

There has been great execution in the poultry yards during the week, in order that our tables might not be without the customary Thanksgiving turkey. We hope each of our readers had the bird of their choice well served up with all the etceteras, and were not obliged to tackle a venerable gobbler, tough enough to make gate hinges of.

Once more our day of National Thanksgiving has come and gone, and from the churches of the land, as well as from the hearts and homes of the people, a song of thankful praise to the giver of all good has gone up. We cannot expect that all troubles would be kept away from us, and each heart knoweth its bitterness, but we think that never before in Canada was there greater cause for thankfulness over the prosperity of the country. We have been spared the disasters that have befallen other lands, and we have gathered a bountiful harvest. A day for National Thanksgiving is eminently fitting, and acknowledges our dependence upon Divine Providence.

Just how the mistake was made we do not know, but about the end of last year the Dowager Lady DeRos experienced the doubtful pleasure of reading her own obituary notices in the papers. Despite the fact that the paragrapher had her dead and buried months ago, Lady DeRos is now alive and well, and on September 30th last completed her ninety-sixth year. Owing to the fact that she was present at the historic ball given in Brussels by her father, the fourth Duke of Richmond, on the eve of the battle of Waterloo, the testimony of Lady DeRos as to the house in which it was given, was naturally of much interest during the controversy on the subject a few years ago.

British royalty is sustained from the public treasury at the cost of £5,000,000 per annum, and it is no wonder that there are found those among the taxpayers who cry out against further annuities being granted. Were the money voted by Parliament expended without extravagance the outlay, although excessive, might not be thought unreasonable; but when we see among the items an appropriation of £250, upwards of \$1,200, being voted to pay for the feed scattered to the pheasants in the Windsor forest, we wonder at the apathy of the British public in allowing such wasteful extravagance; and yet many items in the list of expenditures are quite as ridiculous. Royalty costs money, but it is supported by the classes for social reasons, and by the masses because they revere that which is, and have a decided dislike to change.

Science is a ruthless shatterer of old ideas, but we hope it will still be long before all fancies are swept away by the overwhelming tide of facts. We have all looked at the constellation which is supposed to represent all but one of the Pleiades—only six stars being visible to the ordinary naked eye—and our imaginations, excited by the ideas suggested, have carried us far afield in magic realms of the unreal; but the rude hand of science comes between us and the stars with a telescope, which shows us that there are not only seven Pleiades, but six or seven hundred of them! If the sensitive plate, on which the vision of the telescope is recorded, be exposed for about four hours, the number of stars in the constellation is shown to be about 2,326, with an extensive background of nebulosity. Where then is our "lost Pleiade" and all our fancies regarding her? Science may dispel many of our cherished allusions after a while, but we still cling to the pretty stories connected with the stars, albeit we know their fallacy. The Laureate's lines—

"Many a night I saw the Pleiades shining through the mellow shade,  
Gitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid."

have always a fascination for us, and beautifully describe the twinkling of what we still prefer to fancy are the daughters of Atlas and Pleione, no matter what science may reveal of the number of stars in the constellation.

The recent Congress of Socialists at Erfurt has called forth many comments from the international press, and it is noteworthy that the deliberations of the Congress are now criticised impartially, and that the editorial scribes have evidently recovered from the paroxysms of mental trepidation into which such gatherings have been wont to throw them. The true socialist is one who desires to benefit the human race, and one who seeks to do so by a reformation of many of the existing laws of nations. Many a thinker in this busy world who has witnessed the wrongs perpetrated upon his fellow-men in the name of law has virtually decided in favor of the socialistic idea, and has realized how helpless an individual may be under the force of circumstances. German socialism has advanced with rapid strides during the past quarter of a century, and it has already become a moving power in the Empire. Twenty years ago the total Socialist vote numbered 101,927, to-day it reaches 1,341,587. In Germany the railways as well as the post offices are controlled according to the Socialist programme, and the leading spirits of the movement anticipate great reforms before the close of the century. The Socialists do not uphold lawless liberty, but rather liberty within the law. They believe that the State should extend its business beyond the control of railways and post offices to arts and industries, that there should be a limit to the individual accumulation of wealth, and that its distribution at death should be settled by law and not by the testator. So long as socialism has strong minds at its helm and seeks thoughtfully to better the condition of mankind, the human race need fear no ill-results; but the danger of such organizations is that they may be used by hypocritical self-seeking demagogues to shatter that which exists, in the hope that they may secure personal advantages by the wreck they create.

