

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)
IRONCLADS AND PASSENGER SHIPS.

As we glance over the records of the creation of the British Iron-Clad Fleet, nothing impresses the mind more than the complete and effective officialism by which the huge monsters have been brought into being. The whole system has been such as to bring the highest talent to the surface and to keep that talent working at its fullest efficiency by the best encouragement a nation could afford. There was not only constant communication of the experts who furnished the designs and supervision with the originating Department, but the public, that is to say, all intelligent men who could be brought to take an interest in the naval progress, were kept fully informed of each month's proceedings through the great popular journals. If a celebrated constructor was so unfortunate as to differ with those who engaged him, the quarrel was not carried on under a cloud, and if his sense of honour compelled him to resign his functions, every reader could make himself *au fait* of the merits if he chose to give the needed attention—and the man of science and practice became thereafter the centre of a loyal opposition in naval questions, keeping a close watch over all the work of his successors. It may be said that, after all, the work is most annoyingly imperfect in its results. The effort, however, was a new one. The Ironclad men have done their best, and will go on doing their best, unshackled by routine. The Ironclad is expected to be brought towards perfection by time and experience, even until the necessity for such huge armaments is happily no longer seen. The lessons of the time have been mastered one by one. That is the way we prepare for war, or the risk of it. When the life interests of thousands of emigrants from an overcrowded state are put in question, as regards the vital step of the transfer of themselves, their families and belongings across the ocean that intervenes between their old home and the one in which they hope to better their fortunes, the difference in constructive arrangements is patent. In the one case the builders have tried to make an unsinkable ship. In the other they have hardly given a thought to the special question of unsinkableness. The bright idea of compartments certainly formed an exception to this heedlessness of routine, but even with this great discovery before them, there has been no trouble taken to follow up the principle to successful issues. Routine only has been triumphant. The service, in fact, has been treated too exclusively as a question of commerce, although partly sustained by national subsidies. Although, as regards some lines, it has certainly been well conducted, so long as no extraordinary casualties have interfered with the daily course, the people chiefly interested have not themselves been instructed with any care as to the real conditions of their safety or the preparations to be trusted for emergencies, and an essential check and security have thus been wanting. The ships have been built as the manufacturer had got into the habit of building them. They have been built to encounter rough weather, with plenty of sea room, but not collisions of any sort. The flourish of trumpets with which the advent of each new vessel was announced, was justified in many particulars, but not in the one that now engages so much attention. Magnificent vessels, in many of their requirements, have left the stocks—but what does it all avail, if they will not provide the security that is needed? And as to any of them were not in possession of the first line of certification or assurance from competent authority as to their resisting powers. Most bitter experiences have filled the place of the knowledge to be gained in that way, but not as to the vessels of the future. We expect to know something more of them than their sailing and steaming capacity—splendid fittings—accommodation for stowage passengers. The unbiased opinion of a REED upon the sufficiency and good consistency of the structure of the ship, and upon the actual trustworthiness of bulkheads and compartments upon which life or death for so many is poised, would be worth far more to us than all splendours of description, though a floating palace outrivalling Cleopatra's barge were painted in them. It is not the lazy Nile that is to be the destination of these ships, but the Atlantic with its treacherous dangers. Our anxieties cannot be sluggish because the waves and the winds are not so—and casualty has to be provided against. The Iceberg thrusting like an Iron Ram—and needing something more than fragile plates to withstand it; Rocky Coasts in fog and bad weather, and the neighbourhood of other ships on a crowded ocean-highway have all to be faithfully considered and effectually provided against. There is a grave book of contingencies before us with its unopened leaves. The armour that is to defend us, should, as far as man is capable of making it, be placed beyond a peradventure. It is for this, these impervious air receptacles or compartments that we need the best certificate that science can furnish. In the case of arctic ships for the hazardous enterprise of polar discoveries, the ice-dangers have been seen and met. The constructors knew what they had to do, and made provision accordingly. Let us have the same right ship for the Atlantic work. A ship fitted for the risks she is exposed to is the best insurance for life, and the cheapest for property. The defence she supplies is real, and complete in proportion to her resisting powers, but in the meeting of monetary insurances there is only a transfer of loss from one pocket to another, and a real loss to the community, while life cannot in this way be protected. The right ship would be certain to be patronized by travellers.

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CYNICS.

The other day, my wife referring to some expressions which had just fallen from my lips, called me a "cynic." She said it reproachfully. "You are a perfect old cynic, Joel," were the words she used.

The accusation caused me to reflect. I felt there was some truth in the charge, and, like all accused persons, I looked about me for some excuse. I had little difficulty in discovering sufficient causes for the disease.

