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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 Democrats scored a great success in the United States last week, and it appears not unlikely that the next presidential election will also result in a victory for that party.

The final fiat has gone forth that Birchall must die. The executive refused to interfere with the course of justice, and to-day is set for the execution. Sincere pity for Mrs. Birchall will surely be the uppermost feeling in the hearts of all who have taken an interest in the case.

It begins to look as if there would be a notable shifting of party lines in Canada ere long. The great party which has been hitherto so closely identified with the Free Trade theory appears to have adopted at length a platform in which the chief plank is the practical assimilation of our fiscal system with that of the most intensely Protectionist of civilized nations. It is not argument, but mere definition, to point out that, of the two great parties in Canada, the face of the one is set toward the United States, that of the other toward Great Britain and her Colonial Empire. The two parties are beginning to divide sharply on these lines, which can hardly fail to result in much changing of allegiance. It remains to be seen which party is going to be the gainer by the process of exchange. After this recasting of parties shall have accomplished itself, it will by no means follow that all the adherents of the Liberal party are in favor of annexation and extreme protection, any more than that all the adherents of the Liberal-Conservative party are advocates of a moderate tariff and of Imperial Federation or Independence. But the party names will have lost all the little significance that now attaches to them, and the line of demarcation will be much more emphatic and impassable than it has hitherto been. The present condition of affairs is anomalous. The protectionists of Canada are looking eagerly toward a customs union with Free Trade Great Britain, on the basis of a very low differential duty. This, the Canadian Free Trade party declares can never be brought about. At the same time the Canadian Free Trade party itself is staking its hopes on the attainment of a measure of customs union with the Protectionist United States; and this the Americans declare most emphatically is not to be had save at the price of political union. When the policies of the two parties begin to diverge so sharply, and to aim at such widely opposite goals, it is incumbent on the citizen to cast aside all mere personal considerations, all mere accidents of administration, and to choose his party with a view to the fundamental principles at stake.

What will not woman's love survive? The bigamist Biglow, who is now in Kingston Penitentiary serving a term for being too much married, has been remembered by his first wife, recently deceased, in her will to the tune of \$30,000. This is a pretty substantial proof that her affection was not killed by her husband's desertion.

The city of St. John found and lost a hero in Frederick Young, who gave his own life on the 31st ult. in the effort to save Frederick Mundle from drowning. The effort was unavailing, and both young men went to the bottom. St. John gave the hero an immense funeral, and subscriptions are being taken for a suitable memorial to him—a memorial which will probably take the form of a statue, or arch-way, or perhaps, as some one suggested, a life-boat. It is well that the memory of noble deeds should be perpetuated.

An independent journal like *The Critic* is in a position to urge, without laying itself open to any imputations, the obligation under which every citizen rests to exercise his franchise. Those of us who are most frequently negligent or indifferent in this respect are the very ones on whom the obligation rests most heavily. The educated classes, the moneyed classes, all those who are so placed as to command a wide view of the country's needs, all those who are least likely to be swayed by interests merely local and personal,—it is among such as those that we find so much of that half contemptuous indifference which draws its cloak about it and ignores the politics of the day. The theory of democratic institutions rests largely on the supposition that the greatest wisdom is the wisdom of the majority. It follows directly enough from this that the greater the wisdom of the individual or the class, the heavier the political responsibility inhering with it. Those who stand aside from politics and excuse themselves on the ground that parties are ignorant and politicians corrupt are themselves in part to blame if their charges are not altogether untrue. The difficulty is as old as democracy itself, and came under the censure of Plato, who scourged the lofty indifference of certain cultured Athenians, who could nevertheless endure to be governed by those whom they regarded as inferiors. Here in Canada, where democracy has unimpeded sway, the citizen who will not exercise his franchise should forfeit it. In the problems which Canada has to face there is matter upon which the very wisest heads that we have been so fortunate as to meet with might exercise themselves without any great condescension.

The Moncton *Times* of last Friday contained an editorial article headed "The Holiday Nuisance," in which the opinion that a Thanksgiving Day is a superfluous holiday is expressed. It gives reasons why, in its opinion, the granting of a holiday for the purpose of giving thanks should be abolished, or at least, that a Sunday should be appointed instead for that purpose. It thinks that the subject should have the consideration of the press and public men, with a view to the doing away with holidays that have no significance or good effect. "The loss of labor," it says, "is very large, the waste of money, needed at the approach of winter, must be considerable, and the commencement of a life of dissipation often, no doubt, dates from this day of idleness." Now, while there is some force in the argument that a good deal of money is spent, possibly wasted, on holidays in general, we venture to think that Thanksgiving Day is the less to be objected to on this account than any other holiday in the calendar. In the city of Halifax Thanksgiving Day is observed in a highly commendable manner, the churches are fairly well attended, and the sentiment of dependence upon the Almighty, of which the day is expressive, must and does have a beneficial effect on many of our fellow citizens. Like most newspaper men, we find it hard to get a holiday at any time, but we think it would be a distinct loss to our broad Dominion if a public Thanksgiving Day were to be abolished. The holiday may cause inconvenience to some people, but they are a small minority, and in many cases where it is found necessary work can be carried on with but little trouble. No one is bound to be idle because of a holiday. And this year the day itself was so perfectly beautiful that it alone was enough to make one feel thankful, and there are few people among those who enjoyed an outing on Thursday of last week who did not feel that a Thanksgiving Day is an appropriate and beautiful way of acknowledging our dependence upon the bountiful Lord of the harvest. No, we cannot agree with the *Times* in this matter. If any holiday must give away to the pressure of business, we judge that New Year's Day would be the more easily sacrificed, although, as the *Times* says, it comes at the end of a week of "elevating social enjoyment," and a rest is desirable. It would be interesting to learn what the public have to say on the subject. If any person cares to discuss the pro's and con's we will be happy to publish their communication.