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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 colored paper for our cover has not yet arrived, so we are obliged to appear as usual this week in black and white.

With the advent of steel cars instead of wooden ones for passenger, postal and freight traffic, will probably come a lessening of the horrors of railway accidents by the removal of the fire terror. Among the advantages claimed for the steel car are lightness, superior strength, economy and indestructibility by fire. These qualities have been fairly proved by a mail car in use between Chicago and Louisville which has had an unusual number of accidents fall to its lot—not of course because it was made of steel—and has stood its ground without being smashed or even damaged by more than a few surface scratches. Of all its improvements the fact that it could not burn the passengers to death appears to us the most valuable. Should the car stove upset it might burn the people in its vicinity to death and perhaps suffocate the other passengers with smoke, but the chances would be in favor of escaping the fire fiend. The new steel car is expected to stand wear and tear for twenty years, while the life of a wooden car is only eight years, the repairs do not amount to anything on the steel cars, while on wooden cars they cost 10 per cent. of the annual operating expenses of all railways, and the steel car, on account of its greater strength, will hold twice the weight that a wooden one will convey. Extensive works for the construction of such cars are now being erected near Chicago, which when completed will turn out fifteen cars a day and give employment to 700 men. There is no reason, so far as we know, why Canada should not manufacture steel cars.

The New England manufacturers who are now demanding free coal and free raw materials may as well face the inevitable at once and make up their minds that the time has passed for them to successfully compete with localities where coal, iron and other raw materials are found in close juxtaposition and where manufacturing have been erected on the spot. Should they consult their own best interests they would now turn to Nova Scotia, not with the idea that they will get free coal, but with the determination of removing their works here and of investing their capital in developing our unsurpassed coal, iron, copper and lead deposits. If they do so they will never have cause to regret it, as once give us a local coal market equal to what we would lose in Quebec by placing coal on the free list, and we may be tempted in return to give them the markets of the States for their manufactured products, by a wide measure of reciprocity, even including manufactured goods.

The drillshed where our noble six hundred—or more—undergo their military instruction, is a ramshackle old affair that ought to be marked unfit for duty. Other cities have handsome and commodious drillsheds, and we think the authorities ought to be thinking of providing Halifax with something superior to the present accommodations. The drill ground is also of insufficient extent and should be enlarged. Our citizen soldiers require room to manoeuvre and should have it.

Canadian architects in the Upper Provinces have been aggrieved on several occasions by having the plans of American architects accepted for buildings in Canadian cities. Some of these same plans, however, have proved so defective that the buildings have collapsed—a fact which has of course been satisfactory to the aggrieved Canadian architects. The Board of Trade building at Toronto was built from plans supplied by a New York firm of architects, of, we believe, English training. It collapsed and had to be rebuilt from Canadian plans. The same fate has been suffered by the building of the Young Men's Christian Association in Montreal, causing a great loss. The fact is that the Americans sacrifice solidity to effect, and as they cannot be held responsible for their work as are Canadian architects, they take but little care. A Canadian architect is, if we are rightly informed, held responsible for the safety of his design for a term of years by law, and consequently he takes the greater care that it should be safe. The moral is to employ home talent, but whether these lessons will be taken to heart or not is hard to say.

There is considerable speculation in the city as to the result of the taking of the census which begins on Monday. The official returns at the last census gave Halifax a population of about 36,000, but many usually well informed persons claimed that this figure was lower by about 4,000 than the facts warranted. The estimates now run all the way from 42,000 to 55,000. Those naming the higher figure give as their reasons the assured errors in the census of 1881 and the undeniably large increase in the number of houses, shops, etc., in the northern and western portions of the city. On the other hand it is argued that, though many new buildings have been erected, and are now occupied, in the outlying districts, still many places in the central or what were formerly exclusively the business portions are now unoccupied; also that emigration has about equalized immigration, and that the "natural increase" could not have been more than 52 per cent. in ten years. We regard both estimates to be extreme, and think that the enumeration will show that we have a population of between 45,000 and 47,000. The exact data will be placed before the public in about a month.

The census enumerators will soon be calling upon each and all of us to answer a good many questions. Among those to be answered are: Sex, age, married or not, relation to head of family, place of birth, birth place of father and mother, religion, occupation, an employer or wage earner, unemployed during week preceding census, average number of employed hands in the case of a factory or mill, railway works, etc., able to read, write, deaf dumb, blind, unsound mind, deaths last year, real estate owned and occupied, silos, orchard products, vineyards, market gardens, grains, root crops, other products, live stock, animal products, home-made fabrics, industrial establishments, their capital, employees, material used and products of the forest, lumber, shipping, etc. It behooves everyone to have their information ready so that the work of taking the census will not suffer needless delay. The army required to take our census will be composed of about three thousand enumerators, officered by some two hundred and twenty captains, called county commissioners, and commanded by fifteen colonels, called census chief officers. These have been instructed and drilled in the manual so that on the day appointed within the wide domain of the Dominion, from east to west, from Cape Breton to Victoria, B. C., with all the intervening territory, the questioning shall begin. We shall endeavor to maintain the editorial dignity when we are asked if we can read and write and like questions. We trust that others will also bear the trials of the census season and that the ladies will not give cause for confirming that old slander about their unwillingness to state truthfully the years of their age. It is of importance that every aid should be given the enumerators in their not altogether-gracious task. They are sworn to secrecy and will not divulge any written or verbal statement. There are some items in the schedules for this census that might have, with benefit, been altered, but it is too late now. The enumerating of people who have gone away within a specified time—six months we believe—who may possible return, is a mistake. It is too speculative for the returns to be of value. What we want to know is how many people live in Canada and sail on Canadian vessels. Those who have left Canada to seek employment elsewhere do not make part of this population.