

# 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.

**AN UNKNOWN BENEFACTOR**—There died recently a man whose bright thought and inventive genius has benefitted millions of people who have never so much as given him a grateful thought. We refer to that aged inventor who many years ago invented and introduced the baggage check for travellers. His invention is now in use in all parts of this continent, and in many portions of Europe there are indications that the old world "lose your trunk" system will be discarded in favor of the more rational and modern method.

**A RECENT VIEW OF CONSUMPTION.**—Dr. Biggs, the Bacteriologist to the New York Board of Health, has for many years been making a study of the various forms of disease which are classed under the term consumption. He reports that during the past year there have been over 6,000 deaths from the disease in the City of New York, and he points out that if the popular idea was that consumption is a contagious disease the people would co-operate with the health authorities in endeavoring to stop its progress. He claims that no epidemic of cholera, fever, or small pox would be so fatal in so short a time, and he dwells especially on the fact that the disease does not die out in the course of time as do the above named maladies, but that the mortality in the ensuing years is more likely to increase than to decrease. Dr. Biggs does not believe that consumption is hereditary, although the liability to contract the disease may be so. He claims that it is mildly contagious, and that all who now suffer from the disease have contracted it from some person whose constitution is already affected. Dr. Biggs believes that the disease in many of its earlier forms is curable, and that if the public would but co-operate with the health authorities that the disease might be stamped out within the limits of one generation. He suggests the establishment of consumptive hospitals, in which by means of properly graded wards it would be possible to repair patients in the early stages of the disease from those in whom the disease has made further progress. These hospitals to be effective should be made compulsory to all persons affected with the disease, and every physician should be required to send to the Board of Health the address of every consumptive patient with whom he came in contact. By these means the disease would be isolated, the danger of infection would be checked, and the patients in the earlier stages of the disease would stand a better chance of recovery.

**CHEATED YOUNG GIRLS.**—A contemptible fraud has been perpetrated upon a number of young girls living in or near one of our Canadian cities, and it is but fair to give some account of the method employed, lest dupes be found for the same trick among our Provincial maidens. The plan was for a self-styled "employment firm" to advertise for applications from lady-type-writers. Hundreds of applications poured in and each girl was informed that if she would but enclose 25 cents in silver the address of a firm in need of her services would be sent her. The promise was then carried out. Each girl obtained the address of a genuine firm, but on presenting her application she invariably found that there either was no vacancy, or that if there by chance had been one that hundreds of applications for the position had already been received. The detectives at last, by a decoy letter, caught the miserable sneaks who were carrying on the fraudulent business, and if justice does not mis-carry they will enjoy a term or so of penitentiary life.

**WHEN WINTER COMES.**—The weather-prophets are shaking their heads over the weather forecasts for 1893-1894. Prof. W. H. Smith, of Montreal, predicts a cold, dry winter with an abundance of snow storms and the usual January thaw. The prognostications of local weather prophets are not unlike those of the acknowledged authority, although the conclusions are by no means based on similar premises. An aged farmer in New York State has noted a half dozen signs which, to him, are indicative of an exceptionally large and that the squirrels and chipmunks have laid in larger stores of these winter edibles, as proving conclusively that nature is providing for her changes during a coming bitter season. He notes that both partridges and woodcocks are coming close to houses and barns instead of keeping at a safe distance from the dwellings of human beings, and that the green frogs have already changed their skins. In the Province of Quebec similar observations have been recorded by observant farmers, and the conclusions of these natural wisecracks taken in connection with the official announcement would indicate that a period of bitter winter weather is not far removed.

**THE LESSER ECONOMICS.**—A shrewd old farmer who has been much exercised by the complaints from his neighbors of the hard times from which they were suffering, has been led into a few crisp statements as to the cause of the "so called" hard time, which, however, from his stand-point he is unable to see. He points out the wasteful policy of the people, who are content to buy their fencings, their wooden axe-handles and all the small but indispensable wood necessities of life, while at the same time they are content to allow the timber to rot on their uncleared lands. He asks why people should throw their ashes away and then complain that they must buy soap and axle grease? Why the manure should be let go to waste and the expensive guano used in its stead. Why it is necessary to buy winter vegetables when the seed and the garden plot can both be had in the spring, and lastly why the people who are paying for schoolhouses and for the salaries of school teachers should insist on losing the advantage of this investment by sending their children away to boarding school. It appears to us that the old farmer has got to the bottom of the matter, and that if there were but more like him among our Provincial agriculturists there would be fewer complaints about a condition of affairs which their own unnoticed extravagances have brought about.

**MARRIED FOR TITLE AND MONEY.**—Another text has arisen from which the frequent unhappiness of unions between the titled noblemen of Europe and the wealthy heiresses of America, may be preached. It is already a notable fact that the majority of such marriages are not happy ones. The husband who seeks to repair his shattered fortunes by getting his hand into the coffers of his father-in-law is usually a poor sort of a match who would not easily find a wealthy wife in his own country. On his marriage with the American heiress he is apt to patronize her on the question of "family," and he quite ignores the doctrine which is generally believed on this side of the water, that it is not notable ancestors but notable descendants which are wanted at the present day. The bait which he can offer of a title and of a cash is too often sufficient, and the girl finds herself in an alien life, cut off from friends and perhaps even the language of her youth. The Princess Colonna, the adopted daughter of John W. MacKay, is now petitioning for a divorce from her titled but rascally husband on the grounds of ill-treatment and of unfaithfulness. The petition will probably be allowed, but under the French law her husband can still claim support from his wife's estate, so that although the union may be dissolved, the one thing which the man thought indispensable to his marriage—the gold of the Bonanza King—will still be his. For his duped wife, who is the mother of his three small children, whose life has been despoiled of what should have been its happiest years, there can be but deep sympathy felt.