

# THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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The ugly form of agrarianism is now stalking through the fruitful vine yards of Italy. The murmurs of discontent which have been audible for some months, have at length broken forth in one discordant howl. The dissatisfaction of the agrarian population was quickly followed by agrarian troubles, and has culminated in agrarian outrages like to those in Ireland. The frosts of socialism threaten to destroy the foundations of society as now constituted.

The City Council of Montreal have set aside \$2,000 towards aiding the Montreal section at the Colonial Exhibition. Montreal will, no doubt, make a creditable exhibit, but it is to be hoped, in the interests of emigration to Canada, that the carnival craze will find no expression there. If the object of the exhibition is to discourage emigration, a few tobogganing costumes, pictures of ice palaces, and a mild exaggeration or two in the way of rein-deer sleds and dog teams would probably have the desired effect.

The Hon. Joseph Chamberlain is the leader of the radical wing of the British liberal party, but the measure for the government of Ireland, proposed by Mr. Gladstone, appears to be too radical for Mr. Chamberlain. In his criticism of the measure, he referred to the mistake made by Mr. Gladstone in asserting at the time of the American war, that the South had formed a nation, and pertinently asked whether the Premier was not now making a mistake in his Irish policy. Chamberlain is a keen observer of men, and he believes that public opinion in Great Britain will condemn the measure "in toto."

The coming season promises to be one of unusual activity with one class at least—the hotel keepers across the Atlantic. The Indian and Colonial Exhibition offers special inducements to tourists in its own attractiveness as well as by the cheap excursion rates in connection with it. We notice in a Toronto exchange that the teachers of Ontario can make the round trip to London and return, via New York and Glasgow, with first class passage accommodations for \$100. If the different lines of steamers were asked to tender excursion rates for Nova Scotian teachers, we have no doubt the trip could be made for an exceedingly small sum. We hope the "education department" will take the matter in hand.

Among the curiosities discovered at Mandalay was an eighteen pound bronze gun, which is beautifully overlaid with gold. This was the oracle that Theebaw consulted as to the result of the war with the English. The muzzle of the gun was slightly elevated, and a small quantity of water poured in. If the water had remained in the gun, it would have been regarded as an omen of success, but the priest who was making the investigation on behalf of His Majesty, cunningly devised a plan to have the water at once expelled. When Theebaw observed this result, he at once became disheartened, giving up all hope of offering successful resistance. The gun is now on its way to London.

Those belligerent American journals whose position on the fisheries' question is so strongly jingo-istic, appear to have little support in the West, where the editors have little or no "fish to fry." One Western paper, quoted by the *Herald*, declares that the American nation is not sufficiently fond of cod-fish to go to war about it. The New York *Tribune* claims that the phrase "three miles off any of the coasts, bays, creeks, harbours," does not warrant the construction from headland to headland. Well, if *within three miles of a bay* means anything it means within three miles of a line joining the two headlands which mark the entrance to the bay. Besides, as pointed out by the *Herald*, the evident intention of the clause in the treaty of 1818 was to exclude Americans from our in-shore fisheries; and the recent case of the Alleghanian *versus* the United States Government has set a precedent, in this case to the advantage of the government, for the measurement of in-shore waters by a line drawn from headland to headland.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Paradoxical as it may appear, the names of Lily and Blanche are becoming common among the negro children of the Southern States.

The Dominion Franchise Act will increase the number of electors in every city and county by between two and three thousand. These new voters will be the element of uncertainty in the next general election, and the political wire-pullers will have to look alive or their occupation will be gone.

Canada wants a bankrupt law to prevent dishonest traders from making preferential claims in favor of their relatives. There should be no backdoor business which will allow a man to pass over his stock to an interested party, and then make an assignment to his creditors of his uncollectable book-debts.

The Yankee speculator is always on the *quai vive*. His latest move has been to make a corner in peanuts, 100,000 bushels of which are now stored in Norfolk. These will be shipped so soon as the demand jumps the price of the speculator's figure. The peanut vendors will probably find trade all with "peanuts, twenty cents a pint."

No bank or private corporation would think for a moment of superannuating an official who is still able to fully discharge the duties of his office, and yet this has been frequently done by the Governments of the country, the only apparent excuse being that the removal made room for another. Perhaps the *Herald* and *Chronicle* can give the public the respective accounts for which the Grits or Tories are responsible on this account.

Those who remembered the warm personal friendship existing between Gladstone and the Marquis of Hartington must have been surprised to hear the latter denouncing Gladstone's Irish scheme in such a vigorous manner. Hartington made a bid for Tory support when he insinuated that party lines could be obliterated and loyalists combined to defeat the measure. He said they should unite as one man to hand down to their successors the great empire complete as they had inherited it, and to maintain throughout length and breadth the undisputed supremacy of the law.

## DEPRESSION AND HARD TIMES.

According to a statement based upon official industrial statistics, the consumption of the products of American industry is now reduced to the extent of three hundred millions of dollars below what it otherwise would be, owing to the number of unemployed working men throughout the United States. Surely this is a fact more than ordinarily significant and suggestive. It shows that consumption as well as over production, is chargeable with the business depression of the past two years.

If in the United States the demand for food and clothing and other articles of consumption should increase to the extent of three hundred million dollars beyond what it now is, it is not likely that there would be a general depression in business. But when there are in that country a million of unemployed wage-workers reduced to the greatest distress possible without famine, and over a million working for wages that render subsistence barely possible without eleemosynary aid, consumption of many products—natural and manufactured—must be greatly lessened.