

Just try whether even if, at first, the A minor concerto or Bach's fugues fail to draw Mrs. Manners' "Robin Adair" is not as much appreciated as the "Broadway Swell" or "Ta-ra-ra, Boom-de ay" and their idiotic kindred.

The Civil Service has at last, following the lead of other services, elsewhere, been supplied with an "organ" "The Civil Service Review," which made its bow on the 1st instant. Its programme is moderate and conciliatory. It proposes to be absolutely non-political, impartial and free from any national or religious bias. It promises to treat matters relating to the Service with truth, fairness and discretion and with reference purely to the principles they may involve. It calls attention to the fact that the Service is, to a great extent, the executive of the government of the day and trusts that the spirit so suggested will be met with corresponding consideration tending to sympathetic and harmonious working and to mutual respect. It states that its characteristics will be courtesy in appeal, moderation in argument and reasonableness in request. This is a good platform, and the venture should receive the hearty approval and support not only of members of the Service themselves, but of the country at large, and of its representatives in Parliament; last, but chief of all, of the Ministers of the Crown, in whose power, for use or abuse these men lie, and who are for the time, the principal performers on the stage whose minor parts are filled by the great mass of the unknown, who after all can make or mar the play. "Stars" come and go, rise, flame, wane and vanish, and fresh stars appear," for as George Eliot puts it, "Destiny stands by, sarcastic, with our dramatis personae folded in her hand," but the "super" and the scene-shifter are perpetual essentials. Let them have fair, humane and just treatment.

Mr. Dalton McCarthy has launched a bomb into the House by giving notice of a Resolution alleging that manufacturers "sheltered behind the ramparts" erected by protection, "have formed combinations and trusts which prohibit competition and create and maintain monopolies"; that the present tariff is unfair, oppressive and burdensome; that there should be no delay in remedial legislation; and that finally, the House declares its readiness to reduce customs duties in reciprocal favour of the United Kingdom, of other portions of the Empire, and of other nations, especially the United States. A considerable addition to the pages of Hansard may be looked for. Meantime, Mr. Foster having already in his budget speech, said his say, looks on smilingly, like Milton's "affable archangel." With a majority of 67, he can afford to do so.

A warm debate, closely reasoned and argued, on the important question whether the legislation of the Province of Nova Scotia should or should not be allowed to grant to a syndicate the control of her coal mines, was closed by a speech from Sir John Thompson in which, while expressing his personal non-approval of the measure, he upheld the right of the Province to deal with her own minerals just as Ontario deals with her timber limits, and, on constitutional grounds, announced that the act in question would not be interfered with.

The discussion raised in the House on the question of the census, brought out

some very interesting statements from members who found their constituencies credited with numerous manufactories which their own eyesight had been unable to perceive. It was, not unfairly, asked that the individual factories referred to might be specifically identified. It appears not to have been generally remembered that in 1885 a voluminous return was made to the House giving similar information, in the form of a report made by A. H. Blackeby, on the state of the manufacturing industries of Ontario and Quebec, and by E. Willis, on those of certain sections of the Maritime Provinces. These reports were made at the instigation of Sir Leonard Tilley, then Finance Minister. They covered the period from 1879 to 1885. The information obtained included the name of the place, the name of the firm, the class of work, and the date of establishment, besides grouping in tables of a less individual character, (so that private concerns should not become too public), the statements as to number of hands employed, totals of their yearly wages, the value of the product, and amount of capital invested. The return is to be found in sessional papers No 37, of the year 1885.

The annual Press dinner which came off in the House of Commons restaurant was a great success, the chair being occupied by Mr. Fred Cook, President. The newspaper men numbered 35, and their guests, including the Hon. MacKenzie Bowell, the Hon. Wilfred Laurier, and the Hons. Patterson, Daly and Davies, brought up the list to 70. The dinner, the speeches, and the songs were all of the best, as might be expected, under such auspices.

