

THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal,

DEVOTED TO

Commercial, Manufacturing, Mining and General News.

\$1.50 PER ANNUM. }
SINGLE COPY 5 CTS. }

HALIFAX, N. S., SEPTEMBER 16, 1892.

{ VOL. 9
No. 38 }

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THE CRITIC,

Published every Friday at 161 Hollis Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia

BY

CRITIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Edited by C. F. FRASER.

Subscription \$1.50 per annum in advance. Single copies 5 cents
SAMPLE COPIES SENT FREE.

Remittances should be made to A. M. FRASER, BUSINESS MANAGER.

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.

One of the most interesting scientific models in the world is now under construction for the Columbian Exposition. It consists of a tank thirty feet square, in which are placed miniature continents, surrounded by actual water. The pipes which lead the water to the tank are so arranged that all the ocean currents are actually represented, and as the currents are represented in water, in which a whitish powder has been mixed, their direction and swiftness can be easily determined.

The world famous "Marshall Gold Nugget" will be among the countless treasures entrusted to the managers of the World's Fair. This nugget, which was found by the veriest chance on Feb. 16th, 1848, gives the date to the discovery of gold in California. The finding of the yellow little ball, no larger than a lima bean, was yet the means of altering the whole future of California, and of transforming the country of ranches into one of the most wealthy mining countries in the world.

Far down underneath the blue waters of the Adriatic some "sick pearls" are being nursed back to health and beauty. These pearls, which were once among the most magnificent in the world, were laid aside by the Archducess Ranier for many years. While reposing in the bank vault they lost both color and lustre—in other words they became sick. The experts who were consulted on behalf of these interesting patients recommended a prolonged sojourn in the depths of the sea. Although they have been there for a number of years, they have not yet quite regained their former exquisite beauty.

The "Shut-in Society" has for the past seven years been doing a grand work in a quiet way. It was founded almost by accident in 1877 by a letter from one shut-in invalid to another. In 1885 the Society was incorporated under the laws of the State. The object of the Society is to provide for the comfort, help, or amusement of those who are compelled to lead a shut-in life. Many who are not invalids, but who are in sympathy with the work, have also become members. These take an active part in the various committees which attend to sending literature to invalids in isolated places, to the helping hand, the wheel-chair, the cloth dress, the missionary and the prison departments of the work. The Society has many Canadian members, both among invalids and among more active workers. The Secretary, Miss M. C. Yarrow, 29 North Seventh Street, New York, will gladly furnish any further information needed.

It is a pity that so much ingenuity is frequently wasted in a bad cause. A late *Engineering Record* recounts a recent fraud which was happily discovered before any damage was done. It seems that in examining a rivetted iron-work structure the inspector decided that several additional rivets should be put in. The contractor, who was unwilling to go to any expense, complied with the order by having balls of putty stuck against the iron plates at regular intervals, had rivet snaps sunk in them, and had the whole neatly painted over. The *Record* suggests that the name of the rascal who tried so cunning a trick should be handed down to posterity, bracketed with that of the contractor who attempted to supply cast-iron bayonets to the British soldiers in a late Egyptian campaign.

Many travellers have been deceived by the mirages on the desert of Sahara, which so temptingly represent fertile oases in the great expanse of sand, but a more curious delusion has been found of late in Alaska. Near the Great Pacific glacier, from five to six o'clock in the evenings of the month of July, a spectro city was seen on the shadow of the glacier. The street of this phantom city are well defined, the trees are plentiful and many tall spires are seen. The architecture of the houses and palaces in unlike any known in the modern times. Many theories have been advanced as to the cause of the apparition, but so far scientists are baffled. Those who hold that it is a reflection of some Russian city of the present day are at a loss to account for the absence of all life in its streets and highways. The Indians of Alaska have well named it "The Silent City."

A report has gone abroad through the medium of the *New York Herald* that a slavery—not unlike that of the Kanakas in Queensland—is being practiced by the management of the Wilkesbarre Railroad in Pennsylvania. It is boldly stated that 300 negro laborers are held in the veriest bondage. That they are ill-paid, ill-treated, and driven to work under cover of guns and pistols. It is said that they were originally engaged on quite different terms, that they were promised \$1.50 a day, where in reality but a few cents are doled out, and that they were promised proper food instead of the mule-meat which they have been obliged to eat. It is also asserted that those who have endeavored to escape have been so severely treated by their employers that the men are thoroughly cowed. If even half of what is alleged is true, a frightful cruelty is being perpetrated. The officials of the United States, so it seems to us, would be better employed in caring for the oppressed negroes who are supposed to be under the protection of the Starry Flag, than in so enthusiastically protecting their flag from insults in foreign countries.

The fact that during Lord Salisbury's Administration two millions of square miles were added to the British Empire has won him many admirers. The opprobrious title of "land-grabbers," which the press of foreign countries has been prompt in selecting for the Ministry, did not by any means lessen his popularity. The late reported foreign acquisition is now being much talked of, although as yet no official statement has been given. It will be remembered that in 1885 a treaty was made between Great Britain and Germany with respect to the Islands of the Pacific. The Gilbert or Kingsmill Islands were then admitted to be the property of Britain, but until recently the matter has not been pushed farther. The islands of the group are all of coral formation, rising from six to ten feet above the sea level. They contain a population of some 40,000 inhabitants, engaged for the most part in fishing and basket-making. The little trade between the islands and the mainlands has been carried on by England and by a few American merchants. Annexation will probably finish the good work of civilization which the Missionaries have begun.

It was with no small degree of annoyance that many Canadians lately read of the flag-disturbance in Montreal. It seems that the American flag was seen on the Queen's Theatre building flying above the Union Jack. A serious disturbance soon arose over the matter, and finally the Stars and Stripes were torn from the pole. The United States Consul was prompt to defend the flag of the Republic and demanded an investigation of the affair. The Secretary of State at Washington sent pro-emptory telegrams to the Consul, and the Canadian Secret Service was called upon to hunt out the offenders, while the Press of Upper Canada published lofty editorials on the courtesy due to foreign flags. A letter has been received by the Canadian Secret Service in which Neil Florence, the business agent of the company then playing at the Queen's Theatre, states that the "flag incident" was intended as an advertising dodge, and that the whole affair was pre-arranged. In view of the turmoil which his actions have excited, Mr. Florence has thought best to take French leave of Montreal. The United States authorities will make it pleasant for him if he attempts to cross the border, for the insult which he, as an American citizen, offered to his flag, will not soon be forgotten.