The "Medicated Music" idea, as embodied in the St. Cecilia Guild, has received the approval of Dr. Andrew Wilson, who says the result has been fairly satisfactory. This scheme for administering soothing music to sick persons has been attracting considerable attention since its inception by Canon Hartford, and various are the strains in which it is commented on. Some poke fun at the whole thing, disbelieving in any advantage to be derived in serious cases, others look at it from a matter-of-fact point of view, and think there may be something in it, and one paper (showing how much there is in a name) says that the one redeeming feature is that the honored name of Florence Nightingale is numbered among the patronesses. It is well to look at it from a sensible standpoint, for there are few of us who have not at times experienced relief from nervous headache and similar affections when the right sort of music could be procured. Even the "savage breast" is said to be susceptible to music's charms, and if this is so why should not music prove a boon to the ailing? Some kinds of music would no doubt be successful as counter irritants, but they should be carefully avoided by both sick and well. Dr. Wilson says that possibly the physician of the remote future may see fit to number the viol and the sack-but among the instruments of his profession.

It is a noteworthy fact that while public benefactors in Great Britain and the United States have weighted their bequests to universities and benevolent institutions with all sorts of absurd conditions the noble bequests of our Nova Scotian benefactors, notably those of William Murdoch, Sir William Young and John P. Mott, have been left to the governors or trustees of the respective institutions, the funds or the interest upon the funds to be used as thought best. Some years since a handsome sum of money was left to Harvard College, upon condition that each year a sermon should be preached in the university chapel in which the dangers of the Roman Catholic Church were to be set forth. It is needless to say that the College authorities accepted the bequest, while the condition upon which it was made was fulfilled in the letter if not in the spirit. Only a few years since a dignitary of high standing in the Roman Catholic Church preached the stipulated sermon. Benefactors should always remember that conditions only serve to trammel their own liberality, and although the needs of to-day may prompt them to surround their bequests with certain stipulations, yet the march of time may so change the existing order of things as to render such stipulations or conditions ill-advised and positively injurious to the very persons whom it was intended to benefit.

Of course Canadians are Americans in a broad sense, just as Nova Scotians are Canadians, but when it comes to calling our best Canadian writers and notable people by the more general title, and thus give the impression that they are citizens of the United States, we strongly object. We have often had cause to protest against this appropriation of our talented countrymen and women by the United States, and sometimes English authorities are guilty of crediting the work of our writers to Americans. In the *Illustrated London News* of October 31st (American Edition) we find a portrait of Miss Sara J. Duncan, author of those bright books, "A Social Departure" and "An American Girl in London." Miss Duncan is a Canadian, but she is, in the paper mentioned, spoken of as "one of the brightest and most deservedly successful of recent American writers." True, the *New York Book-Buyer* is cited as authority, and the note goes on to say she was born in Brantford, Ont., and gives a list of the prominent journals the young lady worked so successfully for, but when we see the error made of calling our writers American, we are seized with a burning desire to set people right on the subject. Miss Duncan was married a few months ago to Mr. E. C. Coates, who holds a scientific appointment at Calcutta, where she met him on her journey around the world.

If we are to believe all the alarming reports anent the recrudescence of influenza at Berlin, Vienna and Bucharest, and the prophets of evil who say the poisoned air currents will carry the infection all over the globe, our lives will be miserable with fear of the disease. It is held that the epidemics in the famine-stricken interior of Russia keep up the supply of infection, and that although not necessarily fatal there, because the people are inured to the conditions which give rise to the disease, when it spreads to outside places it becomes a scourge and carries off thousands. Last year it was thought that the disease had its origin in the great shrines and monasteries of Russia, where hundreds and thousands of pilgrims annually congregate, and are packed together in indescribable squalor, filth and disease. These gatherings are known to be powerful agents in the spread of the terrible contagious maldies so frequent in Russia, and the theory that LaGrippe is of similar origin is quite credible. When the epidemic first appeared under its present name (at various times a similar malady has been epidemic under other names) it was thought that it was useless to take precautions against its spread. This idea appears to be giving way now, and means are beginning to be employed in the larger centres to prevent influenza spreading universally as it did last year. Whether these efforts will be successful or not remains to be seen, but we think everyone should take those precautions that are available to all, such as keeping up the general health, avoiding chills, drafts and unhealthy places, and fortifying the system by daily bathing and plenty of out-of-door exercise. These precautions are expedient at all times, and should not be neglected by those who desire to enjoy the blessing of good health.

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