

The expenditure of our neighbors within the fiscal year for their war pensions amounts to \$90,000,000. The Commercial Union papers, which advocate a great American Zollverein, may perhaps think—or pretend to think—that the privilege of contributing their share to this trifle would be a benefit to Canada, but it is more than probable that they will experience considerable difficulty in converting the public to their remarkable views.

In a letter to the Royal Geographical Society, Stanley has given an account of the poison by which Lt. Stairs, and many others of his followers, were wounded and caused great suffering, four, indeed, dying from its effects. It appears that it is "formic acid." The bodies of the red ant are dried, powdered, cooked in palm oil, and smeared on the points of the arrows. Formic acid in its pure state is so corrosive that it produces blisters on the skin, and there is now little doubt that it is the deadly irritant by which so many men have been lost with such terrible suffering.

Both Lord Wolseley's pen and tongue are sometimes apt to bring him into trouble. In a recent article in the *North American Review* he has been criticising the conduct of Mr. Jefferson Davis, when President of the Confederacy. Mr. Davis retorts by speaking of Lord Wolseley as an "itinerant foreigner," an expression which does not seem to have much point—who has published matters which, if he received at all, he must have received in courteous confidence from General Lee. Mr. Davis attacks Lord Wolseley's "hypocritical pretensions," his "arrogance," and the "libellous statements," evolved from "his own internal consciousness." Nor are Lord Wolseley and Mr. Davis the only leaders of men on the war-path. The redoubtable General Butler sees fit to charge Admiral Porter with cowardice during Farragut's advance upon New Orleans in 1862. This also is, as Sir Lucius O'Trigger observed, "a very pretty quarrel as it stands." Admiral Porter is generally known as an officer who has done good service to his country, and it will strike most people that General Butler has taken a long time, 27 years, to find out the Admiral's recalcitrancy.

We regret to learn from the orders for the annual drill that the total strength authorised for drill this year is less than for some years past, there not being funds available for more than the number specified. The appropriation admits of the training of 53 per cent. only of the total strength. As the city corps are allowed to drill every year, many rural corps which did not drill in 1888, will not be called out for 1889 either, and will therefore have but one season's drill in three years. One in two years was bad enough, but one in three is atrocious. How the force can be expected to keep up its efficiency under such a crushing discouragement passes comprehension. The disappointment will be great as many corps have put themselves to expense in preparations. It is time the militia made themselves heard in this matter. The whole force is moderate in number, its cost is small considering its importance, and the ministry ought to have the courage to insist on a vote sufficient to maintain efficiency, as the extra amount required would be inconsiderable. If this timidity characterizes the ministry and the Department much longer we shall, in truth, find ourselves with nothing but a force on paper.

We have not yet seen a description, in detail, of the new nailless horse-shoe, but it continues to be noticed in the English papers with increased confidence of assertion as to its success. "We have examined the shoe," says the *Financial Bulletin*, "in all its details, and are convinced that the inventors possess a patent which will revolutionize the horse-shoeing industry." The shoe has been well tested in one department of the army, and found to be most satisfactory. The fastenings are said to be simplicity itself, and the shoe is easily adjusted and removed. If this be borne out, it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of the invention. All the evils arising from pricking in shoeing will vanish, and the saving in wear and tear of horse-flesh will be enormous. We should imagine also that much of the lameness incidental to contracted hoofs, under the constriction of nails, will likewise disappear. The office of the invention is at 20 Budge Row, Cannon Street, E. C., London, G. B. The sooner some one takes it up and makes it known in Canada the better. It has been exhibited at the last Horse Show at the Agricultural Hall, and many great authorities on horses gave it their unqualified approval.

Students of ancient science and philosophy are well aware how deep, if often mistaken, was the knowledge of "them of old time," and how astonishing were the originality and mental vigor and activity of men like Aristotle, Lucretius, and Lucan. Among other matters which we are accustomed to think we know all about, while the ancients were floundering wearily in the morasses of superstition is geography. Sometimes, no doubt, they mystified themselves with such wild speculations as what the earth stood on, but they seem to have had a more than fair knowledge of the geography of Africa, about much of which we are ourselves still in considerable uncertainty. No modern map previous to the discoveries of Speke & Baker laid down the sources of the Nile with anything like the correctness of Ptolemy. In the map of this father of cartography, the Nile was delineated (A. D. 150) as rising in two lakes, the positions of which roughly approximate those of Lakes Victoria and Albert Nyanza. There is also a Spanish Globe now in Paris which is supposed to date from the sixteenth century. In it the great northern bend of the Congo extends north of the equator, giving it practically the position assigned to it by Stanley. Before the discoveries of Stanley, no nineteenth century map located the Congo so accurately as did some maps of the seventeenth and the early part of the eighteenth century.

