

# THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Capital punishment in France is considered to be more effective in preventing crime than life terms of imprisonment. The old historic guillotine is still used, but fortunately the improvements which have been made upon it in later years enables the deadly work to be done more quietly, the head of the victim being severed from the body in two seconds' time.

We very frequently hear it asserted that the climate of Nova Scotia is changing, and that the seasons are several weeks later than they were thirty years ago. The meteorological statistics show no very material alteration in the temperature of our atmosphere, and the impression that our climate is changing probably arises from individual susceptibility to heat or cold, which vary as age advances.

In many schools it appears to be impossible to preserve good discipline without resorting to corporal punishment; but teachers who find it necessary to chastise wayward pupils, should never allow themselves to punish in the old-fashioned way—boxing the ears. Many cases of permanent deafness have been known to arise from this homely method of chastisement, and is therefore deprecated by physicians.

If the prejudices and race antipathies of the people of Canada continue to be played upon by unprincipled political demagogues, the future outlook of the Dominion is indeed dark. If French, Irish, Scotch, English or German origin is to entitle any particular section or community to special privileges, it is time that we formed a new party which would place country before race. Distinction of nationalities in a land like ours is absurd, and the sooner we realize it the better.

We deprecate the idea so frequently expressed by correspondents of American papers, that Halifaxians and Nova Scotians in general, are a slow-going people. We should like to see a colony of these scribblers planted on our rocky coast, and note whether their material progress was any greater than that of our fishermen. We can imagine these gentlemen occupying the positions of Nova Scotian farmers, manufacturers, and business men; and can fancy their surprise at the success which Nova Scotians have achieved under similar circumstances. Those who christen us slow lose sight of the fact that the population of the Province is less than that of many cities in the United States; and that our people are engaged in such a variety of enterprises, that none strike the stranger as particularly important.

There is a smell as if of spring in the business air, and once more the feeling of hopefulness for the coming prosperity is manifested. Saving one or two years of fitful prosperity, the depression has now lasted since 1873, the longest term of dull times ever recorded. If the lessons of thriftiness and frugality which have been taught us by hard times are kept in mind during the next wave of prosperity, the recurrence of a like depression will be pushed forward many years.

An old law in France provides that one son in every family of seven children is to be educated at the expense of the State, but it remained a dead letter until last year, when the Chamber of Deputies granted for the purpose the sum of 1,000,000 francs. To the utter surprise of the educational department, the applications for this special privilege have far exceeded all expectations, and if the law is continued in force, the grant this year will have to be increased ten-fold.

Germany is now troubled by the phantoms of three ideas, which, according to a Berlin journal, threaten the peace, existence, and commercial prosperity of the Empire. Looking towards France, Germans behold the spectre of revenge; and in casting their eyes in an opposite direction towards Russia, they see the goblin of aggression; while in Britain they behold the overgrown spirit of monopoly. These three ideas—revenge, aggression, and monopoly are, so far as Germans are concerned, veritable ghosts, presenting dangers which are of a misty and unreal character.

An Ontario Jury has decided that bee-keeping is a public nuisance, and has recommended the granting of an injunction against a man who keeps eighty hives of them. The Judge has refused to grant the injunction, and the question is to be brought up before the full Bench. In almost every European country bee-culture has been recognized as an important industry, and it would be strange, if in this land enterprising bee-keepers find their business curtailed. We cannot believe that the full Bench of Ontario will grant the injunction, if it does, we may say good-bye to honey.

The pomp of the Lord Mayor's show, on November 9th, on which day the Chief Magistrate of London is sworn into office by the Lord Chief Justice at Westminster, has long been regarded as out of joint with the times. In this practical business-like age, the expense of such a useless pageant is considered wasteful extravagance; and in view of the wretched poverty which lurks in the adjoining alleys to the streets through which the Lord Mayor's procession passes, the display savors of a mockery. Surely the Chief Magistrate of London can be sworn into office in a manner more in keeping with the times.

The Chinese Government has put down its foot in solid earnest, and declared its intention of no longer acknowledging the French protectorate over Roman Catholics in China. It appears curious that a Republic which threatens to withdraw the subvention to the Roman Catholic Church at Rome, and vaguely hints at the confiscation of church property, should without treaty provisions assume to itself the right to protect Roman Catholics in China, irrespective of their nationality. Hereafter, each European government will look after its own citizens in China, and France will have to forego a power which she has always turned into a political engine.

The inventor or father of the anagram has not made his name immortal, and perhaps it is just as well that it is so, otherwise he would come in for a large share of abuse from those who have wasted hours at a time in endeavors to make the letters in a given word spell something else. We have all heard of the celebrated transposition of Horatio Nelson into "Honor est a Nilo," and that of Florence Nightingale into "Flit on cheering Angel;" but the fact that thirteen and nineteen assorted letters can be so transposed, is less surprising than that with twenty-six letters we can form more than 100,000 distinct words. An inapt anagram is simply meaningless.

Mr. Lowell, formerly American Minister to the Court of St. James, and one of the most popular foreign diplomatists that have ever set foot in England, has got into an awkward scrape. Mr. Julian Hawthorne, a literary and personal friend, called upon him, and in the course of a chat, Mr. Lowell spoke freely of men and things in England. The next day, all the interesting details were presented to the public in the Boston *Advertiser*. For instance, the public was told that the Prince of Wales was immensely fat, that his speeches were composed by some person of more brains and literary ability than the Prince, that the late Prince Leopold was a literary imposter and a cad, and that the head of the house of Churchill was a thorough blackguard. All this is gossipy and just the thing that people like to read; but Mr. Lowell says that Mr. Hawthorne must have unintentionally misunderstood him, for several remarks attributed to him were not made, and that the conversation was private. It is a great pity to see good Mr. Lowell in so awkward a situation, but why should he or any other man be afraid of the consequences of telling the truth, after the first plunge has been taken?