

in this old Wendeorian scribe, is doing a good work which deserves, however, to be given more publicity. Regular weekly meetings of the club are held, and many essays, touching upon the writings, and dealing with incidents in the life of the author, have been read, but so far as we are aware, no effort has been made to familiarize the public with their contents.

We have before alluded in these columns to Haliburton's "Bubbles of Canada," which, in view of the late Riel agitation, should be read by all those who take an interest in questions in which the French Canadians are concerned. Haliburton, in this work, clearly points out that England's necessity was Quebec's opportunity, for, at the time of the conquest of Canada, Britain reserved all the rights of the conqueror; and it was not until the passage of the Quebec Act, and the Ordinances of the Quebec Council, created by that Act, that the French in Canada succeeded in securing privileges which have and must continue to preserve their distinctive national character, language, and religion, despite the association with the Anglo-Saxon and mixed races by whom they are surrounded.

In this Dominion, which is essentially a British country, the Canadian French are, by a British Act of Parliament, permitted to retain and enjoy all the French customs, usages, and laws, relating to property; to continue the use of the French language as an official language, both in the Quebec Legislature and in the Federal Parliament and Federal Departments; and it has likewise been granted in Quebec, that when the English and French versions of the law clash, the French version shall prevail. Under the Canadian law, the Church of Rome in Quebec enjoys privileges equal to, if not greater, than those enjoyed in any other country. By law, she collects, what are known as tithes, but which really represent not one tenth, but one-twenty-sixth part of the produce of lands cultivated by her adherents; and she further has the entire and unrestricted control of the education of her youth, which in France is denied her. These and many other facts are intelligently discussed in the work referred to, and Haliburton evidently fully recognized that these privileges would tend to perpetuate the French-Canadians as a distinctive race. The liberal manner in which British Statesmen dealt with Quebec is in striking contrast to the spirit of her transactions with her American colonies. In the one case, a conquered people and an alien race were allowed to retain their laws, customs, language, and religion, while in the other, British subjects, many of them born in the British Isles, were refused their inherent rights, and were treated as if they were foreigners. No doubt, the lesson of the war of Independence had its effect in making Britain more lenient with her French subjects in Canada, but had the consequences been foreseen, it is probable that a less liberal, but more judicious course, would have been adopted.

As it is, the French are here to stay, and so are the Anglo Saxons; and it should be the object of Statesmen on both sides of politics to smooth down the race differences, and as far as possible obliterate the line which, since the Riel agitation has widened to the breadth of the British channel.

Haliburton's works have lately been published in cheap form, by an American publishing house, and are within the reach of those who desire a more intimate knowledge of Nova Scotia's wit, author, and historian.

#### DEATH IN THE MILK PAIL.

A few weeks ago, it was announced by cable that Dr. Klein, of London, had discovered the origin of scarlet fever, and that his investigation would probably lead to the stamping out of this wide-spread disease. From fuller information, we learn that experiments have for the past six months been going on which have resulted in the discovery that scarlet fever was spread through milk from a skin and udder disease of the cow, and that calves inoculated with fresh virus from the cow displayed all the symptoms shown by a person having scarlet fever, calves inoculated with cultivated virus seldom recovering. Cows suffering from this disease appear to enjoy their food as before, and yield an undiminished supply of milk. The micrococci fall into the pail during the process of milking, and according to Dr. Klein, they thrive and multiply in the fluid. No one has yet been willing to sacrifice himself by drinking the milk known to contain such micrococci, but it has been proved in several instances that scarlet fever, which became epidemic in certain sicknesses of London, was due to the milk supply having been obtained from cows afflicted by the disease spoken of. Dr. Klein says, that as the animals had a good appetite, and appeared in excellent health, their owners continued to dispose of their milk as usual, and were astonished when they learned that they had innocently been the means of spreading disease. It is thought that this new discovery will lead to important results, and ultimately to the extinction of a disease which yearly claims thousands of youthful victims.

#### DEMAGOGUEISM vs. REFORM.

We have endeavored, to the best of our ability, to lay before the readers of THE CRITIC, the disadvantages and drawbacks under which the toiler, who is obliged to work from early morn to late eve, is forced to labor. These disadvantages and drawbacks are, as we have pointed out, small in many respects, as compared with the difficulties that encountered the laboring man of a half century ago; but that there still exist grievances of a sufficiently serious nature to warrant the consideration of sober-minded men, must be quite evident to all. In this country, we have comparatively few capitalists or men of leisure, most of us being obliged to work, and work hard, with brain or muscle, to keep the wolf from the door; but in Britain and the United States, capital is not as generally diffused as in Canada. It is centered in the hands of a comparative few, and the masses of the people are, to a greater or less extent, held in serfdom by the possessors; but while we endorse any legitimate movement that will tend to improve the condition of our brother man, here or elsewhere, and while we

