

Color-blindness is becoming so prevalent in the United States that the authorities of leading American railways have caused the most rigid tests to be made. The chief difficulty appears to be the distinguishing of red from blue at any great distance, experiments proving that at least twenty per cent of the locomotive engineers are unable to distinguish these colors one hundred yards distant. Have any tests been made of the employes of our provincial railways?

It is said that there are literally thousands of American tourists now travelling in Great Britain and on the continent. American travellers are ever interested sight-seers, and the systematic way in which they set about it astonishes the phlegmatic people beyond the ocean. Next to home culture travelling does more to broaden the mind and refine the manners than many terms spent within the walls of the school room. Before seeing other lands we should first travel, so as not to be strangers to the beauties of our own fair land.

We all know that the various forms of preserved milk ordinarily sold, though not altogether bad substitutes for milk, are more or less artificial and unsatisfactory. A Swiss company seems to have hit upon a process which, we should judge, will go far to produce a preparation that will furnish actual milk. The process is one of pure dessication, and is in the form of a powder which contains all the essential properties of the milk, and will of course resolve itself, when remoistened, into the nearest approach possible to fresh lacteal fluid.

We understand that during the late discussion of the sawdust question at Bridgewater considerable matter of value bearing on the subject was forwarded to the Department of Marine and Fisheries, with which the whole matter rests. We would suggest to the Bridgewater parties interested, to appoint a committee to confer with the Dominion Government in the first place, and to urge the appointment of a Parliamentary committee, for whose investigation a question involving such opposite opinions is an eminently fit subject.

There are some people in this Province with souls no larger than peanuts. A few days since we were informed that a promising enterprise had been seriously crippled through the misrepresentation of meddlesome persons who could have no possible object in decrying the undertaking excepting that of mischief-making. Such miserable specimens of humanity are beneath contempt, but as they oftentimes do irreparable injury, they deserve public exposure, and the obliquy which would follow. If Nova Scotia is to take the leading place destiny intended her to take, the backbiters and misanthropes must be locked up or turned under the sod.

There is as yet no indication that the Province of New Brunswick would favor a Maritime Union, but there are not wanting intelligent New Brunswickers who agree that such an union would greatly strengthen our position in the Dominion. The chief argument against such an union seems to arise from a fear that it might destroy the prestige of Fredericton as the capital of the Province. This is, after all, but a sectional objection, and could the main principle of union but be generally accepted, such details as the fixing upon a convenient capital might well be left to solve themselves. Would not the alternate meetings of the Maritime Provincial Legislature in Fredericton and Halifax meet the objection in a way satisfactory to the people of both Provinces?

It is with pleasure that we quote the following from a letter of His Grace Archbishop O'Brien, recently published in *L'Evangeline* of Digby:—"Whilst on this subject I would wish to correct some false notions and dissipate some prejudices and misapprehensions. I cannot for one moment admit that less provision has been made in the Maritime Provinces for the education of our Acadian fellow Catholics than for that of any other class. All the schools of higher education in these Provinces, established by the bishops, have been equally open to all Catholics. We cannot, so far as spiritual affairs go, admit race distinctions. We are simply Catholics; not Irish, nor Scotch, nor Acadians." His Grace's utterances always patriotic in the best and highest sense speak for themselves, and call for no comment, but that the sense in which the remark is made implies that his co-religionists, while none of these sectionalisms, are simply Canadians.

Some of our country contemporaries are abnormally thin-skinned and touchy about trifles, and wonderfully ingenious in the imagination of offence when none is even dreamed of. The week before last we published a note altogether complimentary and laudatory on the Springhill Band. But we happened to use the words "but there is no sign about them of the roughness usually associated with a mining community." We did not say or intend to imply that our opinion of mining communities was a low one, but our very innocent remark brings down upon us the wrath of the *Springhill News*, which vents itself in the following somewhat captious and unnecessary tirade:—"It is not unusual for many persons otherwise well informed to hold erroneous opinions concerning the miners, such as appear to have prejudiced THE CRITIC writer against an intelligent, industrious class of men. Some even find it hard to conceive of the men who labor in the coal pits being altogether human. Such gross ignorance is inexcusable in a Nova Scotian. It may be pardonable in a conceited immigrant, who judges of Nova Scotian colliers from his observations in other countries. To us THE CRITIC's surprised tone seems rather comical. A visit to Springhill would do much to dispel the mists of prejudice that apparently befog others as well as the Halifax editor."

