

# THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal

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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.

There is cold comfort for our Nova Scotian heads of families in M. Victor Meunier's recent suggestions on the servant question. This eminent naturalist thinks since indolent domestic servants are becoming more prevalent, that anthropoid apes might be captured and given a thorough course of training in household works. M. Meunier claims to have trained several of the animals successfully, and cites many incidents in which they have been found skilful and apt servants. It occurs to us, however, that if the same patient training were given to our raw country girls there will be no need for us to resort to introducing grimacing quadrupeds among our startled families.

The Indians and half breeds on both sides of the boundary line seem to have breathed in from some unknown source a desire to get ahead of those much-suffering individuals who constitute the travelling public. Relic hunters are frequently induced by them to purchase very modern antiquities. In an Indian store near Bismarck a regular stock of relics is kept on hand—Navajo blankets (from Massachusetts) Indian pipes (from Connecticut) tom-toms (made of Government cheese-boxes covered with sheep-skin) and most profitable of all the historic bows and arrows which have figured in Indian uprisings. The Apaches, who long ago discarded spears, are now supplying the trade with them, while the purchasers are given their choice, so to speak, of any interesting legend which they care to connect with their new possession.

We are glad to note that henceforward the after-dinner toast of "The Colonies" is to be given at all public banquets in England. This recognition should long ago have been given them by the feasting Britons. But we wonder what definite vision will arise before the speaker's eye when he calls the toast—will the icy mountains and the coral strand appear simultaneously before his inner vision, the whooping Indian or the devoted missionary, the crafty Hindoo or the bushman of Australia. All the types are represented in the Colonies, and too often the ordinary Briton thinks of the colonial dependencies as a vast combination of dissimilar peoples. What is wanted is a careful recognition of each colony by the proper officials. Maps indicating climate, soil, products, prices and population should be placed in all schools, railway stations and public buildings. Emigration being thus intelligently promoted, fewer mistakes would be made by settlers, and when such a state of affairs exists the toast of "The Colonies" will be drunk with a proper understanding.

A little matter has come up between Australia and Great Britain which is of particular interest to Canadians. The Australians complain that the French Islands in the New Hebrides, which are used as penal settlements,

are hurtful to the whole group of islands. More than that these French outcasts are very carelessly looked after, as they often escape and make their homes in Australia. The grievance is so great that the Australians suggest that if Great Britain will purchase the islands they will agree to the confederation of the Australian colonies. Doubtless in Australia there are special reasons for keeping out a modern generation of criminals, but in Canada, too, we feel not a little annoyance from the nearness of the French possessions of St. Pierre and Miquelon, to say nothing of the debatable French coast of Newfoundland, and if Great Britain is to buy French land why should she not include this troublesome territory in her purchase. It is by no means improbable that Newfoundland would enter amicably into confederation if the island and coast difficulties could be peaceably solved. The policy of France regarding the sales is not as yet known. It is the fashion of the French Congress at present to boast of her possessions in foreign lands. The offering of money as purchasing power would probably be construed as an insult from the "nation of shop-keepers." But an exchange of land for land might be satisfactory to all parties concerned. Our chief interest in the event is for the welfare of Canada and for Newfoundland, and we would welcome a policy which would lead to the adoption of "the tie that binds."

The Presidential election shortly to be begun in the United States is not the only national contest of the month. The general Italian elections are set for a date a few days later, and a hot struggle is likely to ensue between the Government of the present Premier, Giolitti, and the ex-Premier Crispi. The chief difficulty in the administration of any modern Italian Government has been the disposition of the State Revenues, which have been inadequate to meet the demands made upon them. The expense of maintaining a large army and navy has crippled all efforts to develop the natural resources of the country. The roads, railways and telegraphs are all maintained at the expense of tax-payers. Crispi, if elected, promises to cheapen the method of Government by removing some hundreds of inefficient and unnecessary Government employees, and to make a stand against the common practice of diverting public money into private channels. Crispi is without doubt the popular candidate with the less well-to-do portion of the people, and as the franchise is a liberal one, giving votes to all citizens who are over twenty-one years of age, who are able to read and write, who pay taxes to the amount of \$3.75 per year, he will doubtless poll a large vote, while on the other hand the present Premier has a fine opportunity of using boodle in the campaign. The elections are not wholly decided by the majority vote, as each deputy needs not only to be elected in his own district, but must also be able to claim one-fourth of the whole enrolled vote. Second district elections are very usual, and naturally they result as a rule in the support of the members of the successful party in the national contest. In fact the 13th of November promises to be as exciting a day in the classic country as the 8th of November will be to the people of the United States.

The sad illness and death of Mrs. Harrison at the present political juncture has caused much heart-felt sympathy for the Republican candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Mrs. Harrison has been an able help-mate to her husband, together they have struggled in obscurity, with empty purses, and her husband attributes not a little of his success to her ever ready interest in his affairs. The President and his wife have been a typical American couple. At the time of their marriage they could not afford a home of their own, and the young wife was installed with his family at the Harrison homestead until the youthful husband had become a full-fledged lawyer. After the first child was born the young couple flitted into a home of their own—a tiny three-roomed cottage with a lean-to kitchen. The humble home was a happy one—the husband and wife being willing to accept privation for the sake of being together. The President shared in the daily labors, cutting the wood, or filling the water pails before office hours, and it was not until 1860 that prosperity dawned upon the devoted pair. Then Mr. Harrison was appointed reporter of the Supreme Court, and, with the comfortable salary attached, it was no longer necessary to keep up a perpetual warfare with the wolf at the door. With her great natural tact Mrs. Harrison was as much at home in the stately White House as in her first cottage. Her sweetness of mind and disposition endeared her to all who came in contact with her. Her high moral character won the approval of those who differed with her husband on political grounds. The crowned heads of Europe, the Pope and others high in worldly rank, have sent messages of sympathy to the stricken husband. Cleveland, too, has sent a manly word of condolence, and people of all classes in the nation are united in their praises of the dead woman. And yet we cannot but turn from the grave with an appreciative thought for the will power of the man and woman who carved their way so patiently and steadily to the highest position which the American Republic affords.