

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

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Those who wish to secure pleasant and profitable reading matter for the winter evenings should note our occasional offer which appears on page twelve. For \$2.00 in cash we undertake to send *The Critic* to any subscriber for one year, supplying him in addition with forty five of the most readable of readable books. Those who are renewing their subscriptions, as well as new subscribers, should take advantage of this offer.

Gaspe, P. Q., and Cariboo, B. C., have returned Members of Parliament favorable to the present Government.

Mr. W. H. Ray, ex-M. P. for the County of Annapolis, has been appointed a member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia.

The next civil service entrance examination will take place on the second Tuesday in May, and qualifying examination will begin on the 4th of May.

Sanford Fleming has been appointed to represent Canada along with Sir Alexander Campbell at the Imperial Federation conference, to be held in London next month.

It is reported in Ottawa official circles that Sir John Macdonald will visit Washington before Parliament meets, to confer with Secretary Bayard on the fishery question.

The Stewarts, who are connected with the failure of the Maritime Bank of St. John, have brought a suit against the *Montreal Star* for libel. They claim \$100,000 damages.

Mortuary statistics for the Dominion show there were 54 deaths in Halifax in February, 43 in St. John, 13 in Charlottetown, 15 in Chatham, 6 in Fredericton, and 39 (?) in Montreal.

A temperance convention has been in session in Halifax during the present week, for the purpose of discussing and furthering temperance legislation. A resolution favoring prohibition, is to be forwarded to the Dominion Parliament.

The railway receipts on the two principal lines of Canada continue to give a good showing. For the first nine weeks of the current year they were \$200,000 more on the Grand Trunk, and \$128,000 more on the Canadian Pacific than in the same period in 1886.

Stewart & Co., of London and St. John, N. B., have taken action for \$500,000 against the Bank of British North America. Plaintiffs allege that the bank refused to honor their check while a balance stood to their credit, and that this caused the damage sued for. The suit arises out of the failure of the Maritime Bank.

The Quebec government advocates an interprovincial congress, at which all the provincial governments shall be represented. The avowed object of the proposers is to examine into the financial relations between the federal and provincial governments for the purpose of devising some means of securing larger subsidies than are now received.

Through the negligence of a despatcher a serious collision between a coal train and a special freight took place near Bathurst on Saturday. The engineers and firemen succeeded in jumping to the ground before the locomotives collided, which they did almost immediately after the hands sprang from the train. Twelve cars containing general produce, and a number of loaded coal hoppers, with the two locomotives, were destroyed by the collision.

A monster public meeting in the interests of temperance was convened at the Academy of Music on Monday evening last—the mayor occupying the chair. Upon the platform were a large number of city clergymen, members of the Legislature, and representatives of the temperance organizations and Women's Temperance Union. At least fifteen hundred persons gathered to hear the speeches and endorse the resolutions which were put to the meeting. Resolutions condemnatory of the traffic in liquor, favoring restrictive legislation, encouraging the organization of women against the growth of intemperance and asserting their right to the franchise, and pledging those present to support the act which has recently come into operation, and to take steps to elect, as members of the City Council, only tried temperance men, were spoken to at length, put to the meeting, and carried unanimously. Rev. Mr. Cline said: "The records of our police and criminal courts pour into our ears, in language louder than words, the story of the terrible effects of the use of liquor, and yet he thought we did not fully understand the matter in all its dread reality." Rev. Mr. Teasdale said: "No law is perfect, but our latest license law is the best we ever had." Rev. F. R. Murray contended that the principle of the drinking system was radically wrong, and that the so-called vested interests of the comparatively few who are engaged in the liquor business must give way to the good of the people at large. Mr. Gayton, M.P.P., said his watchword to the meeting would be: "Hold what you have got, take no retrograde step, but press forward for greater things in the future." Dr. Burns declared that "strong drink is the curse of Canada. It is filling not only our prisons and asylums, but our graves as well." Dr. Partridge said that the liquor trade was "a failing business, and one daily growing in ill repute, while a good temperance sentiment is steadily increasing." Dr. Hole said "the law must be carried out, only waiting for a better one ere long." Rev. Mr. Huestis appealed for at least five hundred young men to aid in the temperance cause. Miss Johnston, president of the W. C. T. U., read an admirable paper. Their object was not to obtain high license or low, not to have liquor sold by pints or quarts, but the total extermination of the liquor traffic. Appropriate remarks were made by his worship the mayor and the Rev. Mr. Brown, and a most successful meeting was brought to a close.

Quebec is in financial difficulties. Her funded debt already amounts to \$18,000,000 and her government foreshadows a further loan of \$4,000,000. Ontario, on the other hand, has a surplus of \$6,000,000.