First of all, I thought—what is cynicism? There can be no doubt that it is generally ascribed to those soured and disappointed people who endeavor to cover their ill fortune by bitter aspersions on the machinery of human affairs. It may be a question if this is entirely a just view of the case. A cynic is one who objects to the unfair mode in which matters go in this world. If everything went on properly there would be no cynics. If even-handed justice were meted out to all mortals, the cynic would have a slim chance. Unfortunately there seems to be too good cause for all the bitter railery which forms the current literature of the professional cynic.

Instead of being a bad man, the cynic is generally a good man—an honest man—a generous man—a warm-hearted man. Thackeray was a cynic, but who loved his fellow men better? Who was more anxious that each should have his due? Tom Carlyle is a cynic, but what heart beats more in sympathy with the great mass of human beings than the sturdy old Scotch philosopher's? We pause in sacred awe when we come to mention the name of Him who taught as never man taught; but when we read His words:

"Woe unto you! Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in," we are almost reminded of sublime cynicism.

Cynic am I? Well, why not? In my outlook on the world what do I see? Universal Justice? Success in proportion to merit? Achievement in the measure of effort? Reward in accordance with labor—honor with virtue? Let the sleek and smiling panegyrists answer these.

I am not an old man, but I have lived long enough to discover that in worldly eyes, honesty is not always the best policy. I have seen unscrupulous tricksters acquire fortunes, and enjoy them to the end of their days, while honest men, with greater toil, were living in humble poverty because they would not be dishonest.

I turn to the realm of politics. Here I have seen men who have mastered every important public measure—who have all the qualities of eminent statesmen—judgment, discretion, tact and eloquence, who have never been able to enter Parliament: while empty-headed, vain, shallow upstarts have stood at the head of the polls and strutted gorgeously through the Halls of the Legislature. Is not this occurring every day? Do we not all see it with our eyes, and understand it with our hearts?

My friend A. toiled his way through college which he left with honors; toiled his way to his profession—law, of which science he has made himself master. He put out his sign and diligently attended his office and ably performed whatever business was entrusted to him. But his clients are few and his income small. My friend B. passed his collegiate course at the same time. He studied little and consulted his own pleasure much. He, too, studied law, reading just enough to pass his examination. But, with scarcely any effort on his part, he obtained a partnership with a well-established barrister, and is now making a fortune. Is this entirely fair? My friend B. has not one tithe of the ability or energy of my friend A., but he has beaten him completely, will beat him, and the world calls him the "rising man." And yet I hear every day of my life the old threadbare aphorism: "Merit will prevail, Sir."

The story is a long one and cannot all be told at once. I am grateful to my wife for suggesting the subject. I think I can profitably enlarge on it. If I don't get over my present attack of dyspepsia soon it is probable I will return to it.

Cynic am I? What made me such?

JOEL PHIPPS.

FIRE PROOF DWELLINGS.

The production of a real fire-proof dwelling house is a subject that should come very near the heart of the good citizen. A Mr. A. J. Smith of Chicago has obtained a handsome premium awarded in that city for a fire-proof house. The tests to which it was subjected were sufficiently severe and consisted of the combustion of pine wood furniture and a quantity of shavings within the building. These were admirably withstood, the construction scarcely shewing the touch of fire anywhere about it. This indeed is a great victory for civilization, if we did but realize it, and the secret seems to consist almost entirely in covering the boards and rafters everywhere with concrete, tinned plates over the same material being used for the roof. The best composition for the concrete, over which in the form of floors we should be constantly moving, would seem to be nearly the whole enquiry. If it were to take months to satisfy our minds upon such a question we ought not to grudge the time and energy expended. Encaustic Tiles would be very good, we think, for placing over the concrete for the floors.

ROUND THE DOMINION.

A convention of Y. M. C. A. workers was held in Montreal last week. Mr. G. Hague, of Toronto, was elected President for the year.

Complaints are made in various sections of the Eastern Townships of the rust in wheat and potatoes. The late cold weather also checked harvesting.

Very few men or teams have yet gone to the woods. Wages are low. It is many years since such dullness prevailed in the lumbering operations at this season.

The Government steamer "Napoleon III." will at once start on another tour to the various light-houses in the Gulf and Straits of Belle Isle, with provisions and other stores.

It is said that the ship-building prospects in Quebec and Levis for the coming winter are very encouraging; all the yards will be occupied in the construction of one or more vessels.

Mr. Mackenzie has informed Mayor Kennedy, of Winnipeg, that the Government will not change the route of the Pembina Branch Railway so as to touch the City of Winnipeg.

The Parry Sound *North Star* says that the Icelanders who have been residing in that village have taken their departure by the steamer Wau-buno, en route to Manitoba, where they are forming an Icelandic colony.

