

**THE KNIGHTS OF THE MAIL BAG.**—It has been thought best by the Post Office authorities to discourage the custom long established in many households and offices of seeing the postman at Christmas time. We are not sorry that the new order has been issued, as in the long run it will be found advantageous to both the carrier of the letter bag and to the public generally. The work of the postman is laborious and responsible—he is exposed to all varieties of weather, and our city carriers at least are models of good nature. We learn now that the Christmas boxes which their many patrons have been in the habit of bestowing has been a very mixed blessing, for because of the kindly custom the official salary has been put at a very low figure. We trust that the authority which has forbidden the solicitation of Christmas boxes will provide a salary large enough for the support of those who have been so unfairly placed in a false position.

**OLD KING COLE!**—Our readers will remember the utterances of a leading British paper on the subject of the Horrors of Halifax, in which the infant strike at Springhill and the gigantic Australian warfare were inextricably mingled, and an impression set afloat that the "Springfield Miners of Halifax" were compelled to work in the coal mines along with convict laborers. There was a certain uninviting truth in the coal story, however, for the Provincial mines have of late been well represented in Halifax, and a deal of coal or other dust has been floating about, making some of our friends both begrimed and ill-tempered. Whatever may be the outcome of the deliberations of the Legislature of our Province we may rest assured that the free advertising which our Province has been enjoying is bound to pay. Thousands of capitalists have heard for the first time of the undeveloped mines of coal, gold, lead, etc., of our unworked quarries, and of many other of our passive resources. There seems to be heat enough in the coal fires of Cape Breton to warm up the whole Province.

**THINK OF IT.**—A prominent clergyman has recently made a somewhat startling statement, which, however, will bear looking into. He takes the ground that the best way of building houses for the Lord is not always the rearing of magnificent cathedrals and costly structures, but that in many cases the most acceptable gift which can be offered is the improvement of the houses in which the Lord's poor live. A stately cathedral is a grand affair, representing the ideals and best thoughts of many, a spiritual home from which radiate all helpful Christian virtues. The tenement homes of the poor are sad with the stories of enforced misery or sometimes unpremeditated crime. That the poor should huddle together in uncomfortable yet disproportionately costly rooms, while the philanthropic impulse to aid them by the erection of proper homes is frustrated by the call from a higher quarter for funds for church-building, is sincerely to be deplored. We incline with the clergyman to the belief that the more conspicuous method of pleasing the Lord should not hide from sight another and as blessed a means for benefitting a portion of his people.

**IN THE LONDON SLUMS.**—The Rev. Osborne Jay, of London, has been working for the past five years in the Parish of Holy Trinity, Shoreditch, otherwise known as the "Sink of London." The parish is not large, its width being a four-minute and its length a two-minute walk, but 8,000 people are housed within its limits. Mr. Jay came to his chosen work with many drawbacks. There was no church building or room assigned, while his stipend was very small. His first services were held in the loft over a stable, the congregation and clergyman alike scrambling up a ladder-way. A dilapidated cheese and bacon warehouse was transformed into a club-room, where reading, games, and even boxing 'bouts might be indulged in, so long as the rules of the place forbidding cursing, gambling and scurrilous song-singing were observed. Mr. Jay has now a beautiful church adjoining a model lodging house, a well-fitted gymnasium, and a club room adapted to the wants of the five hundred members. The moral tone of the community has been greatly bettered, as the police records testify, and the well-directed and successful enterprise of the reverend gentleman will be a constant incentive to that essentially modern class of well-educated men and women who are content to give up many of the pleasures of this world for the far greater pleasure of aiding their more needy brethren.

**THE "MAIL" AND DOCTOR DOUGLASS.**—While we are unable to follow Doctor Douglass in his war on Sir John Thompson, and in fact can only regret that so able a man should allow his religious prejudices to so dwarf his judgment as to lead him into manifest injustice in this instance, still, this one fault does not blind us to the fact that the Doctor is an usually able man, full of years and honors, and we are always happy to support the many reforms he inaugurates. Not so the *Evening Mail*, however, which in its zeal seems to consider it necessary to attack not only the Doctor, but everyone who has the temerity to quote him on any subject. His name acts like a red flag on a bull, and the mad charge which follows hurts no one but the infuriated brute. In a recent issue we quoted from Doctor Douglass' appeal to the Canadian people to obtain better laws for the protection of the young girls of our Dominion, and his synopsis of the law on that subject as it exists. The Doctor was as accurate as it is possible to be in the few words he used in touching on the subject, but the *Mail* pronounced him all wrong, and proceeded to quote at length the criminal code as applied to cases of abduction and defilement. In the former exceptional case, all females are protected, but the latter case only applies to girls under fourteen years of age, and proves the correctness of the Doctor's statement, that for girls over sixteen, not heiresses, there is virtually no protection.