Major Tilton, Deputy Minister of Fisheries, states that the steamer *Lansdowne* would not be in commission for the fisheries protection service this year. A new steamer, the *Triumph*, of 105 tons' register, has recently been purchased for this service. She will have the usual armament and about twenty-five men of a crew. Negotiations for the purchase of other vessels are pending.

Party newspapers display an ominous silence regarding certain rumors of political changes, according to their leaning to the Conservative or Liberal side. Liberal journals assert that Sir John A. MacDonald is about to relinquish the Premiership in favor of Sir Charles Tupper. The truth or falsity of which rumor is neither affirmed nor denied by the Conservative press. Conservative journals, on the other hand, declare that the Hon. Edward Blake is about to resign the leadership of the Liberal party, and that he is to be succeeded by the Hon. Oliver Mowatt, Premier of Ontario. This declaration is received in silence by the Liberal press. The public will probably be let into the party secrets as soon as it is convenient for the recognized party organs to take cognizance of these rumors.

The Orpheus Club, in the concerts given on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings of this week, proved, by its rendition of Grunod's sacred trilogy, "The Redemption," that the time since its last public appearance had been profitably employed in the study and practice of this glorious composition. The trilogy, as the name implies, consists of three parts, lyrically setting forth the three great facts on which depends the existence of the Christian church, viz. the passion and the death of the Saviour; His glorious life on earth from His resurrection to His ascension; The spread of Christianity in the world through the mission of the apostles. These three parts of the present trilogy are preceded by a prologue on the Creation, the fall of our first parents, and the promise of a Redeemer. The composer, with a master hand, has depicted the foregoing scenes in a manner well calculated to stir the hearts of deeply religious persons, and to impress the less thoughtful with the truth of Scripture. The music, especially in the first and second parts, is strange and decidedly original; but through it all, there is a deep vein of pathos which appeals to one's sensibilities. In the third part there is one glorious solo for a soprano voice, and several magnificent choruses, the closing one "The Word is flesh become," being truly superb. We heartily congratulate the Club on the decided progress it has made since its last appearance in public. The parts are now much more evenly balanced, and some of the other defects then noted, have in a great measure been removed. It may be the effect of our northern climate, but it is to be regretted that the sopranos, when singing above the fourth space, are obliged to force their tones, which not infrequently results in their being off pitch. We have always understood that the club had a superfluity of bass voices, but to judge from the performances of "The Redemption," two or three more basses are yet required, in order to make a perfectly even balance of parts. Among the soloists Miss Phelan, Mrs. Taylor, Mr. C. J. Ross, Mr. Gillis, Prof. Currie, and Dr. Slayter, rendered their respective parts in a most creditable manner, several of the other soloists doing fairly well, while the remainder still require months of coaching before they will be able to do their parts even common justice. Mr. T. J. Payne deserves a word of praise for the manner in which he played the accompaniments, which were uniformly, tastefully and correctly rendered. Mr. C. H. Porter, Jr., has produced "The Redemption" in Halifax despite great drawbacks, and the community owe him a debt of gratitude for his untiring zeal in endeavoring to cultivate a taste for works of such real merit.

Wolves are unusually numerous this winter in parts of Dakota.

Nearly \$25,000,000 worth of candy was made in California last year.

New York City pays a half million a year in pensions to disabled policemen and firemen.

Forty thousand bamboo canes are among the cargo of a vessel from Japan discharging at Portland, Maine.

Twenty years ago not 30,000 colored people in the South could read. Now the colored readers number over a million.

The citizens of Oswego, Kansas, raised \$7,000 recently in half a day for the purpose of sinking a shaft in search of gas and coal.

No rains have fallen in Crawford County, Kansas, for sixteen months, it is stated, and water sells there for forty cents a barrel.

Several towns and cities along the Missouri River are preparing to blow up ice-gorges with dynamite in the event of floods this spring.

Jay Gould proposes to have a new union railway station, a free bridge and no end of tracks at St. Louis. The station will cost \$1,000,000.

Indians in the eastern part of Nevada eat the flesh of the rabbits they capture, make robes of their skins and get a bounty on their scalps.

Many Michigan cities and towns have abandoned standard time, and it is thought the Legislature will repeal the law that authorized its adoption.

Bloomington, Ill., has paved seven miles of streets with tough, durable bricks. The pavement is smooth, easy for horses, and less noisy than stones.

A successful experiment of heating cars with exhaust steam from the engine has been made on the New York, New Haven & Hartford railroad in Connecticut.

New York's claim to the possession of the youngest female pickpocket is disputed by Chicago, in which city Annie Kedlee, aged eight years, has been arrested as an expert thief.