

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 proving 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.

Since the paragraph relating to Sir Provo Wallis (on the next page) was in print, a cablegram from England announced that Admiral John E. Commerel, V. C., has been selected by Her Majesty for promotion to the rank of Admiral of the Fleet. The information in our note regarding the promotion was drawn from a reliable English source, but of course the cablegram is decisive.

That Blaine divorce story is very sad. It appears to have been a foolish marriage, and the only result was unhappiness. When a boy of eighteen years of age marries without parental approval a woman several years his senior, the outlook for the future is not bright. The sequel is known to all. The divorce bill has been gone through, Mrs. Blaine is free, Mr. Blaine, senior, (Secretary Blaine) has made public a long list of statements about his son's former wife, and the divorced woman has replied in an equally public manner. All this domestic infelicity should have been kept quiet. The public has no legitimate interest in it, and if the persons concerned were not so prominent it would remain in obscurity.

Our intelligent readers will no doubt recollect hearing of M. Pasteur's researches in 1881 into the causes of an outbreak of splenic fever or anthrax among cattle, and his tracing the origin of the epidemic to the germs of the disease which had been carried to the surface by earthworms from the soil in which the bodies of animals dying from a previous epidemic had been buried. The startling possibility is now suggested by M. M. Lortet and Despeignes to the Paris Academy of Science that earthworms may form vehicles or media for the conveyance of the germs of tubercle, of which consumption is the common manifestation. The observers have discovered that the tubercle bacilli can remain with unimpaired vitality for several months within these worms, and the fact, new to science, (tubercle has not heretofore been associated with invertebrates,) possesses a keen interest for the ordinary unscientific mortal. The vicinity of cemeteries has never been considered salubrious, but if we are to believe this new germ terror, it must be exceedingly dangerous to go near such places. If "my lady worm" is going to make our buried friends or enemies so dangerous by carrying infection from them to us, it appears to argue for the crematory as a better method of disposing of those who have shuffled or been shuffled off this mortal coil. It will come to this in the end no doubt, but we are slow to change burial customs.

The interest taken by the British colonies in the World's Fair is considerable. When the totals are counted up they make a pretty round sum. The amounts voted by the various colonial governments already come to about \$375,000, three times the appropriation made by Britain—\$125,000—and large additions will be made to this amount when other colonies announce the amounts they intend to spend. Our own country has not yet stated what our expenditure will be, but if in keeping with the space appropriated, it will be considerable. The total area allotted to Great Britain and the colonies will probably be about 300,000 square feet, and if the demands of the colonies are to be all met this will have to be augmented by annexes or other means, for New South Wales has applied for the whole 300,000 feet, and other known demands bring the total area required up to 500,000 feet, without any thought of the space wanted by the mother country. It is evidently going to be a difficult matter to provide all the space required, and we fancy the Fair will be truly the biggest show on earth.

Speaking incidentally of the Provincial Museum elsewhere in this issue recalls to mind the project broached some time ago of obtaining more convenient accommodation for that most valuable institution. It is more than a pity that the museum should continue to remain where it is so long without an enthusiastic scientific man in charge, and altogether out of the way of being much good to anybody. If ever there were a Provincial concern needing to be brought out and worked up to a state of usefulness such as it is capable of, it is the museum. Many people do not know there is such a thing as a museum in Halifax, and many others who are perfectly aware of the fact would not take the trouble to mount the stairs to get to it. We suppose that some day a building will be obtained in which the museum will have room to expand, but time is flying past and we do not appear to be getting any nearer to the desired consummation. At any rate it would seem a desirable thing for the Government to appoint a scientific man to take the place of the late Dr. Honeyman and work the museum up to the best that can be done in the present premises.

The enlightened sentiment of the time is very much against any form of harshness or severity in the bringing up of children, and those who recognize that "it is better far to rule by love than fear" have got to the very root of the matter. Such a revelation of cruelty as that from Cromore House, Coleraine, Ireland, where Mrs. Montague, with a rigor almost undreamed of among parents of the modern school, caused the death of her three-year-old daughter by tying her fast to the wall in an empty, darkened room and leaving her there, is a shock to the civilized world. Such unnatural behaviour on the part of a mother is difficult to understand; the very brutes are kind to their offspring, and we should think that every woman who has a child of her own would be more inclined to err on the side of excessive tenderness and love than to cause it needless suffering. Children are the joy of a household, and it is only hard, unfeeling, heartless people who could ill-treat those who are so helpless in their earlier years, and who, it seems, are allowed to be so, in order that some of the noblest and best characteristics of the human race should find expression in love and care for them.

We note with pleasure the interest which is shown by many manufacturers in the improvement of the condition of the working-man. In Nova Scotia the co-operative labor scheme is as yet little in vogue, but our controllers of capital are closely watching the experiment as tried in the United States. The case of Mr. Albert Dolge, of Dolgeville, is a favorable instance of the success of the co-operative plan. For twenty-three years the factories and mills of Dolgeville, which by-the-by is a model industrial village engaged in the manufacture of felting, have enjoyed the benefits of co-operative labor. Mr. Dolge's system has been both economic and just. One chief object of his scheme has been to retain skilled laborers permanently. To secure this the wear and tear on the workmen has been carefully taken into account, an accident and life insurance company providing for the future of his family and a pension fund providing for his advancing age. The inventive genius of the workmen is encouraged by the fact that the profit arising from any invention or improvement in the machinery made by an employe goes directly to the employe. On the other hand, if raw material is purchased cheaply through the shrewdness of the management the profit goes to that department. A labor depreciation fund has been the safety-valve in years of bad trade. Last year the number of hours work per day was reduced and the wages increased 12 per cent. This year a raise of 10 per cent. has been given. Yet the profits of the business allow Mr. Dolge to make generous gifts to his town. The handsome brick school-house, the kindergarten and the free library are lasting monuments of his good sense. And all this without hysterical nonsense and gush over "the rights of the lower classes."