

women. If there is no truth in what we have said, how is it that the younger portion of the community is so divided in its opinion as to the military element in society? Our young women—at least the majority of them—are great admirers of gold lace, and the wearer always inspires a certain degree of awe among them. If he dance well or ill, sing artistically or indifferently, or talk sense or nonsense, he is all the same "awfully nice"; his society is courted and he is wooed as persistently as though he were a genius with untold wealth. But what about the young men of Halifax? They have learned from bitter experience that in society they must seek a lower grade than that occupied by their sisters—they realize the ignominious position in which they are placed owing to the army worship of their mothers and sisters, and most of them, after a vain attempt to battle against the overwhelming odds of a bright uniform and unlimited small talk, abandon society in disgust, and seek in lower grades, or in the clubs and hotels, for that social intercourse which to young men is second nature.

These remarks, it is true, are not applicable to each and every family in Halifax, but, in the main, they are correct. There are of course many young men who are fortunate in having mothers and sisters possessed of sufficient common sense to enable them to realize the utter absurdity of this military craze, but that these are the exception and not the rule is proved from the fact that most of our young men marry girls who are not residents of Halifax. There are many other facts in connection with Halifax society which we may touch on in future issues, in the meantime our correspondent who desires to have his letter published, will have his wish gratified if he kindly sends his name in confidence to this office. We have referred to this matter of Halifax society, not from any desire to depreciate the officers stationed here, but rather to give voice to that which everybody has long thought of, long talked of, but has never seen in print.

ART IN NOVA SCOTIA.

Present indications point to a marked increase in the attention given in this Province to painting. The signs of the times are encouraging in this particular at least. The collection of pictures by colonial artists at the late exhibition in London attracted very favorable notice; among the colonies Canada stood well to the front; and Nova Scotia could well venture to hold up her head among her sister Provinces. And, in fact, there are few parts of the world in which nature has done more towards fostering the pursuit of art than she has done in Nova Scotia. In the north and east of the Province the artist finds in endless variety all the blending beauties of lake and river, hill and dale, solemn primeval forest and nestling cheerful homestead. Around the southern coast the lover of the bold in nature can witness the awful play of old ocean among the rocky islands and frowning cliffs, or take refuge in the land-locked cove along whose high, rocky shores clusters the neat and cosy fishing village. There are few towns in Nova Scotia within an hour's walk of which a painting class cannot find abundant material for sketching from nature. Certainly Halifax is highly favored in this respect. The long, narrow peninsula, held in close embrace by two beautiful arms of the sea, is rich in the picturesque. Leaving the peninsula, a short drive in almost any direction will bring the artist to so many good subjects for sketching that his only difficulty is selection.

With such advantages for the cultivation of art, it is encouraging to notice the rapid increase in the number of art students. Most of these engage in this study as amateurs, but there is no reason why many of these amateurs should not develop into distinguished professional painters. It seems to be a prevalent opinion that artists are generally poor. This may be true of the majority, for necessarily a great number of them have not sufficient natural talent to produce really valuable works. Again, artists and poets are proverbially poor financiers; and where we find an exception he is generally well fed. The poorly clad physician, the bailiff-haunted journalist, and the lawyer who cheats famine through sheer force of habit, are not unheard of in these days; yet these scarecrows are not enough to frighten people from entering medicine, journalism or law. There are prizes in all professions, and in none are they more liberal than art. It is estimated that the French painter, Meissonier, earns at least \$100,000 a year, and has done so for the last thirty years. True, this is the pay of a genius; but where the genius is so well rewarded, surely the talented need have no fears.

TIME RECKONING FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The thorough and exhaustive paper on the subject of Time Reckoning for the Twentieth Century, read by Mr. Sandford Fleming before the Royal Society of Canada at Ottawa last May, is the basis of an interesting and vigorous article published in a late number of the *Century Magazine*, and written by Principal Grant, of Queen's College.

Mr. Fleming has devoted some ten or twelve years to the study of the subject, and his investigations and conclusions are so convincing that the Smithsonian Institute has accepted the paper, and it will be circulated among all the learned societies and institutions of the two hemispheres. It is a most searching and interesting work, and it is a satisfaction to know that the ideas put forward by Mr. Fleming are meeting with such appreciation and approval at the hands of scientific men everywhere. Principal Grant asks, "Is there not a necessity for reform in our system of time reckoning?" and then proceeds to show that scientific men and railway managers are generally convinced that there is, but that they fear that the general public may not be prepared for what at first sight may appear a too radical change. This feeling is only too natural, as all great reforms must be brought about by patient instruction of the masses in the details and benefits of the proposed change. In the end there can be but little doubt that Mr. Fleming's views will be incorporated in the new system. A reasonable time for inves-

