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We are sincerely rejoiced to note the resolutions, passed at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce held on Tuesday, for the amalgamation of that body and the Board of Trade under a title to be decided on in the course of further negotiations. The existence of the two bodies separately was a quite unnecessary division, and consequent weakening, of forces which it was especially desirable to condense and consolidate.

Our thanks are due to our subscribers for the promptness with which they have remitted their subscriptions and for the words of appreciation of the CRITIC so many of them have voluntarily expressed. One subscriber writes: "Dear CRITIC, I send you the names of six new subscribers, all of whom have had one or more copies of your paper and are pleased with its strong patriotic tone. If your canvasser comes this way I feel sure he can get many more, as our people appreciate a good thing and are willing to pay for it." Thanks friends, we will do our best to merit approval and give to our patrons a live, bright and newsy paper.

While sailors are succeeding in stilling the turmoil of the seas by pouring oil on the tempestuous waters, the policy of certain Provincial politicians seems to be far from emollient of friction between the Federal and Provincial Governments. In the recent creations of Queen's Counsels the Ontario Government has taken what seems to be a somewhat unnecessary step in giving precedence to the gentlemen appointed by Mr. Mowat over those nominated by the Dominion Government. This measure has certainly at first sight somewhat of an aggressive aspect, and tends to engender a suspicion that Mr. Mowat, having been uniformly successful in foregone controversies, is not averse to raising another issue which in this case would probably embrace the whole question of privilege in regard to the appointment of Q. C's. No great harm can ensue, yet it almost seems a pity that any not strictly necessary question of jurisdiction should be opened up.

The strictly political course of the recent French elections has no doubt gone to strengthen the Republic, but it will be generally recognized that in Franco-social methods will tell more effectually than even electoral successes. It is already said that "Madame Carnot has done more for the Republic by her tact and shrewd common sense than half-a-dozen cabinets. She is quietly bringing together all classes, and tinging down social angularities. Every year she secures a "big tree" at Christmastide, whether from Australia or California is of no consequence; it is the varied fruits that it bears that the children study. She this season adds to her own circle of juvenile friends, four hundred children—ten boys and ten girls under eleven years of age—selected from "the very poorest families" in the twenty wards of the city, to participate in the treat, and given in rooms once occupied by the Czar of Russia and the Napoleons. "Surely," it is remarked in the Paris letter of the *Week*, "this is Republicanism in the King's coaches."

We read another statement of the efficacy of pouring oil on troubled waters, which is this time attested by the officers of the United States Ship *Yorktown*, which in a tremendous gale derived comparative ease from the means used. These are described as follows:—We had several oil-bags on board (large bags filled with oakum and well saturated with oil.) These were thrown over the side, and from time to time a little oil was allowed to run through the weather scuppers. The oil spread out to an infinitesimally thin film over the water, and the tremendous seas which swept down towards the vessel, as they reached the limit of the oil subsided into a rolling swell, which lifted the ship up and then rolled away to leeward. A still more striking instance is recorded in connection with the rescue by boats of a British steamer in a tremendous sea mitigated by similar means, but we give the first named case, as it has the sanction of the reports of Naval Officers, which are perhaps more reliable than many unauthenticated paragraphs.

A good deal of activity of invention has of late been shown in the matter of horse-shoes, and it is much to be desired that some really practical result will come of it. We are so accustomed to the iron shoe that it would surprise many to learn the number of totally different modes and materials in use in many parts of the world, mostly it is true outside Christendom. The latest idea we have read of is a shoe in the composition of which paper is the chief constituent. It is said to adhere better to the hoof than the metal shoe, to be unaffected by the action of water, and to be more durable than the caoutchouc which it was once thought might supersede iron. It is stated to become roughened with wear and to be therefore less liable to slip, which is an important advantage. The extreme hardness which can be attained in the preparation of paper, as in "papier maché," is well-known, and renders it not improbable that the proposed material may be found to answer the purposes required, while it may not, perhaps, be quite so rigid as the metal.

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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 sentiment expressed in the articles contributed to this journal. Our readers are capable of arriving at their own conclusions as to the merits of any part of an article or contents of the paper; and after receiving his share of what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The results of the elections in New Brunswick only serve to prove how uncertain is the path of the politician. Premier Blair's government was so far popular that a majority of its supporters were elected by acclamation, while the first Lieutenant Provincial Secretary MacLellan with all his colleagues of St. John city and county were defeated. Of course this was the result of supplanting Mr. Peters in office by Solicitor General Ritchey; but it proves how narrow and local may be the interests upon which a politician may be defeated. Every one thought that when the general roll was called the popular Deacon would be there to answer to his name.

We draw the attention of the *St. John Educational Review* to a statement which has recently been made in several papers to the following effect:—"The star of Bethlehem is again to be visible in this year, being its seventh appearance since the birth of Christ. It comes once in 315 years, and is of wondrous brilliancy for the space of three weeks, then it wanes and disappears after 17 months. It will be a sixth star added to the five fixed stars in the constellation Cassiopeia while it remains in sight." We are free to confess that we are not posted on this phenomenon, but the astronomical notes of the *Review* are so sound and interesting, and evince so broad a grasp of astronomical knowledge, that we have no hesitation in seeking enlightenment at its hand.

The *Charlottetown Herald* of the 15th instant contains the report in full of the commissioners appointed to enquire into the defalcations discovered in the Charlottetown Land Office after the death of Mr. R. A. Strong, Assistant Commissioner, the defaulter. After deducting from the amount deficient (\$2983 03) the sum of \$676 49 chiefly paid by his son, but which included a month's salary (\$66 66) due to the father, the net deficit remains of \$2306 54. The opportunities of malfeasance appear to have been due to lack of proper oversight and vigilance in the department, and to loose systems both of audit and book keeping, defects for which the Commissioners suggest due and efficient preventives. Such a case should operate as a warning to all Government departments. If all public employees, especially the heads, do their duty conscientiously and firmly, such scandals could not by any possibility occur.