

# THE CRITIC:

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## THE CRITIC,

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The editor of THE CRITIC is responsible for the views expressed in Editorial Notes and Articles, and for such only; but the editor is not to be understood as endorsing the sentiments expressed in the articles contributed to this journal. Our readers are capable of approving or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper; and after exercising due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Owing to the length of the *Week* articles on "The Future of Canada," and to a press of other matter, we regret that we shall be unable to reproduce any of them in this issue, as we announced our intention of doing last week.

It is not easy to discern the importance which Mr. Balfour seems to attach to his proposal to establish a Roman Catholic University for Ireland. The measure will certainly not satisfy the Home Rule party, and will displease both the men of Ulster and many other Conservatives.

We give in another column a brief account of the excursion of the Press Association through Cape Breton, which we trust will be taken as a small recognition of the hospitality experienced by the party. While on this trip we were everywhere reminded by what we saw that Cape Breton was well in line with the prosperity observable in other parts of the Province, that her people were alive and determined, and that her great natural resources were now being largely developed. Cape Breton is Nova Scotia's jewelled crown.

Another of our captious and irritable contemporaries, the *Trades Journal*, of Stellarton, is very much exercised at our having called Mr. Sharp an "English" poet, and is kindly concerned for our reputation "as a critic." Our polite and grammatical contemporary may set his mind at rest. We will cheerfully promise to be very particular in future as to the nationalities, for fear of further shocking the acute sensibilities of some of our good country friends. Moreover, this is the last time we shall waste space in noticing petty cavillings. Our reputation can take care of itself without our specially vindicating it.

The shooting season is here, and with it we may expect to hear of many sad shooting accidents, most of which are directly attributable to carelessness. Sportsmen have no right to take chances which may imperil human life. Mr. Fawcett, the Postmaster-General of Britain, lost his sight through a friend who, seeing a bush move, supposed he saw a bird, and firing was surprised to hear a cry from Mr. Fawcett, the load of shot having lodged in his hat, while two of them, with diabolical certainty, penetrated either eye, leaving him totally blind. The recent terrible shooting accident near Ship Harbor is another illustration of the same criminal carelessness, and it should be a warning to sportsmen of the risk of taking anything on chance.

Dr. Rand, the Mic-Mac Missionary, is one of our truly great men. He has during a long life devoted his best energies to the amelioration of the condition of the Indians. In season and out of season he has labored to improve their moral and spiritual state, and with marked success. Such a record of self-sacrificing devotion merits the gratitude of every Nova Scotian who is stirred with the feeling of humanity, and should the Missionary still survive when this recognition of his noble work appears in print, we trust that not a few will be found ready to give him the material aid that he now so much requires. Helping to smooth the pillow of such a man should be counted as a privilege by those whom God has blessed with means.

The splendid work now being accomplished by the Industrial Schools of Halifax is very little known to the people of this Province, and it deserves a far wider recognition than it has yet received. Instead of exposing the erring youth of the city to the contaminating atmosphere of prison life, the lads are sent to these Reformatory Institutions where, under excellent training, they are prepared to fight the battle of life as honest, God-fearing men. The first crime committed by a boy is frequently the result of thoughtlessness or wretched home-training, and should not condemn him to be associated with men of the Bill Sikes ilk, and with this in view the benevolent people in Halifax have established and are conducting on the broadest possible lines two excellent reformatories, from which have already been sent forth many worthy young men. These Institutions should be made provincial in their scope, and thus prevent the jailing of many poor boys in our growing centres of population. Punishment seldom reforms an individual.

Some one of note is said to have pronounced that it takes a very clever man to write nonsense, and that the nonsense that is written every day is one was Baron Munchausen in the last century, and such a one is Mr. Blake Crofton to-day. Everyone knows that Mr. Crofton's ability is not limited to facetious, as he writes, whenever he chooses, one of the ablest pens in the Dominion, but his fun and the audacity of his invention in laughable books for boys are pre-eminent. His admirable "Tall Talk Stories of the Major" are widely known, and have received numberless favorable notices; and he has now published a new series, the "Hair Breadth Escapes of Major Mendax," which are equally clever and ludicrous. The new volume is very handsomely got up by its publishers, Messrs. Hubbard Brothers, of Philadelphia, and the fun of the Major's yarns is admirably illustrated by numerous engravings. We predict a great popularity among boys (though older people may well afford a laugh too) and a large sale for Mr. Crofton's new work.

The winners of the Montreal *Witness* "Dominion Prize Competition" have been announced. The competition, concerning which we notice some writers request that it should be made annual, or at least repeated, was a capital device for stimulating patriotism and native literature at the same time. Tales and sketches were asked for from all school children, illustrative of pioneer life in Canada. Macaulay's history in five volumes was sent to the writer of the best tale in each county, and a set of Parkman's works was the reward of the best in each Province. The Dominion prize has very curiously been taken by a young lady outside the Dominion, the *Witness* having, in view of its numerous readers in Newfoundland, counted that Province, for the purposes of this competition, as though it had been a part of Canada. No one will be jealous that our little Sister Province has carried off this honor. The winner is Miss May Selby Holden, of St. John's. The second honor is awarded by Lord Lorne to Norman L. Cook, of Gay's River, N. S. Miss Blanchard E. Hiltchey, Tangier, took the County Prize for the County of Halifax.

Two or three months ago the editor of *Truth* expressed the opinion that "Imperial Federation is a myth, and will remain a myth until we are ready to give up all species of claim to supremacy over our Colonies, and enter into a sort of federal treaty with them. Are we prepared to do this? I suspect we are not." Commenting on this utterance, the *Halifax Morning Herald* observed:—"A position of mere colonial dependence will not satisfy the national aspirations of the Canadian people. We will federate or enter an alliance with the Empire on equal terms, or we will become the peers of the British people by setting up national housekeeping on our own account as an independent Canadian confederacy." The official organ of the Imperial Federation League has devoted the first leading article of its September issue to endorsing the position taken by our Halifax contemporary, with which it further agrees in doubting that *Truth* is right in supposing that Englishmen generally are opposed to taking the colonies into full partnership. The *Herald* can congratulate itself for having induced "Imperial Federation" to assume a bold and clear attitude upon a crucial question.