

# 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.

It is rumored that the Allan Line has again secured the mail contract with a stipulation for seventeen knot speed. This rate, it bona fide, would not be so bad, but it cannot but be a matter of regret that the mail service should again fall into the hands of a company so inimical to the interests of Canada in general and Halifax in particular.

A bill, compelling chemists to affix a label describing the antidote to every bottle of poison dispensed, has recently been introduced into the New Jersey legislature. This is a law which might well be universally adopted. The occurrence of casualties and fatalities from the careless and ignorant handling of poisons is so frequent that any measure which would tend to lessen the danger ought to find a place in the statutes. We commend the subject to the consideration of members of the Assembly.

In an article on the libel suit brought by Mr. Van Horne against the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Montreal Daily Witness* has the following incidental but pregnant remark. "The fact that the story was published by a Government organ which has always shown the utmost friendliness if not something more toward the Canadian Pacific Railway and its manager, was calculated to deprive it of the license which is always accorded to political papers which, when speaking against their enemies, are never believed." The italics are our own and they mark an opinion which is so widespread that we have always wondered that partizan sheets continue to waste their time and abilities in mutual abuse, to which no one gives credence.

Lord Wolseley is not one of those regular officers who systematically pooh-pooh irregulars. His experience with the Canadian Militia in the Red River expedition has left a favorable impression on his mind which he has taken more than one occasion to express. In his contribution to the February *Harper*, entitled "The Standing Army of Great Britain," after summing up the strength of the army, he adds:—"I do not profess to enter upon the strength of the military forces maintained by Canada, Australia, and our other colonies, but that they are of great importance will be fully recognized by the world whenever God in His mercy is pleased to send us a statesman wise enough and great enough to federate and consolidate into one united British empire all the many lands and provinces which acknowledge Queen Victoria as their sovereign."

We last week referred to the insolent pretension that the Pacific trade belonged of right to the United States, and alluded to Australia as in itself disposing summarily of that sort of "buncombe." We now have accounts of H. M. S. Egeria having declared a British protectorate over no less than thirteen islands in the South Pacific belonging to the Union and Phoenix groups. What will our American high-flying friends say to that.

A printed statement entitled "An Appeal from the North. Vest" is being circulated among Members of Parliament plainly, it is said, by an Ottawa correspondent of the *St. John Globe*, charging General Sir Fred. Middleton with deliberately appropriating a quantity of valuable furs taken by him under pretence "of keeping them safe" for a Mr. Bremner. The correspondent concludes his communication by stating that "the matter has created a profound sensation." We should imagine so, and we should further think that a tolerably exciting action for libel is likely to be the upshot of it.

As the Provincial Elections loom nearer, our daily contemporaries pursue with renewed vigor and determination the roles of the "Eatonswill Gazette" and the "Eatonswill Independent." Every possible subject is made to do partizan duty, and amongst others that of certain vacancies in the Legislative Council, which again suggests the doubt whether it would not be better, not only not to fill them at all, but to abolish the remainder. We are inclined to think that both Nova Scotia and the Maritime Provinces generally would acknowledge that Mr. Fielding's Government had scored a point if they manfully shouldered the onus of initiating the reform.

The Dominion Franchise Act is of course fair game for the opposition, and Mr. Laurier accordingly gets off the following resolution ancient it: "That in the opinion of this House the Electoral Franchise Act ought to be repealed, and that it is preferable to revert to the plan of utilizing for the elections of this House the Provincial franchises and voters' lists." This is all very well as an opposition protest, but we entirely fail to see that the Provincial Franchises would fill the bill for Dominion elections, varying as they do in different provinces. In Nova Scotia especially, where all Dominion employes are deprived of their rights as citizens of the Dominion, would it be unsatisfactory.

The *Echo* of last Saturday evening has done good service in printing a letter from a Boston correspondent describing the trials and disappointments awaiting Nova Scotia girls who resort to the States under the idea of improving their condition. It is pointed out that the wages of domestic servants have suffered great diminution, while, especially in factories and stores, work is far longer and more arduous than they would be called upon to perform at home, and that the modes of living into which they are thrown are of the most comfortless description, and calculated to lay them open to the numberless temptations of a great city. We trust this communication will be widely read, and reproduced by the Press throughout the Province.

A correspondent of the *Week* commenting on the common use of the term American, as applied to the people of the United States, observes:—"but it is quite right they should enjoy it. It is after a superficial impostor, Amerigo Vespucci, who availed himself of the discoveries of Columbus to vaunt himself into renown." Like the correspondent alluded to we have no objection to the appropriation of the name by the United States if only that it leaves to us, uninterfered with, our own name of "Canadian." But "Canadian" (such is his non de plume) does injustice to the memory of Vespucci, who was not only a distinguished navigator, commander and writer, but had no idea of interfering with or supplanting the memory of Columbus, with whom he enjoyed a personal friendship.

The active movement in the Presbyterian Church in regard to the revision of the famous Westminster Confession is one of great theological interest. Protestantism owes to Presbyterianism a debt which must always be recognized, and that debt will be enhanced by the liberalizing tendency of the present movement. In no body of Christians to-day is there a more active interest in the relation of theology to modern thought, and the question of creed revision illustrates the solvent influence of modern criticism, the advance of toleration and the decline of bigotry. The five points selected for excision by the advocates of revision very well exemplify this position. They are i.e., reprobation; the damnation of infants; the damnation of the heathen; the classification of Roman Catholics as idolaters; and the statement that the Pope is Anti-Christ.