

# 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 rejecting 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.

France and Morocco have been disputing over the sovereignty of the Touat or is, but the difficulty has been settled and terms arranged in favor of the former country. France will henceforth have the right to establish a small garrison in the districts and to control caravans passing through the country, as well as levy a small tax on merchandise.

"The father of the fleet," Sir Provo W. P. Wallis, G. C. B., died at Funtington, Chichester, England, on Saturday, at the age of one hundred and one years. This veteran commander was born at Halifax on April 12th, 1792, and early went to sea. His has been a remarkable career, but as we have in time past enlarged upon it we will refrain at present. It is to be hoped that some demonstration of respect from the English nation will not be lacking now that the "hero of a hundred fights" is dead. At the time of the celebration of his 100th birthday anniversary, it was remarked as rather extraordinary that nothing special was done to celebrate the event, but it was explained that because of the feebleness attendant on his age it would have been dangerous to Sir Provo's life to induce any excitement at that time. That excuse cannot now be urged, and some tribute to the memory of one who saw active service for his country ere the days of steam arrived, would be fitting.

Lady Florence Dixie, who has been a great sport in her day, has come out in the *Westminster Review* with a long arraignment of her former deeds. This lady has succeeded in creating several sensations in her time, and now (perhaps she is growing too old for active participation) she has become too soft-hearted to continue the "female Nimrod" role any longer. Sporting folk will pooch-pooch her ladyship's ideas no doubt, and just as many poor little rabbits and foxes, will be run down for "sport." Men must have some way of working off their superabundant energy, and as hunting is not half as bad as many other diversions, they may as well be allowed to follow their inclinations in reason. Not that we think the kind of sport pursued in England, for instance, is ennobling; far from it, but the world cannot be made perfect in a hurry, and men have yet to learn how to pass their time absolutely harmlessly. Lady Dixie's is an interesting experience, and we do not wonder that the dying sufferings of the victims of her skill haunt her with a "huge reproach," for she appears to have done an unusual and varied amount of killing.

We wonder if the defenders of vivisection will find anything to admire in the story of brutality told by James Payn, in the *Illustrated News of the World* for Feb. 13th. People who uphold the practice of cruel experiments on dumb animals usually do so on the ground that the ultimate benefit to mankind outweighs the pain suffered by the animals, but they are advocating they know not what. Mr. Payn's story, for instance, is but a glimpse of the horrors of the vivisection room. It was a case where murder had been committed in Paris by pouring molten lead into a drugged man's ear, and it was sought to be established that the pain must have awakened him. To this end two doctors got a dog and experimented upon it in a similar fashion, with the result that suffering passing description ensued. "It was so frantic with pain that it shook off the straps that fastened it down to the torture-table like rotten pack thread," says an eye witness in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Mr. Payn continues, "The names of these fiendish miscreants are not given, but if the College of Surgeons in Paris takes no steps to discover them we shall know what to think of the College of Surgeons in Paris." Kindness to animals is one of man's noblest characteristics, and should be inculcated from early childhood. One can understand ignorant man abusing the dumb creatures, but when so-called educated and cultivated men, such as physicians, disgrace themselves with exhibitions of callousness like that related, we blush for our kind.

In November, 1890, the first national parliament of Japan, which was the outcome of the constitution granted to the people by the Emperor, Mutsu Hito, met for the transaction of business. In view of the extreme antiquity of the Japanese dynasty (said to be unbroken from 660 B. C.) and the former federal system of government which prevailed, the adoption of constitutional methods was watched with great interest by the rest of the world. This first parliament of Japan met for a term of four years, but events which have since occurred cut short its existence at thirteen months. It appears that the party of obstruction in the House refused to vote supplies to the government, which course did not embarrass the latter in the least, for it got over the difficulty by dissolving the chamber, and by Imperial decree promulgating most of the measures which the recalcitrant legislature had rejected. It is sad to contemplate this break down in the endeavor to progress with the rest of the world, and the manner of the failure indicates that it will be difficult to re-establish matters on a secure footing. The very essence of constitutional government is assailed when the executive power oversteps the bounds of constitutionality and suppresses legislative power. Perhaps the Mikado did not fully understand the nature of the decree granting a constitutional regime, and becoming exasperated by the unreasonable opposition of the popular party, felt himself entitled to take the law into his own hands once more.

A clergyman preaching a sermon to young men last Sunday commented sadly on the lack of patriotism in the youth of Nova Scotia. He said they are too easily transplanted, and compared his experiences with men of various nationalities in the United States to prove his statement. The German, he said, however firmly rooted in the land of his adoption, casts many a lingering look across the sea to the Fatherland, and to the Irish there is never a spot so dear as the Green Isle. Nova Scotians on the contrary, he found as a general thing, looked upon other lands as much better than the fair Province by the sea, and would ask in a sneering sort of way how the people were getting on down east, or down home. This is a charge not at all honorable to our fellow countrymen who have gone abroad to seek their fortunes, and we only hope things are not so black as they are painted. We all know that men of our race are inclined to roam, and that it frequently happens that greater opportunities for advancement are offered away from home, where a man stands solely on his merits, than can be procured amongst those who have known him from his boyhood. It is a hard saying that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country, but the principle of it is true, and we have to abide by it. Those in whom patriotism is strong prefer to take the chances in the land of their birth rather than go over to certain preferment elsewhere; but this sentiment is rare. Given the fact that our young people sometimes find it expedient to leave home, with which course we find no fault, is it not lamentable that they should ever speak lightly of their home, and fail to remember with affection the scenes of their youth? We do not class ourselves with those whose patriotism and love of home is so great that we could not change our place of abode did circumstances require it or make it advisable, but we have a large share of the sentiment which winds itself about the haunts of old, which turns ever to familiar places and endears all the reminiscences of childhood. We can scarcely imagine ourself, "with soul so dead," as to forget the claims on our regard of our native land. If any Nova Scotian who has done so reads this, it is to be hoped that "the better soul that slumbered" will be awakened, and the love of home regain its rightful proportion to the other affairs of life.