are willing to aid in securing for the laboring classes that recreation and freedom from toil which best conduces to their welfare, we have and must continue to object to the methods employed by some laborers to secure the domination of muscle without respect to the rights of others. The boycott, which we believe is honestly condemned by all skilled mechanics and artisans, is an instrument which threatens the individual liberty of which we all boast. Its enforcement by any organization is contrary to the law of the land, and to the principles laid down by Christian teachers. If it were to be allowed, the working classes would, in the end, suffer greater hardships than those whom it is aimed against. It is at a time such as this, when class is being arrayed against class, occupation against occupation, and man against man, that we best realize the political value of courage. The demagogues who seek to obtain the labor vote, may hope by inflaming the public mind to secure a temporary triumph, but men who believe that a day's work is worth an honest day's pay, and a day's pay is worthy of an honest day's work, will not long agree to support politicians of this stamp.

We believe in free schools, free public libraries, the Saturday half-holiday, shorter hours of labor, and many like reforms that directly benefit the working man, but we object to the tyranny of organization, the use of illegal means, and the subterfuges that are sometimes resorted to by those who claim to be the friends, but who are in fact the enemies of all such reforms.

#### THE SPIRIT OF INVENTION.

In view of the immense fortunes which have been made in late years upon patents, both useful and useless, the inventive genius of our people has been greatly stimulated; and almost every man we know has intimated to us that he has in his mind an idea, which, if carried out and patented, would be worth thousands of dollars; but while money has undoubtedly been made by many inventors, it somehow always appears to be outside the circle of one's friends that we hear of success. Not long since, a friend showed us a model of a piece of furniture, for which he predicted there would be a great demand. The article was patented, and the enthusiasm of the inventor immediately cooled down. It is the patenting of little things that brings in the most money. Here are a few instances. An idle fellow, who amused himself by throwing a ball to which a rubber string was attached for the pleasure of attempting to catch it on the elastic returning it to his hand, was induced to patent the toy, it became popular, and his royalty on the manufacture made him a millionaire. His patent has long since expired, and the Congress of the United States was too dignified to renew it. The man who transferred the ratchet lacing from shoes to ladies' gloves, also made a barrel, although the idea was not strictly original. About the richest patent in the world is the bell-punch that is in use on street cars, and for similar purposes the world over. The proprietor and patentee owns every one of these tell-tales that exists in the world. He has never sold a single one, and his rental from them is something incalculable.

Forty years ago, the description of all the patents issued in the United States filled a book of one inch in thickness. Those now issued in a single month would fill a volume of more than a foot in thickness. The United States patent office issues between 400 to 500 patents weekly, having upon the registrar 350,000 distinct descriptions of patents. The spirit of invention still fills the public mind, but the lack of originality is yearly becoming more marked. The patents which are now taken out being little more than improvements upon articles previously patented.

#### IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

The tone of the London press in discussing the prospects and feasibility of the federation of the Empire must be satisfactory to those Colonists, who while favoring the idea of federation, are strongly imbued with loyalty to the land in which they live. There was a time when Colonial affairs created very little interest in the Mother Country, a time when the requirements of the Colonies were shamefully overlooked by the authorities in Downing street; but that day has passed away, and has given place to an intense desire to conciliate and draw together the scattered sections of the Empire into a homogeneous federation. The Imperial Federation League has done good work in educating the public mind in Britain upon this important question, but it is probable that the interest which is now being evinced in the movement has received its great impetus from the Indian and Colonial Exhibition now being held in London. Here, our fellow subjects in the Mother Country are taught to realize for the first time the immense resources and rapid progress of the Colonies. Here, they are taught to understand that greater Britain has already achieved a high place among the commercial, industrial, and agricultural countries of the world. And here, too, they learn that the policy which would drive these young and strong Colonies to such independence, would be suicidal to the interests of the British Isles. So far as the British public is concerned, the question of federation has passed from the abstract to that of the concrete; but in the Colonies, no public expression as to its desirability has ever yet been made. And this is not surprising. Colonists, as a rule, have little time for the consideration of speculative politics; they deal with actualities; and while they are loyal to the Queen, and revere the old flag, their interests are more closely centered in that which is transpiring in their immediate neighborhood. To force federation upon the Colonies at the present time, would surely result in disintegration of the Empire. Federation cannot be of mushroom growth. If it comes, it will be brought about gradually, without friction. Rome was not built in a day, nor has the Irish question been settled in twenty-four hours. Because no feasible plan of federation has yet been suggested, it does not follow that one cannot be evolved; but its evolution will be like the growth of the Empire—slow, but sure.