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It is reported that in connection with the new rifle the English will discard the old-fashioned bayonet for one similar to the German, about 18 in. long, and sharpened for two-thirds of the way on both edges, like a Roman sword.

An evening contemporary remarks that the officers of the Militia at Mrs. Richey's at home on Wednesday week were in tunics, while the Imperial officers appeared in mess jackets. In the absence of any order, it was right that the former should go in full dress to a Governor's reception, but it suggests to us whether it would not be a good thing if the D. A. G. were to issue an order on such occasions.

The late War Office scandal concerning the bayonet and cutlasses which were compared in quality to hoop iron, is not likely to be repeated, for the authorities have laid down stringent regulations as to the tests to be applied to these weapons before they are issued to the soldiers. These tests consist of—first, a vertical pressure of forty pounds on the hilt of the cutlass, which the weapon must bear without bending; second, an increased pressure until the hilt approaches the point within a few inches; and third, a bending or the blade round a curved surface until hilt and point nearly meet. The weapons are also to be subjected to blows on a block of wood to test the general soundness.

We are in accord with the *Chronicle* in at least one portion of a recent article on titles, apropos of the refusal of Dr. Daniel Wilson to accept the Knighthood proffered to him. We think, with our contemporary, that titles are unsuited to our institutions; and we have always thought Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Blake exhibited more dignity in refusing than they would have done in accepting honors of that description; but we do not look on such proffers as "an attempt to transplant to our soil the effete feudalism of Europe." This is quite an exaggerated view. The Imperial authorities may not always exercise discrimination in their bestowal, but they are, after all, only complimentary recognitions of supposed merit or services.

The planet Mars presents a very different, and much more equable, arrangement of what are presumed to be land and water than the Earth. Its surface is much divided into long narrow bands, presumably alternate strips of each. According to M. Perrotin, a French astronomer, straight transverse lines have of late made their appearance intersecting the parallel bands, which the astronomer is bold enough to assume to be canals. Telescopic power has wonderfully increased of late years, and it is impossible to say what may or may not be. The question of the habitation of planets is always interesting, but it should be recognized that the widely differing physical conditions of other orbs involve the almost certainty that sentient beings existing (if they do exist) upon them, must differ widely from ourselves. In the first place, Mars cannot but be a much colder world than ours, as is indeed plainly shown by the comparative large extent of the snow caps at his poles, and, in the second, his mass is so much less that the very sap of vegetation such as ours, would run wild from the reduced force of gravitation. We have only to remember that one of the attributes of the Creator must be the illimitable power of evolving inconceivable variety according to the conditions primarily established.

The Messiah was very well rendered last Friday evening at the Academy of Music. The choir afforded ample evidence, in their perfect discipline, of the thoroughness of Prof. Porter's training. Mrs. Taylor's rich contralto, her perfect command of it, and her clear enunciation, were a delight to hear. Miss Odell's really fine soprano suffers a slight tension from the prolonged sostenuto of oratorio music, and we should listen to her with even still greater pleasure in opera. Miss Mackenzie sang with much sweetness, but neither of these ladies would lose, in the estimation of their appreciative listeners, by a careful study of clearness of enunciation, especially where "s" is the first letter of a word. Mr. Burgoyne and Mr. Mumford both sang well, the latter, we believe, in spite of a cold, and the general effect was highly creditable to all concerned. But there is no description of composition so artificial as the oratorio. Like an old five-act play, it requires pruning. Three hours and a half is too long a stretch for what you read the text of in five minutes. Haydn and Handel were impregnated with the musical taste of their day which impelled a composer, when he had once conceived an idea, to endless repetition of it. The impulse was as uncontrollable as that of the excellent Mayor of a Western Canadian city, when he finally got hold of the Princess Louise's hand at her departure, and maintained a shake that no musical effort could surpass, if rival. The day is fast approaching when it will become intolerable. We are irresistibly reminded of the recent current joke on the "anthem"—"Bill, Bill, B.I.I, give, give, give, &c., &c., &c.," *ad infinitum*.

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The editor of THE CRITIC is responsible for the views expressed in Editorial Notes and Articles, and for such only; but the editor is not to be understood as endorsing the sentiments expressed in the articles contributed to this journal. Our readers are capable of approving or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper, and after exercising due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

The real name of Emin Pasha is Edward Schnitzer, and he is a native of Oppelu, in Prussian Silesia, where he was born on the 28th of March, 1840. His father was a merchant, who, in 1842, removed to Neisse, in the same Province, where his mother and sister still reside. The word "Emin" is Arabic; it means "The Faithful One," and surely never was adopted as a name more appropriate to the person using it.

The Police of Halifax have, we are glad to see, appeared in their new uniform. It is quite superior to the old, but is yet a curious sort of compromise. The helmet is a great improvement on the old brakesman cap, yet it is of a pattern, perhaps, on the whole, not a bad one, though somewhat unique. The coat is half patrol jacket and half monkey jacket. It might look well enough, but it strikes us that now our guardians have got a new uniform, they want a dose of "setting-up drill" to enable them to wear it with proper dignity.

A "third party" candidate, Mr. Chas. R. Casey, has been started for Cumberland. The programme of this idea runs thus:—"I will oppose all and every Government measure, upon which the existence of that Government depends, until such Government will bring in a bill and cause to be placed upon the Statute books of our Dominion an Act that will outlaw the liquor traffic." This is, to say the least, very crude statesmanship. It would lead to blind opposition to every measure brought before Parliament calculated to advance local interests in all directions. The evils of strictly party-Government are not to be mitigated by ill-considered propaganda.

The *Militia Gazette* of 21st June alludes to the "absurd attack system," and suggests "the four deep formation." We are not quite sure what the *Gazette's* precise meaning is, but, if we had the chance, we should like to experiment on a company 80 or 100 strong, which should stand at loose files in four ranks, (which would abolish the details of the formation of four) each rank to be a section under an officer. In skirmishing or attack we would throw out the first rank and re-inforce with the others in succession. It is so useless to waste time in combatting red-tape that we merely throw out the hint. Anything like a trial of originality is probably beyond the scope of Departmental intellect.