So much dissatisfaction has been felt and expressed at the two cent rate imposed by the new postal regulations on drop letters, that, though the announcement certainly comes rather late in the day, the public will be glad to learn that it is to be viewed in the light of an experiment. The American system is a two cent rate all around, and it is intimated that the Postmaster-General adopted that tax on drop letters—the weight of which is likewise extended to an ounce—in order to ascertain if it would yield a sufficient amount to warrant a further assimilation to the United States system in reducing the three cent rate on inland letters also to two cents. This places the matter in a more reasonable light, though it is difficult to understand why it could not have been explained at first. The Postal Department is a specialty, inasmuch as its intent is, in a greater and different degree than any other, to minister directly to the accommodation of the public. Reduction of rates almost always at first tends to reduction of revenue, and until the increase of correspondence compensates, as it usually does after a while, a deficit may be expected, and will always be looked upon by the people with tolerance on account of the nature of the service, and the public convenience involved. We do not think, therefore, that the Postmaster-General need have been afraid.

The astonishing amount of bribery resorted to in the late Presidential election, seems to have attracted the serious attention of thinking people in the United States to the abuses to which their electoral system is open, and to the discreditable exhibition made by the Republic. Several States, alarmed at the general corruption, have adopted more stringent laws against bribery and intimidation. In most cases systems somewhat akin to the Canadian have been adopted, but the State of Massachusetts has a measure which goes further. It provides that every political campaign committee which expends over \$100, shall have a treasurer, through whose hands shall pass all the money received or expended, who shall keep a detailed account of all receipts and expenditures, and shall, within twenty days after election, "file with the secretary of the commonwealth a return, setting forth all the committee's receipts and a detailed statement of all its expenditure and disbursements." A similar detailed statement is required from the person elected to Congress or any state office. These statements, as a matter of course, are to be on oath. These provisions are similar in principle to those which have proved so effective in England. This system provides so simple and direct a check upon undue and corrupt expenditures and so ready a means of tracing such expenditures that it is a wonder that it is not adopted in substance by every State and Province which is really in earnest in striving to secure purity of elections.

It is to be feared that the ways of the Government of Manitoba are far from being straight. The London *Financial Bulletin* devotes a column and a half to the specific and detailed accusation of repudiation on the part of Mr. Greenway, of the engagements of Manitoba in connection with the bonds of the Hudson's Bay Railway. In 1886, the Legislature of Manitoba passed an Act, which received the assent of the Governor-General, guaranteeing for 25 years interest at 4 per cent. upon an issue of 4½ million dollars of bonds of a railway to connect Winnipeg with Hudson's Bay. A portion of the funds were obtained in England on the security of bonds, which bear on their face the statutory guarantee of interest. The bonds were issued, the first 30 miles of the road were built, when, on the second of March last, the Government of Manitoba, without a word of warning, repudiated the obligation to pay interest. Mr. Greenway merely gives as a reason for cancelling the guarantee, that two years since a route to water, so as to compete with the Canadian Pacific, was desirable; but that the Northern Pacific connection with Manitoba, by way of the Red River Railway, has since diminished the importance of the railway to Hudson's Bay. "A more cynical repudiation of a public pledge by a responsible Minister," says the English paper, "we are unable to recall." This sort of thing, taken together with some episodes which preceded it, do not convey a favorable impression of the moral sense of Mr. Greenway and his cabinet, and the sooner Manitoba begins to take thought for her reputation the better.

The term *Chrestos*, referred to in our last week's issue as an example of the agadic method, was one which both among the Egyptians and the Greeks had a peculiarly sacred meaning. With the former its equivalent was the word *nafri*, which was expressed by the sign of an oval, surmounted by a cross, and was especially applied to Osiris, who, in the Egyptian mysteries, was credited with attributes essentially Christ-like. It had a similar religious sense in Greek mythology, the *heroi chrestoi* being in fact the saved or redeemed souls, the Pagan saints. The meaning was Good, Excellent, Gracious, Holy, and when Christianity, which was chiefly promoted in the Greek language, was pushing its way onward, the term became for a time almost synonymous with *Christian*. Between the words *Christos* and *Chrestos*, when uttered according to the ancient way of pronouncing, there was little, if any, perceptible difference, the former of course signifying "anointed." Consequently, according to the agadic idea, he who was anointed (Christ) was good and gracious (Chrest). Lactantius, Jerome, Justin Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria, with many other of the Fathers, recognize the fact that the Christians were accustomed to get the credit of being good and gracious because the word *Christos* had in effect the same sound as *Chrestos*, and the interwoven idea so prevailed that it was not at all unusual to write the words Christ and Christian with c in place of i, and this is fully confirmed by search through the Christian epitaphs tabulated by Boeckh. In a partial list of these, numbering 1287, there is not an instance of earlier date than the third century wherein the word Christ is not written Chrest or else Chreist. Of course, as time went on, the association of ideas gave way to the more correct distinctive denomination.