Gov. Morris and Hon. Jas. Mackay have just returned to Fort Garry, having concluded a treaty with the Sautaux and Swampy Creek Indians. The territory ceded by the latter, under the treaty, comprises 50,000 square miles.

When the Aylmer people opened their new church some one proposed that they should wipe off a little debt still remaining on that fine building, and in half an hour it was done. That little debt was just \$9,000.

The Glassware company of St. Johns have broken ground on the site of their proposed factory, and intend having the building erected and everything in readiness to commence the manufacture of glassware by the latter end of November.

Work has commenced on the Phillipsburg, Farnham, and Yamaska Ry., between St. Pie and L'Ange Gardien. It is the general opinion that, by the end of the fall, the whole length between St. Hyacinthe and St. Pie will be open for traffic.

The work of supplying the town of Truro with water is now commenced. The Watrous Company of Brantford, Ont., have contracted to do the whole work for \$20,000, and have already sub-let the laying of pipes, erection of engine houses, &c., to Mr. George Chisholm, of Truro.

Eleven men were killed and twenty-five seriously injured by a construction train on which they were engaged being thrown off the track, by an obstruction maliciously placed for that purpose, on the Richmond, Drummond, & Arthabaska Railway, near Sorel, Que., on Tuesday night of last week.

The County Council of Simcoe have agreed to accept twenty-five cents in the dollar for the stock held by them in the Northern Railway. It is questioned, however, whether this resolution can be made to cover the stock bought by the county but transferred to Barrie and other municipalities.

FOOT NOTES.

THE city of Paris has in its streets and avenues 82,000 trees, in excellent condition. In the gardens and squares there are 9,000 more, all of which are cared for most solicitously, being regularly watered and trimmed.

In olden times it was the fashion for a suitor to go down on his knees to a lady when he asked her to become his wife, which, with very stout gentlemen, was an uncomfortable proceeding. The way in which Daniel Webster proposed to Miss Fletcher was more modern, being at the same time neat and polite. Like many other lovers, he was caught holding a skein of thread or wool, which the lady had been unravelling. "Gracie," said he, "we have been untying knots. Let us see if we cannot tie one which will not untie in a life-time." With a piece of tape he fashioned half a true lover's knot, Miss Fletcher perfected it, and a kiss put the seal to the symbolical bargain.

Few persons are probably aware that the Chancellor of North Germany was nearly being a Frenchman, or, at all events, taking service in France. Prince Bismarck's father, says a Paris journal, was forced to leave his country in consequence of a duel, and in 1807 he offered his services to the King of Wurtemberg, Jerome Bonaparte. In this way Prince Bismarck's father found himself in the service of France, and took part in the Russian campaign. Marshal Ney, whose army corps he served during several dangerous night marches, gave him the command of the advanced guard. At the battle of Borodino he had three horses killed under him, and his regiment, which he commanded, was one of the most ill-treated during the retreat. After the passage of the Beresina, Col. Bismarck led the shattered remains of his regiment back to Wurtemberg and recruited it. He afterwards distinguished himself as a light cavalry commander at Bautzen, and was decorated with the Legion of Honor. Having gained glory and honor in the service of France, it would not have been extraordinary had Colonel, afterward General, Bismarck, unable to return home, adopted France as his country.

ARTISTIC.

MISS HOSMER, the American sculptress, proposes sending from Rome to the Centennial a marble group representing the emancipation of the slaves.

CINCINNATI claims to be the headquarters of the fine arts in the United States, and its reputation as such is growing in Europe.

A Parisian gentleman has bequeathed 300,000fr. to the Minister of Fine Arts for the purpose of erecting a gigantic statue of France on the summit of the Aro de Triomphe.

THE celebrated collection of portraits of painters at the Pitti Palace at Florence, has just been enriched with that of Corot, sent by the family of the artist.

M. BAUDRY, the celebrated French painter and member of the Institute, has gone to Orleans, where he will familiarise the life of the *Pucelle* Joan of Arc, in twelve different paintings.

AS AN offset to the German Hermann monument, the Lombards talk of commemorating on the 29th of next May the seventh centennial of the battle of Legnano, when their "League Cities" defeated the forces of the old German Empire.

THE death is announced of Mr. Spencer Hall, who has been librarian to the Athenaeum Club since the year 1838. Mr. Hall, who was in his seventieth year, contributed papers to the *Archæological Journal*, the *Athenæum*, the *Art Journal*, and other publications.

G. A. HEALY, the artist, will arrive shortly from Paris, and will remain for the Centennial Exhibition, to which he will contribute his fine full-length painting of the interview between Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, and Porter, prior to the march into Georgia. Mr. Healy is said to have given in this picture a better Lincoln, perhaps, than any yet painted.

