

THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal.

DEVOTED TO

Commerce, Manufacturing, Mining and Agriculture.

\$1.50 PER ANNUM. }
SINGLE COPY 5 CTS. }

HALIFAX, N. S., JANUARY 16, 1891.

{ VOL 8
No. 3

CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

EDITORIAL NOTES	1, 2
CONTRIBUTED.	
New York Letter	Sophie M. Almon Hensley 6, 7
MISCELLANEOUS.	
Chit-Chat and Chuckles	3
Chess	4
News of the Week	4, 5, 6
Poetry—Rue	6
In Our Years	7
Industrial Notes	7
City Chimes	8, 9
Commercial	8, 9
Market Quotations	10, 11
Serial—My Lady's Walk	12, 13
Mining	12, 13
Poetry—The Angel of Death	14
A New Old Song	14
The Character of Cleopatra	14
Draughts—Checkers	15

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.

Of *Punch* we should never have predicted it; yet now, when here in Canada we begin to think we have had enough of special Christmas issues, we behold the great conservative joker out with a Christmas edition. Still more astonishing, however, is the news that four of the big London dailies are casting tradition to the winds and adopting the less unwieldy form of the American newspaper. This is surely the apotheosis of the American journal, which, in soaring to its present lofty heights, kindly lets its mantle fall on the reverently watching London.

There seems to be a race just now between Germany and England, in the matter of annexing unappropriated territories. The British man-of-war *Egeria*, cruising from Hong Kong to Vancouver, has been hoisting the Union Jack over every island its commander could find which was not already "under the protection of any foreign power." At the same time Germany is on the alert to get a share of the spoils. While islands are going, she signifies her intention of being on hand. She has sent out an expedition from her lately acquired territory of the Marshall Islands, and by this time doubtless her flag is flying over what are known as the Gilbert Islands. Meanwhile Spain is having a hard time to keep possession of those islands which she already has. With her usual fatuity she has excited an insurrection in the Caroline Islands, whose inhabitants ill endure the outrages of their Spanish masters. In spite of the superior weapons of the Spanish soldiery, the natives are giving their conquerors a very bad quarter of an hour.

According to a recent Japanese official return, the population of the country on January 31 last was 40,072,020, of which 20,245,336 were males and 19,825,684 were females. The number of inhabited houses was 7,840,872. Arranged according to social status, there were 3,825 nobles, of whom 593 were the heads of families; 1,993,637 *shizoku*, or members of the old military class, of whom 430,411 were the heads of families; and 38,074,558 "common people," 7,736,764 being the heads of families. There were 7,445,119 married couples. During the year the number of births was 1,209,910; 617,863 of the children being males and 592,047 females. The deaths numbered 808,600. There were 340,445 marriages and 107,478 divorces, while 15,711 Japanese emigrated abroad. The number of divorces is rather astonishing. When nearly a third of the marriages are dissolved we should judge that the Japs find marriage a failure in too many cases.

Halifax is not a bad place to live in. During the gale on Monday we certainly had a high tide, but we did not suffer as St. John did. The tide there was higher than at the time of the Saxby gale, covering every wharf in the city and flooding the stores on the south wharf, west of Ward Street and all west of Nelson Street on the north wharf, to the depth of eighteen or twenty inches. The total loss will be heavy, although individual merchants will not lose very heavily. Annapolis, Shelburne and other places also suffered by the tide considerably. We may congratulate ourselves once more on our immunity from visitations of this sort.

Latest reports from the Argentine Republic show that the Government is grappling seriously, and, as far as could be expected, successfully, with the desperate financial difficulties into which the country was plunged by the late rotten administration. Gold is still at an appalling premium, but confidence is returning and enterprise awakening. A treaty of commercial reciprocity has been negotiated with the new Republic of Brazil, and a similar one is under discussion with Uruguay. The city of Buenos Ayres has a busy population of over half a million,—or, to be exact, 557,711. There is perhaps no other population in the world which patronizes so liberally its numerous horse car systems; and now an elevated railway is to be built, the success of which is practically assured.

A daily contemporary gives prominence to the discovery recently made that flour thrown on burning oil will extinguish it instantly. The discovery was accidentally made by an old lady who was coming out of a pantry with a pan of flour, when a lamp exploded and the oil was at once in flames. In her fright she dropped the pan of flour, which, falling on the burning oil, extinguished it. The device was afterwards tested by others, and is, as our contemporary suggests, worth making a note of. The chief trouble with notes of this kind, mental or otherwise, is that we are liable to forget all about them in an emergency. If a lamp explosion takes place in a drawing room, bed room, or any other room at a distance from the store room, we fear that all the notes in the world would scarcely avail to get the flour brought in in time to prevent a conflagration.

There has at length been found a country which exclaims not "The Chinese must go!" but "The Chinese must come!" This country is Mexico. The Aztec republic is rich in natural resources, but her people were born tired. There is work to be done in Mexico, but few are equal to the exertion of doing it. In this emergency the Government opens its eyes to the excellent qualities of the Chinese labor, who will work twice as hard as the Mexican, and for half the pay. Mexico has railroads to be built and mines to be opened up, and we cannot but think there is sound economics in the present policy of the Government, by which Chinese immigration receives substantial encouragement. A new steamship line has been established between Hong Kong and Mexico, and on the first trip made by a vessel of this line five hundred Chinese laborers were brought over to work on the Tehauntepec railroad. The Mexican Government expects to import at least 20,000 Chinamen this year.

Three months ago, more or less, a lady of our acquaintance, in common with many other victims, had her curiosity aroused by a very attractive advertisement, which took up a square foot of space in many newspapers. It held out the glorious inducement of a free trip to Europe and \$200 for expenses, and several other things, among them a seal sacque, to those who would send in the largest list of words made from the letters contained in the sentence "British North America," to *The Canadian Queen*. Well, as above stated, this lady had her curiosity aroused and wanted to see what the end would be. Following up this idea she made a long list of words, which she sent, together with the dollar subscription, to *The Canadian Queen*. After many days, and writing twice to enquire, she received an acknowledgment of the same, and prepared to wait in patience until the final award. She did not win the trip to Europe, nor yet the seal sacque, but having received notice to send twenty-five cents to pay for the packing of her prize, it was sent, as the lady still wanted to see the thing out to the end. She received by mail last week a butter knife, and everybody else we hear of got the same valuable piece of plate for their trouble. Having got her money's worth of satisfied curiosity out of this competition our friend is willing to part with the butter knife cheap for cash. This competition has been well managed—for the *Queen*, and we notice that another on the same lines is now announced, the chief prize being a free education or one year abroad. The big prize winner deserves to be congratulated, but after our friend's experience even a free education has no charms for us. A year abroad is enticing, but the danger of winning a butter knife is too appalling.