

# THE CRITIC:

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## THE CRITIC,

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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.

Much attention is being drawn to the diminution of mackerel, owing to the use of the seine. The subject is one of the greatest importance.

It is not to the credit of Halifax as the capital city of an important province that she does not possess a Mechanics' Institute. Such institutions are a great means of culture, not only to the class for which they are specially intended, but to many others.

Quebec, on the spur of the threatened Retaliation, is waking up anew to the importance of bridging the St. Lawrence, which is as it should be, and we are again reminded by the present position of matters of the importance of a line of faster steamers than the Allan, a question which was unfortunately shelved last year.

The St. John Globe, on the transshipment of fish question, says—"The American Government does not say to our fishermen, 'you cannot come within our territorial waters, lest you steal our fish.'" The American Government has no occasion, their fisheries not being worth our fishermen's while to poach upon; if they were, the Americans would not fight so strenuously for the right of fishing in our waters.

We are glad to observe that the Federal idea is gaining ground in Great Britain. England may depend upon it, the best road out of some of her difficulties would be separate legislatures for England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. As we have said before, the Peerages of Scotland and Ireland would (as long as they exist) find their proper places in the Upper Houses of the Kingdoms to which they respectively belong.

When will our City Council nerve themselves to the point of prohibiting the trotting of empty trucks and coal carts through the principal streets of the city? We have been spoken to times out of number by prominent business men about this nuisance. The narrowness of our streets renders the racket intolerable. It frequently happens that business men, when time is an object, cannot hear messages telephoned to them for ten minutes together on account of it.

The great measures called for by the American threat of Retaliation are the prompt commencement of our Sault Ste. Marie Canal, and double tracking the Intercolonial. In carrying out the latter, the heavy work of double tracking the costly dumps between Halifax and Bedford might be avoided by building a line from Dartmouth to Windsor Junction. This, with wharfage at Dartmouth, would build up that town as well, and wonderfully enhance the value of property there.

If the British Admiralty is capable of profiting by the lessons of history, and will condescend to look up that of the war of 1812-14, it will notice what we have dwelt upon before—the enormous advantage which occurred to the United States from their prescient policy of building a class of Frigates with which England had nothing to compete. We have also said that no future gun-boat should be under 1000 tons. Congress has now passed a vote for (we believe) four gun-boats of 2,000 tons. Verb: sap:!

The Standard and one of the English Service Journals are unwise enough to indulge in unnecessary and inexpedient warlike talk. This is much to be regretted. The American bounce and unfriendly tone is almost entirely a campaign dodge, directed to the usual end, the capture of the Irish vote, and can be most effectually met, not by counter vapourings, but by calm and dignified forbearance and firmness. The middle of November will probably see it all quietly die out, and it will by that time have done a good deal to strengthen Canadian nationality.

A somewhat curious word occurs as the name of a place in Jamaica, in Miss Musgrave's Sketch of that Island. It is "Porus." We were ourselves doubtful of its correctness, and wrote for confirmation. In answer, Miss Musgrave sends us the following extract from Troude's "English in the West Indies".—"After two hours we arrived at the present terminus, an inland town, with the singular name of 'Porus.' No explanation is given of it in the local handbooks, but I find a 'Porus' among the companions of Columbus, and it is probably an interesting relic of the first Spanish occupation."

Millions of men who owe the United States no allegiance, who have no part nor lot in us, who are not of us, but choose to be foreign to us." This is the offence to Mr. Blaine, from whose speech we quote. Yes, we do choose to be foreign to the States, so far as our much preferable institutions go, and certainly the present Presidential election will not tend to make Canadians enamored of those of the United States. Canada has within her ample territory all the resources of a mighty Nation, and a disaffected minority to the contrary notwithstanding, has the spirit to build up and to maintain it. Friendship as much as you please, but not incorporation.

The speech of Professor Schurman at the Interprovincial Educational Convention, held in St. John, in July, on "A Canadian University Curriculum," ought to be read by every educationist. Incidentally he dwells on the lack of historical instruction—a most important point—but the key note is "leave Latin and Greek to those who wish thoroughly to master them, and let the rest receive humanistic culture through general history and literature." We have, however, always held that, if the rudiments of Latin were made a regular part of the early courses, the over-taxed brain of the child might be spared the worry and bewilderment of the pedantic and worse than useless farrago of English grammar with which it is at present stultified. If the Latin grammar taught were in the quaint old Eton form, it would lose none of its impressiveness. Modernizing is often, as in the New Testament, a mere reduction to commonplace. With the quaintness relinquished goes a strong hold on the memory.

The interests brought into play by the act to give the President fuller retaliatory powers are so conflicting, and at the same time so powerful, that we have the strongest doubts whether the policy will be carried out. One thing is certain. If the Government and the business men of the Maritime Provinces put forth the energy demanded by the position, the day on which the measure is proclaimed will be a great day for Halifax, St. John and Quebec. This is what the Boston Advertiser has to say on the subject—"The method of retaliation proposed by the President would tend directly to the development of Canadian outlets for the commerce of the Dominion, instead of paying for transportation over our lines through our outlets, and thereby leaving the control of Canadian export trade in a large measure in our hands. It is a stupid suggestion to make, for the very fact that it has been made, though it never be enforced, has called Canadian attention strongly to the need of independent outlets." The Advertiser is one of the oldest and best-informed journals of New England.