

THE CRITIC:

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DEVOTED TO

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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.

Single copies of THE CRITIC will hereafter be sold at 5 cents, the early subscription remaining as before at \$1.50, payable in advance.

A good deal has been lately written about Russian wheat. It is said to ripen a fortnight earlier than other varieties. If this be the case, it will guarantee immunity against early frosts in the fall, a quality of incalculable value to the N. W., whose rapid development would be placed beyond one great danger of check, provided it retained, in an alien soil, its other qualities. Professor Saunders' confidence in it is encouraging.

The Empire, the new Conservative organ, commands the encomium of the Week as the exponent of an Independent Press, but, as the Week also significantly remarks, "is not the expedient of a party press a sorry device? Surely there should be a better way for promoting truth and good government than that afforded by rival militant journals, those of one set committed beforehand to the defence of all measures emanating from the government, those of the other bound to oppose them with almost equal uniformity." Let us hope that wiser ideas are gaining ground, for, as a fact, independent journalism is making headway in Canada.

We understand that the question of gymnastic instructions in the public schools is under consideration by the School Board. This is most desirable, and we should be glad to know that a reasonable amount of rudimentary military drill formed a part of the athletic training. We would, however, counsel the board to look carefully round the question, in order not to run the risk of committing themselves to a system which might prove unduly expensive, and to consult more than one expert in the matter. We shall have more to suggest on the subject next week. At present we can only say that so much of a scheme as has been explained to us is open to the objection that it would be impossible for one instructor, however energetic, to cover the ground. The essence of a possible organization would be the instruction of subordinate teachers in the first place.

The N. W. will closely resemble the United States in one respect, i. e., the mixture of nationalities. In addition to Scandinavian and other immigrants, the Dominion Agent for Belgium writes to Mr. McTavish, the C. P. R. Land Commissioner, that he will bring over in March 500 Belgium farmers for Manitoba, for whom he wishes homesteads selected, and contracts entered into for the erection of small farm-houses, stables, &c.

If it were possible to bring home to a profligate press any shred of conviction of a moral responsibility, that desirable end might be promoted by the attitude of some of the more respectable European journals which directly charge M. Rochefort's anarchical sheet *L'Intransigeant* with the precise sort of incitement calculated to urge fanatical and crazy miscreants like Aubertin, the assassin of M. Ferry, to the senseless and sanguinary deed to which their crude ignorance and disordered brains prompt them.

Public Opinion quotes the *California Advertiser* in commendation of the *British American Citizen*, to which we have once or twice alluded to—"the movement," says the *Advertiser*, "of the English residents to enroll themselves as American citizens is a guarantee that mob rule will have another check put upon its muzzle. * * * We want just such material, solid and substantial, to combine and unite with other honest elements, so as to neutralize the power of the ignorant masses and scum of the foreign-born voters."

The Gladstonians are reported to be projecting receptions at every station from Holyhead to London, for Mr. T. D. Sullivan and Mr. W. O'Brien, on their way to the opening of Parliament. The demonstrations are to culminate in a mass meeting and huge procession in London. Counter demonstrations being expected, there will probably be much disturbance. Political processions in excited times are unmitigated evils, and much responsibility rests on those who, by means of them, give the rein to demagoguism.

The question to abolish the exemption from taxation of ecclesiastical property is likely to be a fiery one. The *Week* assumes, as an irrefragable proposition, that "it is the duty of the Church to be, first of all, and above all, a doer as well as a preacher of righteousness, and one of the first dictates of righteousness is that the Church shall bear its fair share of the public burthens." The morality postulated sounds very nice, and—let us say—is nice, but does it appear nice to the churches? We trow not. To the fullest extent of interpretation the churches anathematize the muzzling of the ox that treadeth out the corn. It will be a long fight between cleric and laic.

Some one seems to have been at great pains to pump up a story of Senator Voorhees having been annoyed while speaking in Congress, by a loud conversation among some other senators, which Mr. Voorhees said was due to Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Voorhees is reported to have expressed his regret that he did not know at the time that Mr. Chamberlain was the disturber, as he pathetically regrets that he was deprived, by ignorance of the asserted fact, of an opportunity of braying about "bad manners brought from over the sea." If this circumstance occurred at all it was doubtless the merest accident (and it is not stated that the interruption continued), which, however, a demonstrative vulgarian might possibly spread eagle himself upon, and which the press generally ought to be ashamed to blazon forth with exaggerated and sensational headings. But the thing is absolutely childish, and we do not believe a word of it!

We extract the following significant paragraph from the *Monetary Times*. If the information is correct in detail, the subject is one not only for thought, but action:—"The law courts of Nova Scotia evidently need reformation in the way of decreased law costs in small cases. Four cases have recently been tried in a County Court in Colchester County, Nova Scotia, which suggests to a correspondent the idea that 'a modern lawyer's office more than equals a sugar refinery or a gold mine for making money.' One case was that of a debt of \$28 for balance due on a horse and buggy; on this the taxed costs were \$88.66. Another was a dispute about a cow, heifer and calf, valued at \$26, and the costs allowed are \$195.77. The Singer Company sued a man named McLeod for \$15, and the defendant was obliged to pay not only the debt, but also \$161.20 to the lawyers. The worst case of all was a suit for a heifer, valued at \$15, killed in a bear trap, on which the poor trapper is obliged to pay \$240. He no doubt wishes he had fallen into the tender mercies of the bear trap rather than those of the lawyers."