the Gulf fisheries that Dr. Fortin has become best known, and in which he has rendered the most efficient services to the country. In 1852 he was appointed a stipendiary magistrate for the protection of the Canadian fisheries, and given command of a vessel to cruise through the Gulf. Upon his recommendation, the Government caused to be built at Quebec the beautiful and famous schooner "*Canadienne*," which he commanded for sixteen years. The "*Canadienne*" carried four guns, and commander Fortin constantly maintained the strictest discipline on board, and rendered most efficient and valuable service in the protection of the fisheries throughout that long period. He has ever taken a warm interest in the welfare of Canadian fishermen, with whom he is immensely popular and deservedly beloved. His political career began in 1867, when he was elected to the Dominion Parliament from the county of Gaspé. During five years he was Chairman of the Special Committee of the House of Commons concerning navigation and fisheries, and in knowledge of these subjects he has probably no superior in the Dominion. In 1873 he became a member of the Local Ministry under Hon. Mr. Ouimet, and took the portfolio of Crown Lands Commissioner. He was again elected from Gaspé at the last general elections, and upon the opening of the new Quebec Parliament was unanimously chosen Speaker of the Assembly, in which capacity he has given perfect satisfaction to both sides of the House.

In the exercise of the patronage which belongs to the office of Speaker, he has improved upon some of his predecessors in securing greater economy with equal efficiency; and, as presiding officer of the House, he has shown a firmness and exercised a discipline which are habitual with him. In politics, he is an old-fashioned constitutional Conservative, and it is believed he has no sympathy with the preposterous and revolutionary doctrines of the ultra-clerical party in this Province.