

# THE CRITIC:

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## THE CRITIC,

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

**AN EDITOR DID IT.**—Secretary of the Interior Hoke Smith, the Georgia editor whom President Cleveland honored with a seat in his cabinet, although he was so little known outside of his own state as to be facetiously described as Mr. Hoax Myth by the newspapers, has proved himself anything but a hoax and a myth, as by a single stroke of the pen it is said he has saved the country \$20,000,000 annually. He has given a decision in a pension case construing the phrase "disability, not of service origin," so as to limit it to disabilities preventing the applicant from earning support by manual labor.

**THE ALLAN STEAMSHIP LINE TO BE INCORPORATED.**—It is now reported that the Allan Steamship Company is to be transferred to a limited liability corporation, about being organized. The reason assigned is that since the death of the founders of the line the ownership in the company has been distributed amongst a number of heirs, and it is difficult to arrive at definite conclusions as to the best course to be pursued in the management. Faster and better boats are wanted both for freight and passenger business, but some of the heirs decline to assume the added liability, and the only way out of the difficulty is a sale to a powerful stock company with a large capital.

**BERING SEA ARBITRATION.**—Sir Charles Russell has presented the British side of the Bering Sea case in a most masterly manner, and any one who has followed the arguments on both sides must be convinced that there can be only one outcome of the case, and that a decision in favor of Great Britain. Sir Charles was fortified at every point with confirmatory evidence of his statements, and his very accurate brief is evidence of the care with which the case was prepared. It reflects no small credit on the associate counsel, Hon. Charles H. Tupper, to whom a most important part of the preparatory work was assigned, and shows that Canada's sons never fail in carrying out the tasks assigned to them.

**SPRING FLOODS.**—Disasters to property from floods have been a distinguishing feature of the month of May, and the area affected has been enormous. In Ontario and Quebec the Ottawa River overflowed its banks and submerged the adjacent valleys, doing great damage. In the United States the Mississippi and its numerous tributaries have been swollen with floods and whole sections overflowed, the damage resulting mounting away up in the millions. While this continent has been receiving more than its fair share of rainfall, Europe, especially the juicy island of Great Britain, has experienced a period of unprecedented drought that seriously threatened the crops. In Russia so grave was the crisis that prayers were publicly offered in all the churches for rain. The much desired rain has come at last, a boon to the Russians, but in the Southern and Western United States, where water is generally preferred with a stick in it, it is just now a curse.

**THE COMING INTERNATIONAL YACHT RACE.**—The defeat of the *Valkyrie*, the Earl of Dunraven's yacht, by the *Britannia*, the Prince of Wales' yacht, in a recent race bodes ill for the success of the *Valkyrie* in the coming International yacht race in New York. The *Valkyrie*, it is true, had her bowsprit carried away when within a mile of the finish, but the reports say she would have been second anyway, as the *Britannia* had outsailed her on all points. The performance of the *Valkyrie* must have proved a bitter disappointment to her plucky owner, who had her constructed especially to carry off the International cup, but still she may prove herself better adapted to the American course than the English, and the coveted prize may yet be won.

**THE GARDENS.**—We have had a late spring, but even now a visit to the Public Gardens will prove enjoyable, and it is surprising to note the rapidity with which vegetation has advanced within the past few days. The choice selection of shade trees have sprung into leaf, the well-tended lawns are emerald green, even the skillfully laid out flower beds are made attractive by foliage plants and the hardier flowers. Merry children romp along the paths or feed the stately swans and cackling geese. Nurse maids, as of yore, neglect their charges for their soldier lovers, and couples of higher degree spoon in secluded nooks or look suspiciously unconscious at the passer by. The Gardens, under the tasteful care of Supt. Power, are always a delight and pride to every citizen.

**TARIFF REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES.**—President Cleveland and his cabinet are now carefully studying the tariff, with the determination to meet the coming Congress with well digested recommendations for sweeping reductions in the present McKinley Act. This legislation will of course have to originate with Congress, but the President in his letter to that body has the privilege of recommending such legislation as he may deem essential, and as he is in political accord with both branches his opinions will carry weight. He is in receipt of communications from all sections of the Union giving the writers' views on tariff changes, but what particularly pleases the free traders is the summoning to Washington of David L. Wells, the great apostle of free trade, to consult with the administration on his pet theory.

**BOARD OF WORKS BOOK-KEEPING.**—The revelations made through the investigations of Mr. Scott into the method, or want of method, with which the books of the Board of Works have been kept show an inexcusable amount of carelessness that might have resulted in losing the city an immense amount of money. The perfect honesty and high character of clerk McNutt are guarantees that no loss was made to his profit, but the question arises, may not some scheming members of the board have profited largely through the laxity of the book-keeping? The miserable auditing of the books, the lack of vouchers, the unbalanced cash account, now make it almost impossible to answer this question with certainty, and we have to take with a grain of salt the statement that the city has not lost a dollar. Mr. Scott did his work as far as he went thoroughly and well, and his report was carefully drawn so as not to cast unjust suspicion on any one. Why then is he not allowed to complete his work? And why all this heat against him? This we confess is an indication of a guilty conscience somewhere, and in the interest of the public we demand a full and free investigation.

**WILL NORWAY SECEDE.**—Norway and Sweden have been going on so peacefully and prosperously of late years that the serious difficulty between the King of the united countries and his Norwegian subjects has caused surprise by its unexpectedness. The trouble arose through the refusal of the King to appoint Norwegians to the consular service. The Foreign Minister has always been a Swede, and as a consequence he has appointed his countrymen to diplomatic and consular positions. The Swedes have an hereditary nobility, but the Norwegians have not, and the titled members of the former nationality have been the more ornamental than useful representatives of the countries abroad. The Norwegians have their own parliament, the Storting or Great Court, consisting of one chamber, and a year ago it passed a bill providing for a separate consular service. This the King vetoed and the Ministry resigned. A compromise was effected by which the Ministry retained office, and the Storting voted the supplies, the King asking a year's postponement of the question. He did nothing however. The Storting has again convened and passed the vetoed bill only to be met by another veto, and now King and people are at sword's point. The Storting is elected for a fixed term of three years, only half of which term has expired, so the King cannot prorogue it and appeal to the people. In fact the Ministry has resigned and the Storting has adjourned without voting the supplies. A conflict seems unavoidable, and may end in the secession of Norway and the establishment of a republic.