

# THE CRITIC:

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## THE CRITIC,

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

During the past year alone 2,574 murders have been committed in Italy, 363 more than all the similar crimes in England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany and Spain put together.

King Milan, ex-King of Servia, is another of the royal devotees of the game of baccarat. At the Cercle de la Rue Royale, in Paris, a short time ago, he is reported to have made nearly £7,000 at the game. The bank must have been a good deal heavier than with the "staid" party at Tranby Croft.

Though it is not generally known, Persia is the vineyard of the world, and its supply of grapes is practically unlimited, for grapes are one of the staple foods of the Persians. A bottle of good wine costs but eight cents; a donkey-load of grapes can be bought for half-a-dollar; and grape sugar is manufactured in Persia by the ton.

There is a unique election contest now being waged in Louisiana, and one that is not an edifying spectacle. Old party lines have been obliterated. There is now no North or South, no Democrats or Republicans, no tariff or anti-tariff, not even the peoples party or the Farmers Alliance; the one issue on which the State is convulsed from end to end being lottery and anti-lottery.

Smokeless powder promises to bring about many changes in the appearance of European armies. As the smoke no longer conceals the whereabouts and number of the forces, the Germans want to get rid of all brilliant portions of their equipment which shine in the light and betray their presence. Two guard regiments are having their helmets and the bright cooking utensils in their knapsacks covered with black waterproof cloth as an experiment for the rest of the army.

Human life is estimated to have lengthened 25 per cent during the last half century. "The average of human life in Rome under Cæsar was eighteen years," says Dr. Todd, of Georgia. Now it is forty. The average in France fifty years ago was 28, the mean average duration in 1867 was 45½ years. In Geneva during the thirteenth century, a generation played its part upon the stage and disappeared in fourteen years. Now the drama requires forty years before the curtain falls. During the golden reign of Good Queen Bess, in London and all the large cities of Merrie Old England, 50 out of 1,000 paid the last debt to nature yearly, which means that instead of three score and ten they averaged but one score. Now in the city of London the average is 47.

It is said that everything in China is exactly the reverse of what it is among the western nations—for example if a man wishes to build a house he begins by constructing the roof first. The month of November, which in both Europe and America is the most disagreeable month in the year, in South Eastern China is the loveliest. In China also the sins of the children are visited upon the fathers. The governor of one of the Chinese provinces has a very bad son who has given perpetual trouble throughout his life, now the unlucky father is to be reported to the head government as having neglected the training and education of his son, and not being able to restrain him from evil courses. Probably the governor will lose both his post and his rank, for, so say the Chinese, "if governors cannot even prevent their sons from going to the bad, they are not fit persons to control the masses." There is much sense in this celestial idea—if parents were only more sensible of the grave responsibilities they incur to themselves, their offspring, and the nation in the training and education of their children, there would be far fewer *vauriens*, *mauvais sujets*, paupers, nay, and criminals than there are at present.

The Toronto *Globe*, under the heading of Tupper's Roads, makes a most unjust attack on the Oxford Branch and the new Cape Breton road. With an ignorance of the facts that is plainly apparent it speaks of the latter road as one that was unnecessary and would never pay, as starting from nowhere and ending nowhere, while the whole drift of the article is hostile to Nova Scotia and its resources. Sir Charles Tupper and his policy are fair subjects for criticism, but in doing this the *Globe* should not fall into the serious error of libelling any section of the Dominion. Sir Charles Tupper can afford to welcome such attacks, as they are most convincing proofs that in his devotion to his native Province he has drawn upon himself the bitter abuse of the leading Liberal journal in Ontario. The Cape Breton Railway, so far from being the worthless piece of property that the *Globe* would have it, is a most important continuation of the I. C. R. It runs through a rich mineral country and terminates at the Sydneys, in the centre of the Cape Breton coal fields, and is destined to be a paying road. If the *Globe* persists in mistakes of this kind it will do the Liberal cause serious injury, and cripple the efforts of leading Liberals in this section to overcome the present Conservative majority. Nova Scotia cannot afford to be governed by a party whose leading organ delights in crying down its resources and grumbling at any expenditure of public money outside of Ontario.

At the last session of Parliament the vote of the Lower House in favor of a large grant to construct the Harvey-Salisbury short line link in the Canadian Pacific Railway was burked in the Senate. This was the piece of road that was to have given the most direct connection between Montreal and Halifax, and which our M's P. had been given assurance was part of the Canada Pacific contract, but when the latter company refused to construct it, it was found that through some strange and most culpable oversight they had not been bound as supposed, and they point blank refused to undertake the work. The failure to construct this link made St. John the terminus of the Canadian Pacific and was a great injustice to Halifax. In response to a strong appeal from Halifax and Fredericton the Government had the route re-surveyed, and it was found that although the saving in distance would be trifling the expense would be very heavy. Still faith had to be kept with Halifax, and the money to construct the link was voted only to be shovled in the Senate. There was a great outcry at the time and the Senate was roundly abused, but THE CRITIC pointed out that the Senate acted wisely. The new scheme gave the Canada Pacific exclusive running power over the I. C. R., and would have killed off a new and much more valuable plan of giving direct rail communication between this city and Montreal. The Grand Trunk Railway was anxious to make short connection with Halifax, and with that end in view had secured control of the Temiscouta Railway, and proposed extending it to Moncton provided they were voted the subsidy. The advantages of having both the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk in direct connection with Halifax were too numerous and apparent to need discussion, and it was fortunate that the vote of money to the Harvey-Salisbury branch did not carry. The territory to be traversed by the new line from the terminus of the Temiscouta Railway to a point on the I. C. R. near Moncton had been surveyed, and it was proved that the route was the shortest, that it passed through valuable "farming, timber and mineral lands, and that the engineering difficulties to be overcome were slight when compared with the Harvey-Salisbury line." It was much the best line, and it gave to Halifax the benefit of competing roads. So far this session we have noted no movement to secure the subsidy for this extension, but it is a matter of such great importance to this Province that it should be vigorously advocated by our members and the subsidy voted without delay.