At last the great Reliever of the afflicted has come to the rescue of one of those whose name in the past was well known. After long years of crippled and helpless existence through rheumatism, which rendered him absolutely incapable of independent motion, Colonel Bernard, the brother of Lady Macdonald, died peacefully at the Windsor Hotel, Montreal. His kind and gentle heart, and the uncomplaining disposition which carried him through his weary days, endeared him to his friends, and mingled their pity for his condition with the keenest admiration and respect for his manly bearing. Lady Macdonald has the warmest sympathy of the whole country, in this, her fresh grief.

Mr. E. L. Newcome, of Halifax, N. S., the new Deputy Minister of Justice, is only thirty-four years of age and, like the man he succeeds, adds another to the long list of those of the younger race who nowadays are absorbing the desirable positions in the country. That "Crabbed age and youth cannot live together," is an accepted law of sexual relationship, but why as between man and man youth should be allowed to elbow ripened experience and years which are neither crabbed nor dullard, away from the seats of dignity and emolument is hard to say. The fin de siècle mad push for wealth and distinction can brook no delay. The school boy and the school girl of the more slowly, but, perhaps, more solidly maturing past, exists no longer, and our babies will soon be pushing us, mothers and fathers alike, from our forms. Their lisping utterances will fill our pulpits, and phrase our verdicts. They will dictate our policies, and make our laws; the first, and under the circumstances kindest enactment being that all persons over forty-five shall be

knocked on the head as useless encumbrances. Fortunately, in the midst of this general worship of the youthful, there is left one field to middle age. The occupation of scavenger is still uncovered; and to that and certain singular, modest, but beneficial employments, it must thankfully and altruistically turn.

ZERO.

THE CRITIC.

The professional literary critic, like the professional art critic, is often apt to forget that the general public does not regard a book from quite the same standpoint as himself. Thus, among art critics, the conversation turns ten times oftener to the method in which a subject is handled, than it does to the subject itself. They talk of tone, of correct drawing, of modelling, of composition. Meanwhile the public, that public which knows little or nothing about pictures, and outnumbers enormously the few who do, the public merely knows whether or not it is pleased and often not even this. So with a novel or a poem. Your literary critic laboriously examines the technique, is careful to classify "his author," to point out his characteristics of style, and to compare him with others of his own class. The public on the other hand weeps over the characters, thrills at the poetic images and takes no thought as to why it does either.

But are there not two standpoints, and is not the uncritical public as justified in regarding a work of art from the one as the critical reviewer is from the other? There is something surely in every work of art that mere technical criticism cannot touch, and the more imaginatively powerful or the more delicately lyrical a work of art is, the more impotent does technical criticism become to interpret for us or even to point out to us the hidden and altogether undefinable beauty and influence of the author's creation. Shakespeare may (amongst his myriad other attributes) perhaps be taken as the supreme example of the utter inability of technical criticism to go to the root of the matter in the case of a highly imaginatively powerful work: the volume of technical criticism in the case of Shakespeare seems destined to flow on for ever. And Shelley perhaps may be taken as the supreme example of the inability of technical criticism to explain to us the beauty of poems renowned for the delicacy of their lyricism. In fact technical criticism, as if cognisant of its feebleness, seems to have kept its hands off Shelley: and well it may. Accostics would have an easier task were it to undertake to analyse the pleasure derived from a Sonata; or optics if it tried to put into formulæ the requisites for a beautiful sunset.

As a matter of fact true criticism of any work should travel in an ellipse about these two centres—that is, until that man arises who shall be able to see that the two centres, the two points of view are in reality one, that matter and form are divorced only because of the limitations of the finite mind. Then criticism will form the perfect circle about the thing it criticizes. But till then we must be satisfied to accept as inevitable two foci about which to travel, only doing our best to bring them as near together as possible.

It is of this last caution that both the public and the professional critics lose sight. The one knows nothing and cares nothing for methods; all it knows is that certain things appeal to it and that certain other