tigation is allowed, as Mr. Fleming suggests the beginning of the twentieth century as a favorable date, on which to make the starting point for the general adoption of the Cosmic day of twenty-four hours counted continuously. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company has already adopted the system, and Principal Grant pertinently asks why the general public should not sooner put it into practice. It must come some day, and the sooner the better. Mr. Fleming aims at uniformity in time reckoning, and the idea is based on common sense. He argues that there are no simultaneous days on the earth's surface except those on the same meridian, and as the different days are always in the various stages of advancement, difficulties must necessarily result in assigning the precise period when an event takes place. There can be no certainty whatever in regard to time unless the precise geographical position be specified as an essential fact in connection with the event described. Under these circumstances it must be conceded that our present system of notation is most defective. Certainly it is unscientific and possesses every element of confusion. It produces a degree of ambiguity which, as railways and telegraphs become greatly multiplied, will lead to complications in social and commercial affairs, and prove an increasing hindrance to human intercourse.

Dr. Grant says, in supporting Mr. Fleming's conclusions, "to show how unscientific is the system of reckoning time by our position on the earth's surface, we have only to reflect that every meridian converges at the pole. If we ever get there we can take our choice between the days of Berlin, Paris, London, New York, Winnipeg, San Francisco, Peking, Calcutta, and as many others as we like, and live at the same moment of time in the different hours, days, months, or years of different places."

As the new method is now in actual operation on the Canada Pacific, the general public will have full opportunity to test its merits, and we think its universal adoption cannot long be stayed. "If," as Mr. Fleming says, "the reforms of 46 B.C., and 1582 A.D., owed their origin to the dominant necessity of removing confusion in connection with the notations which existed in the then conditions of the human race, in no less degree is a complete reform demanded by the new conditions which are presented in this age. The conclusions of the Washington conference make provision for the needed change, and they will in all probability be held by future generations to mark an epoch in the annals of the world not less important than the reforms of Julius Cæsar and Pope Gregory."

Mr. Fleming is the father of standard time, and this reminds us that the Intercolonial seems determined to bring the system into disrepute. Instead of adopting the 60th, their proper meridian, as a standard they have adopted the 75th, which is three quarters of an hour slower than the true time at Halifax, and an hour slower than the standard time of the city. This creates most vexatious and unnecessary confusion. If the 60th meridian had been adopted, as it should have been, the important fact that the Intercolonial reaches the most easterly point on this continent would have been duly emphasized; but, as it is, the claims of the seaport terminus, where connections have to be made with ocean steamers, are ignored, and Boston time adopted. It is a grave mistake, and the sooner it is corrected the better.

A FASHIONABLE DISEASE.

Nervousness has become such a prevalent disease in Germany that efforts are now being made to enlighten the public as to its causes and remedies. But nervousness is not peculiar to Germans. We have in the Province of Nova Scotia, hundreds if not thousands of persons who are suffering from nervous disorders, but who imagine themselves the victims of some organic disease, although their medical attendant assures them to the contrary. The professional features of the matter under consideration are not within our province, and we may well leave the symptoms and remedies to the medical practitioner, but its causes should be more widely known, in order that its effects may be avoided. It is an undeniable fact that nervousness is an hereditary disorder and that its germs are most strongly developed in the offspring of consanguineous marriages, but the abnormal number of persons afflicted with nervousness in this age may be traced to the system adopted in modern schools. It cannot be denied that the demands made upon the pupil are severe: in many cases too severe. The children who lack the capacity to assimilate the requisite quantity of the educational aliment have to contend with difficulties quite out of proportion to their powers, and, having to pay the cost in their physical health and mental elasticity, contribute the chief contingent to the ranks of the nervous.

Among adults the overworked business or professional man and the worried newspaper men are always more or less nervous, but it is worthy, not work, that causes the mischief. And those who have strength enough of will to keep mentally cool under pressure of work in the office, or under the trials and vexations of housekeeping, are rarely affected by this modern disorder.

The excessive use of alcoholic beverages or tobacco also unquestionably produces nervousness. And as this disorder frequently impairs mental power and bodily energy of men, those whose business or professional calling require intellect and endurance, should bear the fact in mind.

Almost every man and woman is more or less of a hypochondriac, imagination providing most of us with some chronic disease, which appears so soon as our thoughts are turned outwards. Nervousness is really the cause of the trouble and in such instances is usually engendered by want of occupation. Underwork and overwork are equally objectionable, the happy medium in occupation should be aimed at, excess avoided and the mental and physical powers of youth taken into consideration. Were these wholesome truths properly regarded, we should have less irritableness to contend with and greater capacity to enjoy the bounties of Providence.