It is estimated that the losses by fire in the woods in New Brunswick will reach several thousands of dollars. The timber lands of our sister province constitute the chief natural source of wealth, and hence the destruction of vast forests is a calamity much to be regretted. The mineral wealth of New Brunswick, although supposed to be great, is as yet comparatively undeveloped, and cannot be regarded as a certain source of wealth to the people, but we trust that the buried treasure may prove in every respect equal in value to the mining resources of Nova Scotia.

Among the remarkable crank ideas of the day, one of the most curious is that of a Mr. J. Algernon Thompson, who has conceived the notion of freezing the dead and transporting the corpses to the arctic regions, where they will remain in *statu quo* until the day of Judgment. Mr. Thompson asserts that his fad has made some encouraging progress (he does not say among what sort of persons) and that an English syndicate is considering the establishment of an international cemetery on the shore of Baffin's Bay, which prospective city of the dead the St. John *Sun* aptly designates an arctic "City of Kor."

It is satisfactory to note that the unworthy and backbiting rivalry of city against city, of which we see so far too much, is not absolutely universal throughout Canada. The two British Columbia cities of New Westminster and Vancouver dwell, it appears in unity, in proximity to each other. They find that the prosperity of the one acts beneficially on the other, and that New Westminster has been incited to increased energy by the rapid growth of its younger neighbor, and the mutual benefit has been signally promoted by the C. P. R. having reduced the freight rates over its road connecting the two places. This is all round as it should be, and we trust to see all narrow-minded bickerings between one part of the Dominion and another become a thing of the past.

While the revelations in the Cronin murder-case as to the atrociously ingenious plot to procure and disfigure in London a body which should bear some resemblance to Cronin, to dress it in his clothes, and place about its person forged letters to indicate its identity, displays the utter profligacy of some of the Irish Secret Associations, it is not satisfactory to find Mr Chamberlain determined on scouting the idea of Home Rule, and still less so to hear the Marquis of Londonderry, if he is correctly reported, express his belief that twenty years of coercion will extinguish the agitation. There has been altogether too much of coercion, and, especially in view of the modified attitude of Mr. Parnell, it would seem to be high time to begin a regime of prudent conciliation. On the other hand such terse eloquence in behalf of Ireland as that of Lady Sandhurst, nee of an influential deputation sent there to encourage the Home Rule party, is far more likely to bear the fruit of future success than all the coercion of the short-sighted conservative element.

If a beneficial general interest be not awakened among the cultivated and studious in the Maritime Provinces in the noble and exalting science of Astronomy, the St. John *Educational Review* will not be to blame. Its astronomical articles are full of interest, and so couched as to incite original thought and investigation. Among many others we select the following from its August and September (combined) number:—"Have you ever seen *Mira*? If not you may this month. But perhaps you have forgotten who *Mira* is? '*Mira*' means 'wonderful.' The star of that name is in the constellation of the Whale—Omicron *Ceti*. The wonderful thing about her is that for about eight months out of eleven she is invisible to the naked eye; and during the other three months she increases from bare visibility up to sometimes second magnitude, sometimes only third, and sometimes not more than fourth, and then fades again out of sight. Thus she is a variable star, and one of the three most remarkable of that class. She is not regular in her variations, and so it is not possible to predict exactly the time of her maximum brightness. A French astronomical periodical (*L'Astronomie*) gives August 6th as the date of her maximum this year. As a general rule she is visible for a couple of months after May. If, then, the Frenchman's date is correct, *Mira* should be visible until the first week in October. But you had better look her up the first fine night."

It cannot but be matter of regret to Canadians to see the mania for speculative investments at present raging in Great Britain direct itself so extensively to the United States. The various syndicates which have been buying up American breweries have from the first seemed to us of doubtful security. We find our opinion borne out by one of the editors of the London *Stock Exchange Times*, who says:—"I have persistently recommended British investors to avoid American breweries, and I have generally been met with the exclamation, 'See what a price they bring, and there must therefore be something in them, for the buyers are men who know what they are about.' How the price has been run up so high it is easy to explain. The intervening buyers persuaded themselves that these brewery concerns were just the things to palm off on 'the Brits,' in their mood to turn all things into public companies.' So they bid eagerly against each other, with the natural effect that sellers improved the occasion and meekly allowed themselves to raise their terms. Fortunately for investors the bargains in question are left to the middlemen. Embarrassed syndicates now hold carloads of brewery shares, and wait for a favorable opportunity to 'unload' them on the public. Forwarned is, or ought to be, equivalent to being forearmed." Why is not some of this excessive capital which some Britisher appear to be anxious to throw away upon precarious and over-estimated schemes directed to legitimate Canadian channels, of which there are so many?