

THE CRITIC:

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CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

EDITORIAL.	
The United States Navy	1, 2
For Free Speech	2
Alcoholic Heredity	2
Notes	1
CONTRIBUTED.	
Howe on Imperial Federation	F. Blake Crofton 6, 7
MISCELLANEOUS.	
Chit-Chat and Chuckles	3
News of the Week	4, 5
Poetry—Spare the Birds	6
Industrial Notes	7, 8
Leopards in India	8
Commercial	8, 9
Market Quotations	9
Serial—At Cross Purposes	10, 11
Mining	12, 13
Home and Farm	14, 15
Cheese	16
Draughts—Checkers	16

Few things in the economics of food are more to be desired than an increased cultivation of the vine, with its natural concomitant, a cheap and abundant supply of grapes. It is fully recognized by science that, as food for human beings, there is nothing in the vegetable world superior to grapes; and that they not only give strength, endurance and vivacity to those who regard themselves as well, but restore the sick and debilitated to health, when eaten freely during the vintage seasons of the year, in the vineyards, or fresh from the city markets.

The Virtues and their Reasons, a System of Ethics for Society and Schools, by Austin Bierbower, is highly spoken of in *Washington Public Opinion* as one of the good events of the day. It is said to be a plain, straightforward and practical work, presenting the principles of, and motives for, the morality common to all civilized races, without notice of religious differences. The arrangement is progressive and methodical, dealing first with altruistic duties, and then with duties relating to self. Such a text book may be quite worth the consideration of our own educational authorities. It is published by Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago.

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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.

Considering that the Parliament of Canada a few years ago gave \$100,000 towards the relief of famine in Ireland, it is not very gracious on the part of Mr. Wm. O'Brien to gloat over the prospect of trouble between the United States and the Dominion.

We have been asked several times lately to hint to some Halifax shopkeepers how nice it would be if their customers could always implicitly rely on their punctual performance of promises to deliver things at the precise times they engage to deliver, or have them ready.

There are a good many people in our good City of Halifax who do not seem to know that there is a rule of the pavement as well as a rule of the road. We cannot imagine what is the peculiar attraction of the inner side of the footways. Pedestrians should know that they ought to keep to their own right hand side whatever way they are going.

It has been noticed to us that, in the consideration of the assumption by Canada of some contribution to Imperial defence, her construction of the C. P. R., affording, as it does, the means of military transit, should stand as an important item. It is also stated that a recent negotiation for the transport of Troops over our great railway fell through, not from unreasonableness on the part of the Imperial Government, but from the unusually high rates insisted on by the C. P. R. management.

We cannot help fearing that the furore of Manitoba for railways, is, in the case of the proposed Hudson's Bay Line, outrunning discretion. None of the reports of the navigation of Hudson's Bay are of a nature to inspire hopes of its being open for a sufficient length of time in the year. Lt. Gordon's reports are far from encouraging. In 1857, the *Great Britain* conveyed a detachment of the Royal Canadian Rifles to York Factory. She entered the Strait on the 24th July, and sailed through over 900 miles of drift ice, which caused much damage to her. She left York Factory on the 18th September, again encountering heavy ice and intense cold. Other records give little better promise. We are afraid Manitoba is running her head against icebergs, and will throw away money to little purpose.

Mr. Thomas, the founder and proprietor of the *Graphic*, has been writing "all about" his paper, and much of what he tells us is interesting. When the *Graphic* reproduced Millais' extraordinarily popular picture "Cherry Ripe," which the great artist had painted from a niece of Mr. Thomas' as she was arrayed for a children's fancy dress ball, the sensation was extraordinary. They printed 500,000 copies. The publisher had to refund £4000 in hard cash for orders which could not be executed. A telegram (reply paid) was sent to Mr. Thomas with the suggestive query: "Is the mother of 'Cherry Ripe' a widow? Wire reply." And the amusing incident occurred quite lately of a lady calling at the *Graphic* office and offering to sell one of the prints they had issued with the Christmas number for a shilling, for £5.

Gilbert & Sullivan's new opera, the "Yeoman of the Guard," has scored immense success on its first night of representation. It is a less burlesque affair than its predecessors, and is more of a serio-comic production. Miss Geraldine Ulmar, a Bostonian, received a tremendous ovation in the principal part. A city contemporary has a notice of it, in which it is written—"Whether the piece will go in America with the success it is certain to have in London is a question. It is very English, which, while making it popular with a few will hurt it with many. The music is so good, however, that it is hard to believe it will not earn American forgiveness for such of the words as are suggestive of London Punch." Is it really possible that our cousins will graciously extend their forgiveness to anything English? It is true then that "the quality of mercy is not strained." How condescending, and good and charitable and ineffably amiable they must be!

Yesterday was the fourth anniversary of the first issue of THE CRITIC. It was predicted by persons who thought they had reason to know, that the Province would not support a high class Weekly, and that it would consequently die an early natural death. The unfavorable prophecy has, we are happily to say, been wide of the truth. THE CRITIC not only survives, but survives in honor and credit, to which frequent testimony is borne not only by the Press of Canada, but by a portion of that of Great Britain. It is no longer ago than the 14th ultimo that we found THE CRITIC quoted, by no means for the first time, in *Public Opinion*, and only last week that we were gratified with a strong expression of satisfaction from a Nova Scotia newspaper writer:—"I read THE CRITIC every week," said this gentleman, "with interest. I like its style, and its calm, dispassionate editorial writing." The testimony to the same effect which we receive from private persons is continuous. Our efforts not to lower the standard of the Press of Nova Scotia have been rewarded by a circulation which now amounts to 5,000, for which sterling-tribute of appreciation, we beg our subscribers, readers and friends, to accept our hearty thanks.

THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

Following up the apparently sound idea of heavily armored monitors of large tonnage, carrying few but heavy guns, and of a high rate of speed, plans are now in preparation for two single turreted monitors of 3500 tons displacement, designed for speed of 18 knots, and to carry a 16-inch rifled gun, throwing a shell of about a ton weight, calculated to pierce 30 inches of wrought iron. These tonnages ought to furnish a strong hint to the British Admiralty, to which we would also commend a consideration of what we conceive to be a very important point—the reduction of draught by expansion of beam. In this connection we particularly point out the dimensions of the new armored battleship *Texas*, to be built at Norfolk.