**THE WHISTLE OF THE HONG KONG TRAIN.**—The irrepressible George Francis Train is again to the fore with a wholly novel idea. He purposes to organize several large parties to travel around the world in forty days—the trip to include a limited sojourn in Chicago during the World's Fair. Although we have not as yet heard of any Provincialists who intend to globe-trot under the direction of our gifted friend, we can but inform any intending voyager that if he chance to throw in his lot with a personally conducted party, he will not lack either for information or amusement during his excursion.

**TO MAKE ADVERTISING PAY.**—There are a certain number of people who are blessed with a knack and skill for advertising. Many of them obtain constant employment by the exercise of this novel ability, and on short notice they will furnish a clever rhyme, a comic picture, or a tacking paragraph concerning the article whose virtues are to be made known to the public. There is no doubt that brainy advertisements of this stamp pay proportionally far better than the uninteresting announcement of goods arrived, which does not pique the curiosity. An inch of well-used space is often worth six inches of hackneyed lines, and advertisers will find it to their advantage to give their goods a happy send-off. The advertising columns of *THE CRITIC* are widely read. They afford a capital medium for keeping the country customer in touch with the city dealer, as our many patrons have proved. When so desired every care will be taken to type an ad in the most attractive manner, or should our patrons prefer to carry out ideas of their own as to style, etc., we will afford them every facility in our power. If cheap rates, good circulation, and prompt attention to orders are factors in the success of an advertising medium, we may claim to be fully equipped for service.

**THE MORMON QUESTION.**—President Harrison's proclamation granting full pardon and amnesty to a portion of the Mormon community has aroused much interest. It is perhaps not generally remembered that the practice of Polygamy has been condemned by the Mormons themselves, and that since November 1st, 1890, a plurality of wives has been disallowed in the Mormon strongholds. The condition of the surplus wives thus thrown upon the world has been a delicate matter to adjust, and the President's solution of the difficulty has been the extension of an amnesty to such Mormons as have obeyed the last mandate of their church and are willing to observe the general laws of the Republic in reference to their future conduct. It will be observed that Mormons who have violated their church law of 1890 are still liable to prosecution, and the pardon will apply to the duped and not to the wilful portion of the once Polygamous church. Mormonism has lasted for half a century in the United States. It has been a noxious and poisonous evil and a safe shelter to many ill-minded men, and there are few either of the better class in the community or of the Republic at large who do not heartily agree with the President in his recognition of the rights of a much-wronged portion of his people.

**THE AUSTRALIAN DISPUTE.**—The great strike of the Broken Hill Mines in South Australia is over for the time at least, and the men have returned peaceably to work. The dispute arose over the underground workers, who, instead of being paid by the day, as agreed, were informed that piece-work was to be given out by the contractors. The directors claimed that the men who were employed for eight hours' work spent their time in loafing, smoking, sleeping and card-playing, and that therefore it was impossible to realize a profit on the mine when the labor was so ill-performed. The miners contended that the majority of them had fulfilled the letter and spirit of their agreement, and protested against the introduction of contract work, on the ground that labor would be ill paid, that boys would be set to do men's work, and that the safety of the mines and the welfare of the miners would be neglected. The strikers, numbering about 7,000 miners and workmen, held out for eighteen weeks, the shareholders in the mine and the railroads suffered heavily, the railroads losing at the rate of \$5,000 a day until the strike was over. The miners of course in the long run suffered most, and only after a fierce fight assented to the terms of the directors, but it is thought that the labor party will at once organize for future action.

**A EUROPEAN BREEZE.**—Although the last two weeks have been really cold and lustery, we can hardly claim that we are enjoying an old-time Canadian winter, and though the picturesque furs are a welcome addition to an out-of-door dress, yet the need for them will soon be over. The winter weather in many parts of Europe, especially in Russia, Germany and France, has been much more severe. In St Petersburg it has been found necessary to keep great bon-fires blazing in the streets so that walkers should not run the chance of being frozen to death. In Berlin the principal streets have been packed with drifting snow, and hundreds of men are employed by the city in shovelling. Navigation in the Baltic Sea is entirely closed, and the railway service in many parts of the continent is completely demoralized. The "Sunny South" of Europe has also suffered severely. The vineyards of Spain glisten with clustering icicles, the streets of Naples are as glazed and slippery as are those of Halifax, and old Vesuvius is enfolded in a cooling wrapper of white snow. The extreme cold has caused great suffering, especially among the vagrant classes of Bohemians. No less than sixteen Gypsies were found frozen to death in one encampment. In Canada, where we constantly expect much colder weather than usually arrives, we are prepared for the utmost rigor, and we can only extend our sympathy to those who are suffering so severely from an unusual and extreme temperature.

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