

# THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal.

DEVOTED TO

Commerce, Manufacturing, Mining and Agriculture.

1.50 PER ANNUM.  
INGLE COPY 5 CTS. }

HALIFAX, N. S., APRIL 12, 1889.

{ VOL 6  
No. 15 }

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## THE CRITIC,

Published every Friday, at 161 Hollis Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia

BY

CRITIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Edited by C. F. FRASER.

Subscription \$1.50 per annum in advance. Single copies 5 cents.

SAMPLE COPIES SENT FREE.

Remittances should be made to A. M. FRASER, BUSINESS MANAGER.

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.

"Dr. Goldwin Smith," says the *Colonies and India*, "has written another letter to the *Times* on Canadian affairs. It is very hard lines on the Canadians that they should be obliged to afford shelter and hospitality to one who, like the Oxford Professor, while residing in their midst, is doing his best to undermine their loyalty, and to teach them that it is their interest to leave the old flag, and to ally themselves to an alien state. We entirely agree. It is a pity Dr. Smith has not some definite employment. He is a conspicuous illustration of (we think) Dr. Watts' line, 'The devil still some mischief finds for idle hands to do.'"

It is very satisfactory to find it recorded that the great wine industry of France is recovering from its long depression. Some years since the yield of wine per acre, of 5,000,000 acres, was about 250 gallons, but the Phylloxera came from America, where it is comparatively harmless, and the yield was reduced to an infinitesimal proportion. The Concord grape was then tried, and suffering but little, or not at all, and also yielding abundantly, it was soon planted over an immense area. Other vines which are Phylloxera-proof were also planted, and it is now confidently expected that, in a very few years the yield of wine will be as great as in the best year before the plague appeared. The scarcity of the grape has for years past led to the use of raisins, which not only produce a very poor wine, but lead to a very prejudicial adulteration.

The *New York Nation*, a paper whose favorable literary notices are an evidence of merit, has the following on Mr. F. Blake Crofton's "Haliburton." "The 'Haliburton' of Windsor, N. S., has just printed a paper by Mr. F. B. Crofton, of Halifax, the first of a proposed series of annual publications. It is a very scholarly and appreciative sketch of the greatest of Nova Scotian writers, and one whose influence was very marked on certain characteristic departments of American literature. Though there are few readers of the *Clock-maker* to-day, yet many of Sam Slick's shrewd sayings have become household words. Mr. Crofton takes this occasion to correct several blunders in the various biographical notices of Judge Haliburton, two of which, we regret to see, are faithfully copied by the editors of Appleton's *Cyclopedia of American Biography*."

Fifteen duels and sixteen suicides are said to have been the ghastly record of Monte Carlo since the New Year. Surely it is time some stops should be taken to stop the "carnival of crime" that unceasingly flourishes in this wretched little principality, which covers about six square miles of territory, and has a population of less than 14,000. The very existence of such a state, in which the moral sentiment of the community is overwhelmed by avarice and greed of gain, is an anomaly and a scandal.

Among other public conveniences which would be put a stop to by the passage of the proposed new Sunday Bill would be the Dartmouth Ferry-boat, and a very great inconvenience such a stoppage would be. As we have elsewhere observed, fortunately the Press is a unit on this attempt to override reason and common sense by narrowness and intolerance. The *Echo* has adopted the ingenious idea of a ballot on the question, and a correspondent (Adam Smith) in the *Mail* has a very smartly written letter about it, full of common sense, which we confidently look to see prevail.

We said last week that we would see in our present issue to what extent our own fair ladies are responsible for the terrible destruction of our birds—and a competent ornithological authority estimates that two-thirds of the victims of a cruel fashion are song birds. Mr. Piers, some statistics from whose appeal we quoted, has made some observations in his walks about Halifax, which, tho' not exhaustive, very likely involve a fairly proportionate estimate. As the result of partial investigation, he counted, in 6 days, 150 hats, out of which 109 (over two-thirds) bore the spoils of the wholesale slaughter of innocents. When will the fair sex take thought of compassion and humanity?

A remarkable increase of population is observable at the Sault Ste. Marie. In 1870, at the time of the first Red River Expedition, there might have been 100 to 150 inhabitants. It probably remained stationary, or increased but very slowly, for several years, for, in 1887, there were only 300. But in April, 1888, there were 1,820. Last year there were 1,020 arrivals, and the present population is 3,500, a good number of which are supposed to consist of Canadian families who crossed over to the American side two or three years ago, and have now returned. Every year the construction of a railway to create immigration is more and more seen to be justified.

The recent Scott Act elections have fully borne out our anticipations of the continuance of a re-actionary feeling. The decision adverse to the Act of nine counties in Ontario last year has been called a Waterloo. It may now be relegated back to the position of a Leipsic. Last week's action would seem to be the Waterloo. Eleven counties and two cities in Ontario, and the County of Colchester in Nova Scotia, have rejected the Act. No doubt the repeal was supported by numerous Prohibitionists dissatisfied with the working and efficiency of the measure, but there is probably a large margin of dislike to measures which promote all sorts of underhand work and do but very little real good.

There is a rumor afloat that the *London Times* may be financially ruined "as well," says our authority, "as in reputation," by the failure of its attempt to prove Mr. Parnell guilty of complicity in crime. As for the "reputation," public sentiment wearies of all scandals after a time, and in a year or two the *Times* would probably be little the worse for wear in that respect. But its expenses before the commission were enormous, and it is currently reported that an attempt has been made to dispose of the paper to a limited liability company in order to give it a fresh start. This may be true, but it has been generally supposed that the *Times* was rich enough to pull through even such an ordeal as this failure has been. Curiously enough, the paper went through a nearly similar crisis about 100 years ago.

Father Chiniquy, who has been lecturing recently on the Jesuits, has a singular and not very credible story about the death of President Lincoln. It is to this effect: that eleven Jesuits who were present and heard Lincoln's address determined to murder the President, and break up the republic in the interests of France. Lincoln knew it, and told Chiniquy so. A priest who came from Rome told Chiniquy that the plot had been all arranged, and another priest told a friend of Lincoln's the same story. He (Chiniquy) traced Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, to the house of the priest who formed the plot and another who was implicated in the murder was shielded by the priests of Canada and Rome. It is to be supposed the Rev. Father believes this "wonderful history" himself, but we should think very few of his hearers will, unless they are of the type of the disciples of Ignatius Donnelly.