

# THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Russian budget shows a deficit of \$75,000,000, and yet the Czar talks glibly of an Asiatic campaign in the coming spring. Perhaps John Bull will consent to advance the sinews of war, even though they be used to cripple his trade and weaken his power in India.

The House of Assembly seems very reluctant to settle down to the real business of the session. We hope the Opposition will not needlessly lengthen debates, prolong the session, and annoy the Government. Such a course ought to be unworthy of a party that has confidence in its cause.

The climate of Malta is said to be delightful; it is in fact an almost perpetual summer. Cotton clothing is principally worn by the people. The head is covered with a wide brimmed straw hat, while the feet remain bare, saving in the opera houses, where bare-footed ticket-purchasers are denied admittance.

The eight hour movement has been very generally seconded by the Trade and Labor Unions in both Canada and the United States; but the action of the Knights of Labor, in agreeing to accept eight hour's pay for eight hour's work, brings the proposed reform within measurable distance of success.

We are credibly informed that Hon. Mr. Thompson's maiden speech in the House of Commons, as also subsequent addresses by him there, made a most favorable impression on both sides of the House. This is only what we expected of him. He is a representative of whom all us Nova Scotians, Grit and Tory alike, may well be proud.

It is now whispered in diplomatic circles that the submission of the Hovas to the French was quietly acquiesced in, with the understanding that the British occupation of Candia should receive French support. The rumor, which comes from French sources, may well be doubted; but we have yet to understand by what means France obtained her present hold upon Madagascar, seeing that the Hovas and their heroic Christian Queen were prepared to protect their Island against all comers; and that the idea of a French protectorate was scouted by them as impossible.

The United States Committee on Foreign Affairs recommends to Congress the adoption of a new Extradition Treaty between the United States and Canada, which shall be much more comprehensive in its character than that now in operation. With such a treaty Canada would not be, as now, an asylum for American defaulters.

Jack Frost appears to have lost his reckoning, at least, so the people of Florida have reason to think. By his visitation to that peninsula, plantations of orange and other fruit trees, to the value of \$2,000,000, have been destroyed. Even in Cuba his nipping bite has been felt, and the inhabitants of that sunny isle now understand the true origin of the term "Blue-nose."

The North-West Territories of Canada are to be represented in the Federal Parliament by five members in the House of Commons, and two in the Senate. With such a representation the Territories should be able to voice their grievances, correct abuses, and raise the great lone land from its position as a mere dependency, to that of an integral portion of British America.

The railway mileage of Canada is, considering our population, fast assuming gigantic proportions. 11,000 miles of railway in a country with a population not equal to that of the little kingdom of Belgium, indicates a degree of progressive push well calculated to appal those who have no faith in the future of this Dominion. Railways are as much of a necessity at the present day as post roads fifty years since, and the country, or section of country, without the means of quick transit which they afford, cannot hope to successfully compete with localities enjoying railway facilities.

Lord Dufferin, in his own peculiar polished style, has been assuring the Chinese residents of Rangoon, that no matter what the Government of the United States did to prevent Chinese immigration, the Chinese would always find a welcome upon Canadian soil. Lord Dufferin appears to have overlooked the fact that the Government of the Dominion have taken a cue from the United States, and has imposed a tax of fifty dollars per head upon each and every Chinaman entering the country.

Australia is afflicted with a plague of rabbits, which has increased to such an extent that the authorities are taking steps to put a stop to it. One flock-owner, it is stated, has trapped five thousand of the troublesome creatures, but they must be destroyed in far greater numbers than this, in order to produce any diminution of this pest. Queensland has been so far free, and in order to keep it so, the Government has decided to erect a rabbit-proof fence on their boundary line. Tenders have been accepted for 2,550 miles of wire fencing and 450 miles of wire netting of small mesh.

There are but few Nova Scotian teachers that will not feel the stern truth of the following paragraph, which we clipped some weeks ago from the *Baddeck Reporter*, but for which we did not find space until this week:—"So long as teachers are hired by the term of six months, our schools will not amount to very much. We do not see why a teacher's occupation should be more uncertain than that of a sailor before the mast. Young men are blamed for making the teaching profession a stepping stone to other professions. The reason why is apparent. No young man of any ordinary ambition would remain in a profession where the most certain thing is uncertainty. The ordinary teacher is the football of every old busybody in the section. In some cases, teachers are possessed of tact sufficient to keep the old gossips in good humor, but this is not always the case.

Attorney General Garland is being roundly abused by the Republican Press, on account of the suit brought against the Bell Telephone Company by the United States authorities. Garland is a large stock-holder in an opposition company, the success of which depends largely upon the result of the present suit. Garland is an interested party, and as such it is claimed he had no right to take part in the action against the Bell Telephone Company. There is, however, another side to this question, in which the public are interested. It is stated that the patent of the Bell Telephone was secured in an irregular manner. If this be true, the Attorney General is bound under oath to proceed against the company, even though by so doing he increases the value of the stock held by him in a rival company.

The Czar of Russia, who has recently purchased a complete set of photographic appliances from a London manufacturer, has issued an order to the effect that all political prisoners, convicts, etc., sentenced to banishment in Siberia, shall, before leaving for that mysterious haven of justice, sit to be photographed by his Imperial Majesty. The album containing the impressions thus taken, will doubtless be studied with interest by the Czar in his leisure moments. The physiognomies of the men who have dared to question his absolute power, and who have risked their own liberty for the sake of the liberty of the people, should be an interesting study to a potentate who has yet to learn the principles which induced these men to strike for freedom.