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EDITORIAL NOTES.

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A curious case of the heart being moved from the left to the right side is reported from a western American town. Last November a railway official was struck by a piece of rock and so crushed that all his internal organs were completely altered. The heart was twisted quite out of its normal position to the right side, and the unfortunate man gradually faded away till he expired at the end of last May, having puzzled the physicians by living so long with a displaced heart.

According to the census of illiteracy, we find that Roumania, Servia and Russia are extremely ignorant, 80 per cent, of the population being unable to read or write—a truly deplorable state of affairs. Spain comes next with 48 per cent; Hungary, 43; Ireland, 21; France and Belgium, each 15; England, 13; Scotland, 7; Switzerland, 2½; German Empire, 1; while in Sweden, Denmark, Bavaria, Baden and Wurtemberg not a single person over ten years of age is unable to read and write. Among the white population of the United States 8 per cent. are illiterate. The percentage in that country would be much greater if the negroes were included.

A new and brighter day has dawned for the Windsor and Annapolis Railway. For years this road has been conducted upon a short-sighted and illiberal policy, but since Mr. Campbell has assumed the management of the railway its affairs have been conducted in a progressive and business-like manner. With the completion of the missing link between Annapolis and Digby, Halifax now has all-rail communication with Yarmouth, and Mr. Campbell, with commendable enterprise, has grasped the situation, and will next week place upon the route the "Flying Bluenose," with parlor car attached. This train will leave Halifax at 9.15 a. m. and arrive in Yarmouth at 6 p. m.

The rhythmical stroke of the scythe-stone and the rattle of the mowing-machine, which are now being heard throughout the land, bring to mind the fact that most of our farmers do not cut their grass at the most suitable

season, but leave it until the seed is overripen. The proper time to turn grass into hay is immediately before the seed matures, for both the head and stalk are then abounding with nourishment, and the fodder formed is far more wholesome and palatable than would otherwise be the case. If left after this, all the nutritive parts will have gone towards forming the fruit, and the stalk will be hard and tough, like straw, in which condition it is of little use for provender. If let stand still longer, the seed drops out of the head and the whole plant becomes almost worthless. Now a great part of our grass is cut when in this desiccated state, and consequently is of very poor quality. Our agriculturists should recognize this fact, and by beginning the haying season some days earlier they would obtain very much better returns for their trouble, and would give satisfaction to those who are dependent upon them for their supply. It is a sad sight to see grass, otherwise excellent, standing in the fields to dry and brown until nearly valueless. If the farmer has not enough laborers to house the hay when in good condition, he should secure more help, for it is mistaken economy to let it remain uncut until dry and bleached in the sun.

The St. John Gazette holds up Venezuela as an example of a far away South-American Republic that has adopted a policy similar to the policy of the Conservative Party of Canada. It seems that Venezuela has refused to enter into reciprocal trade relations with the United States on the basis laid down by Secretary Blaine. The reasons given for this refusal are quite Spanish in their grandiloquence, and well calculated to deceive where the facts are not known. The truth about Venezuela is that her customs duties are almost prohibitive and are pledged to pay off the large loans made by the Government mainly in England and France. Knowing that the revenues when collected go to pay off the interest on the debt the customs officials, high and low, wink at smuggling, and it is carried in the principal ports in the most open and unblushing manner; a cargo of refined sugar, in one instance, having been smuggled in by one of the so called Venezuela men-of-war. Boodling in Venezuela may be said to have been reduced to a science, the officials from the president down to the coast guardsman all being on the alert to feather their own nests. In fact the minor officials have generally to forage for their salaries, government pay days being few and far between.

According to an Italian paper there has been a serious disturbance between the Greek and Latin Christians in the cave at Bethlehem (said to be part of the stable in which Our Lord was born). In order to divide the celebrants of the diverse rites there are two staircases leading to the grotto, one to the part used as a church by the Franciscan Fathers, the other to that part in which the Greeks conduct their religious services. It appears that for some time back the Greeks have wished to use for processional purposes the staircase reserved to the Latins. This the Franciscans have strenuously opposed, fearing that if the Greeks once used the staircase they would claim it as their own. An obstinate struggle took place in which the Greeks were worsted. Then followed a few days of peace—the Franciscans remaining on the watch in case the Greeks should renew the attempt. These latter, on the arrival of their new patriarch, began the attack, this time, however, they were armed with revolvers and knives. The edifying spectacle took place on a Friday. In consequence of information received by the guardian of the Convent of Bethlehem upon the evening of the attack the Franciscans had made preparations to resist the passage of the Greeks, five of the brotherhood taking their station near the great door, and others in the vicinity of the grotto. In the middle of the Greek mass the deacon appeared carrying the sacred elements upon a paten under which was concealed a knife. A Franciscan seeing him descend the staircase in question told him that he had no right to come that way. The deacon, without speaking, consigned the paten to an acolyte, leaped upon the monk and struck him with a knife. The thickness of the Franciscan's frock prevented the blow from taking effect. A second Franciscan rushed up to the assistance of his confrere and knocked the Greek down. A free fight ensued which was interrupted by the arrival of a Turkish guard. The Franciscans then retired. During their retreat a Greek fired his revolver at them, but the ball struck one of his own comrades. A picket of 100 soldiers was sent the same day from Jerusalem. The Mudir (prefect) assured the fathers that the Greeks would not be allowed to use the staircase. But in spite of his promise he, upon the next day, drew up his soldiers in line and allowed the Greeks to pass between them, laughing at the protests of the Franciscans. In consequence of these proceedings France has made representations to the Turkish Government. It is a sad fact that in the holy places of Palestine peace has for years been maintained only by the presence of Turkish soldiers. Such dissensions among Christians furnish a strange comment upon the words, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples that ye love one another."