A MEMORIAL is being erected at the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise to Baron Larrey, the famous surgeon of the *Grande Armée*. It is to bear the following inscription:—*A Larrey, l'homme le plus vertueux que j'aie jamais connu* (To Larrey, the most virtuous man I ever knew.) The monument stands opposite the tomb of General Massena, and between those of Marshal Ney and General Lefevre. The author of the inscription was Napoleon the First.

THE *Journal des Débats*, on the occasion of the death of the painter Waldeck, who died lately at the age of 107, cites the celebrated painters who have died at an advanced age. Titian died in his 99th year; Coppel was 89; Rigaud, 86; Mignard, 85; Jordaens, 84; Tintoretto, Claude Lorraine, and Albano, 82; Frimaticcio and Teniers, 80; Carl Vernet and Grouze, 79; David, 77; Quercus, Leonardo da Vinci and Ostade, 75; Michael Angelo died in his ninetieth year.

LITERARY.

OLIVE LOGAN'S eyes are seriously affected.

THE Viscount de Castillo, one of the most distinguished Portuguese writers, both in prose and poetry, died a few days ago at Lisbon, of cerebral fever at the age of seventy-five.

SOME sensation has been caused at Dijon (Côte d'Or) by the discovery of a copy of a scarce edition of the "Œuvres de Corneille," printed at Rouen by Laurens Maury, 1645, with portrait by Michel Laine.

THE Clarendon Press will issue this autumn, through Messrs. Macmillan & Co., a new edition in five vols. of Professor Jowett's "Plato." The translation has been carefully revised, and the introductions have been in many cases almost re-written.

MR. KEGAN PAUL'S "Life of William Godwin" is at last to appear. As we have already announced, the book will contain letters, hitherto unpublished, by Shelley, Lamb, Coleridge, Mrs. Shelley, Godwin himself, Mary Woolstonecraft, and others.

"SPELLING isn't my profession; one man can't do everything. What's a printer for? If a printer can't spell, he'd better quit his business," is the line of argument adopted by Joaquin Miller when a cold, unfeeling critic ridicules his orthography.

JOHN G. WHITTIER, it is said, finds the early morning hours the best time to compose poetry. He has also a habit of composing aloud. The latter fact so seriously interfered with the slumbers of a sailor, who occupied a room adjoining to Mr. Whittier's at a hotel, that he applied for other quarters "out of the hearing of Whittier's."

A NEW biographer of Artemus Ward says the genial humorist usually wrote with one leg over the arm of his chair. The *Morristown Herald* observes that it had always supposed he wrote with a pen or pencil; but to write with one leg over the arm of a chair is not so difficult as to write with one arm over the leg of a chair.

MRS. HERSCHEL, wife of Captain Herschel, grandson of the celebrated Sir William Herschel, is now engaged on a memoir of Miss Caroline Herschel, the accomplished sister and assistant of Sir William, compiled from her own journals. Several letters of the great astronomer hitherto unpublished will be included in the volume.

THE *Graphic* will shortly issue an "Indian double number," containing illustrations of the principal places in India which are about to be visited by the Prince of Wales, with letter-press descriptions written by Mr. Andrew Wilson, who lately contributed to *Blackwood*, under the title of "The Abode of Snow," an account of a visit to the Himalayan mountains.

STUDENTS of Greek who are, in accordance with the recommendation of Professor Blackie, carrying on their studies in modern Greek literature, may be glad to learn that Mr. Maisonneuve, of Paris, under the editorship of Emile Legrand, has issued in one volume of "Poemes en Grec Vulgaire," "The Oracles of Leo the Wise," "The Battle of Varna," and "The Siege of Constantinople."

HISTORY OF THE WEEK.

Considerable damage to crops resulted from late floods in Ireland, and several lives were lost.

The court martial on the loss of the Vanguard have severely reprimanded and dismissed Captain Dawkins, her commander. Two other officers were censured. The officers of the Iron Duke will probably be court-martialled for running down the Vanguard.

A Houston, Texas, special says that the effects of the recent cyclone are visible all over. Great damage is done in the low grounds. The flooded crops suffered in some places, the damage being from one-sixteenth to one-tenth of the entire crop.

In England the foot and mouth disease is still raging among the cattle, and shows little signs of abating.

Accounts of Carlist desertions continue to be received. Several bands have voluntarily dissolved in Catalonia. Massachusetts Republicans have come out strongly in favor of specie payment.

The Chicago Board of Education on the 26th, with one dissenting vote, discarded the Bible from the public schools of the city.

Servia has ordered all her subjects abroad to return and join the landwehr.

The reported success of the Carlists near San Sebastian is confirmed by despatches from Paris.

Arrangements have been completed for effecting a junction between the railway systems of Turkey and Austria.