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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.

The physicians and the general public of New York are greatly excited over a most unusual suit now under way in the law-courts of that city. Three years ago the sudden death of Washington Irvin Bishop, the famous mind reader, was announced, and ever since the mother of the deceased has insisted that the doctors who made the autopsy not only acted without her consent, but that her son was absolutely murdered by them, as she claims that he was not dead but in a state of trance when the knife was applied. The doctors defend themselves on the ground that, though they received no authority from a coroner or from the next of kin as the law requires, yet they had obtained the permission of Bishop himself, and that, in conducting the autopsy, they simply carried out his instructions.

If street and sidewalk improvements go on in Halifax for the next ten years as they are going on at present its citizens will have good reason to rejoice at the transformation. Our rocky, rutty roadways and our uneven brick sidewalks have caused many a visitor to smile at our eighteenth century ideas; but he who visits Halifax to-day cannot fail to be impressed with the idea that the city is endeavoring to keep abreast of the times, and that somebody in authority has grappled with the question of street and sidewalk paving and knows what he is about. Halifax is now spending nearly \$200,000 upon her street and water service, upwards of 500 men and over 100 teams are engaged in the various city public works, and the fortnightly pay roll reaches a figure close to \$10,000; and yet there are some people who say that Halifax is asleep. If so, she is sleeping with her eyes wide open.

The subject of life insurance for women is attracting much attention at present. Many insurance companies have refused to take risks on women, others have charged an additional per cent, and several well administered companies have declined to insure married women for the benefit of their husbands. A woman's life is not supposed to have a commercial value, especially if she be dependent upon her masculine relatives, and therefore the same doctrine which allows the bread-winner to provide for the females of his family, disallows the bread-winner obtaining money because of affliction. The criminal lawyers and doctors of the United States are largely responsible for the present lively debates on the subject. They contend that the crime of wife-murder for the sake of insurance money is becoming more frequent, and many of them advise that legislation be enacted to prohibit a wife from insuring her life for the benefit of husband.

The British elections of members for the House of Commons are day by day being hotly contested. If Great Britain had adopted our system of simultaneous elections the agony would now be over. The returns to date show a decided gain for Gladstone, but he will require the co-operation of both the McCarthyites and Parnellites to maintain in office any ministry that he may form, and as this would place the balance of power in the hands of the McCarthyites the Government could not be long-lived.

The coming Presidential election in the United States will decide not only the issue between the two great political parties, but will also test the new Ballot Laws. Under the former system the voters' right to secrecy, in many States, was not considered, and all varieties of bribery and corruption were almost openly resorted to. During the last Presidential election it is said that in New York State, where it was impracticable to bribe electors to vote openly against their parties, they were paid to stay away from the polls. Thirty-five States have now adopted the Canadian ballot system slightly modified, and although a uniform ballot-law is much to be desired, its adoption by these States will result in putting down much that has been corrupt in the quadrennial struggle.

The riots and bloodshed which have taken place in the vicinity of Carnegie's steel works at Homestead, Pennsylvania, are a disgrace to the boasted enlightenment and civilization of the age. The treatment of the workmen by Carnegie's agents and his preparations to defend the works were bad enough, but the employment of an irresponsible detective force to shoot down the locked out employes was beyond all reason, and no one can be surprised that the men took the law into their own hands in defending themselves against their armed assailants. The wonder is how the citizens of the United States tolerate the existence of an irresponsible armed detective force such as Pinkerton's men, and how long the federal and state laws will pass over in silence that which would in any other country render the assailants liable to criminal prosecution as murderers.

Some time ago we noted that the Government of the State of Ohio was supplying free employment offices to the public with the most satisfactory results. Now we learn of a somewhat similar movement in New Zealand, where the Government has organized a "Bureau of Industries," of which there are now fewer than 200 branches throughout the colony. Work is found for all worthy applicants, and where necessary, a railroad pass to some districts where laborers are needed is given. The agents at the various stations each month furnish a schedule of the labor performed by applicants and of the kind of workmen most needed in their district, so that the head office is in receipt of constant information as to the requirements of its branches. All the Public Works are carried on by the Bureau and the Government Engineers on a co-operative system. The Government contractor will never grow wealthy in the colony, for no sub-contracts are sold at the expense of the laborer's pocket. Every six men employed on the public works elect a "gauger," who represents their interests to the Government Engineer, who determines the price of the work to be done. A well-organized labor bureau is a true charity to the unemployed, and the Government of New Zealand is to be congratulated on the thorough manner in which the scheme has been carried out.

The terrible fire which broke out in St. John's, Newfoundland, on Friday last, and which within a few hours destroyed two-thirds of the city, has overwhelmed the citizens of Newfoundland's capital. In very truth we know not what a day will bring forth. On the morning of Friday the citizens of St. John's were engaged in their daily avocations; on the following morning their homes, churches, school houses, places of business and many public buildings lay in ashes, and they and their families were without food or shelter. Such a calamity is simply appalling and is one well calculated to appeal to the sympathy and generosity of our people. As nearly as can be estimated property to the value of \$20,000,000 has been consumed by the flames, upon which an insurance of four and a quarter millions had been effected, making a net loss of over \$15,000,000, to say nothing of the discomfort, suffering, and the general interruption of business. Before the smoke of the fire had faded away the citizens of Halifax, stimulated by the stirring appeal of the *Morning Herald*, were up and doing so that by Saturday evening a steamer freighted with food and clothing was despatched. Throughout the Province active relief measures have been taken and our brother colonists in St. John's may depend upon it that the aid extended to them in their hour of trial has been spontaneous, and no effort will be spared in affording them the prompt relief which their circumstances require. Every Nova Scotian, rich and poor alike, must do something, so that in the aggregate our contribution may be worthy of our fair land and commensurate with the disaster which has overwhelmed the capital of ye ancient colony.