

Brice-a-Brac:

DEVOTED TO AMATEUR JOURNALISM, AND
MORE ESPECIALLY, ITS EXTENSION
IN CANADA.

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Editor and Proprietor.

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Amateur Journalism.

Many of our friends to whom copies of this paper have been sent, have asked us for what purpose we publish it, and of what use it is to issue so small a paper; and when told it is published in the interest of Amateur Journalism, ask—what is Amateur Journalism?

In answer to the first question,—we publish this paper for our own mental improvement, and to practice as an amateur that profession which we hope some day to make our vocation; and the last question we feel sure we cannot better answer than by quoting the following passage from Finlay A. Grant's pamphlet on Amateur Journalism. He says: "Amateur Journalism is the occupation or, perhaps, pursuit of a fraternity of boys and girls, young men and young women of America, who edit and publish small papers of their 'own,' for the purpose mainly of self-culture, and the exchange of their ideas upon various topics, the dissemination of amateur news, and the discussion of the many interesting questions incident to the existence of the fraternity." It must be apparent to the most superficial observer that an institution like this should be a source of infinite pleasure and profit to its devotees; and it is.

In the past, Canada has been a considerable factor in the strength of the 'dom; but one by one, the Canadian Amateurs have fossilized, until at the present day, *The Nugget*, *Thistle*, *Boys Folio* and BRIC-A-BRAC are all that are left to represent the 'dom in Canada. This is the more to be regretted that not only do the boys of Canada lose a pastime, which (in our opinion) is second to none, but the country itself is also a loser by it, for, says Mr. Bright in one of his great speeches, "there is nothing that is a greater instrument of intelligence, knowledge, and altogether of good, than the dissemination throughout a country of a well conducted and morally influenced Press." If this be true, and who can say it is not, then Canada or any other country must be benefited by the existence within its borders, of a fraternity of Amateur Journalists; for what can be better calculated to ensure a country a moral press, than this noble institution "which is," says a Boston Newspaper, "a training school where crudeness of thought and expression is pruned, where a taste for *belles lettres* is cultivated, where excellence, or indication thereof, is readily and gladly recognized, where emulation and enthusiasm

are universal." It may be objected to this, that the boys who enter its ranks do so, not to train themselves for journalism as a profession, but merely for amusement. This is true, but many prominent amateurs have, on leaving the ranks of amateurdom, become famed in the literary world, notably among them being Chas. Scribner, the founder of *Scribner's*, now the *Century Magazine*, the most successful monthly of the day. Moreover Amateur Journalism as an educational institution is yet in its infancy, and we believe that it will reach its highest point as a training school for those who intend to make journalism their profession. It is our ambition to do something towards making Canada again to take a prominent place in amateurdom; to this end, we send BRIC-A-BRAC to all our friends, and place it and as many other amateur papers as we can obtain, in every reading-room we have access to, in order that as many as possible may become acquainted with Amateur Journalism.

We can testify that recruits are warmly welcomed by the 'dom, and that during our short connection with amateurdom, we have received an amount of pleasure that has far more than repaid us for the trouble and expense incident to the issuing of a first number.

Our Winter Carnival.

Our Carnival has come and gone, and has been declared by all to be even a greater success than was anticipated. To begin with, King Frost seems to have taken us into special favor; the days of the week, each dawned bright, clear and cold, not the damp cold that sends a shiver through you on going out into it, but the dry, healthy cold that sends the blood into the cheeks, and makes the eyes bright with exhilaration. Then the rinks and roads were in the best possible order, and the tobogganing hills were ice from top to bottom, and the toboggans flashed down them with speed of the wind, it is said that on one hill the toboggans attained a speed of about ten miles a minute.

Perhaps the most beautiful and picturesque sight that man ever saw, was the storming of the Ice Palace on Wednesday night (28th ultimo). Two thousand five hundred snow-shoers, dressed in the most picturesque costumes of modern times, armed with torches and roman candles, stormed the Castle; then from the Castle shot rockets, bombs, and fireworks of every description. Faster flew the candles from without, and faster and faster came the rockets from within. The sky is one mass of gleaming stars, and, can we believe our eyes? the Castle changes colour, gleaming now red, now green, now blue, and now changes to a transparent white. We rub our eyes and think, surely this is Fairy Land; but no; even as the thought crosses our mind, the fires die out, the snow-shoers fall into line, led by the "Old Tuque Bleues," they slowly file past, and depart for the rendezvous at Cote de Neiges.

Are the wonders of the night ended? No, something directs our attention towards the mountain, and we see what appears to be a serpent of fire winding its undulating way over the mountain; it is the snow-shoers, and as the last of them disappear, two columns of fire arise from the mountain, and the night is done.

Many other things of interest are shown our visitors, and they depart, loud in their praises of Montreal and her Carnival, and making inward resolutions to be here next Carnival, come what may.

Editorial Notes.

Miss Arlington, E. S. Heney, S. Hein and C. R. Burger will please accept our best thanks for the papers they so kindly sent us, they were of the greatest use to us in getting out this number. Outside of these and the New York bundle, we have not received thirty exchanges in return for two hundred and fifty sent out. Where! Oh, where are the papers of those enthusiastic youths,