

# THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal

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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.

Notwithstanding every effort to exterminate the rabbits of Australia, the prolific rodents continue to multiply. Government rewards for the best method of destroying the pests have been several times offered with no signal result. In New South Wales the people are actually considering a proposition for surrounding the colony with a brick wall, so that the rabbits may have no place of refuge and may more readily be destroyed.

At the next general election in Ontario a plebiscite vote will probably be taken on the subject of prohibition. If the voice of the people calls for prohibition, there is no doubt that the policy of the Government will be in accordance with the demand, and if the prohibitory measures are rejected, even the most ardent temperance workers will admit that the failure is to be attributed to the direct vote of the people, and that the possible unfavorable result has been brought about by perfectly legitimate means.

There has not been a strike of late years which has aroused as much sympathy as has the action of the girls employed by the Aerated Bread Co. of London, in refusing to continue their work in the over-heated basements assigned them, and who receive wages of from 8s. to 10s. per week. The company, which is noted for its excellent and cheap bread, is a huge monopoly, and as the last declared dividend was 42 per cent, there is no excuse to be made for the shareholders, who have literally wrung their money from the helpless employees.

Morocco seems beyond doubt to have drifted into French control, notwithstanding that Spain claims the State by an ancient right, and that Great Britain is supposed to have coveted it as an addition to her colonial possessions. In both Algeria and Tunis French rule has been popular, and the new French railroad to be laid through Morocco is a tempting bait to the Moors, who realize that modern improvements are necessary for the restoration of their country to its pristine greatness. England is at the same time keeping an eye on Tangiers, and when France formally takes possession of Morocco, Great Britain will assert her power in that Province, and to greatly add to the security of her naval power in the Mediterranean.

Thanks to the attention which novelists, since the days of Charles Dickens, have been giving to the condition of the poor of great cities, many philanthropic schemes for bettering their lives have been considered. Walter Besant in particular has advocated the establishment of free libraries,

reading rooms and museums in the poorer quarters of London, at the expense of the Government. The character of the Whitechapel district of London is too well known to require description. It has been and is a hot-bed for breeding criminals, but a broad movement is now being made for reclaiming the erring ones by a series of popular entertainments, and by the opening and dedication of the Whitechapel Free Public Library, Museum and Reading Room. State Socialism has become popular in England since the last generation.

Some as the soul has been starving in London for an out-of-door "color-feast." He complains that in foggy weather the Strand is unbearable because of its monotonous coloring, the omnibuses and post office boxes being the only relieving objects in the gloom. He urges that the dull weather impresses the brain insensibly, and that every effort should be made to infuse a cheerful glow even to a downfall of rain, and he calls for the art-loving public to refuse to purchase "mackintoshes of neutral colors, and umbrellas of black alpaca." Scarlet, orange, emerald green and brilliant purple are the colors in which we should face Nature in her dull days, and so perhaps shame her into a proper sense of her conduct, and we doubt not that "happiness and mirth" would prevail even in a north-easter among those who from snug window seats could watch the variegated processions of rainbows.

In our issue of October 28th we published a statement which apparently was authoritative giving the results of the use of black pepsin in butter-making. We referred briefly in our editorial columns to the apparent discovery, which promised to double the yield of butter and prove a boon to dairymen and dairywomen throughout the Province. What we said was prefaced with an "if," because we had no practical knowledge of butter-making, but we thought that the experiment of using black pepsin was well worth the trial, especially as the report of the experiments of the Dairy Association of South Australia was so definite and declarative in its statements. Several of our subscribers have since obtained black pepsin and have used it with varying results, but so far no experiment in this Province has proved a success. In another column we publish a selection from the *Scottish American*. This widely read journal, like THE CRITIC, had previously published the report of the Dairymen's Association referred to above.

A Russian editor is not the happy care free quill-driver of this continent, harassed only by overdue subscribers, threatened libel suits, and controversially-minded correspondents. In Russia, in addition to these lesser evils, the press censor is to be found, and woe to the luckless wight who dares to ignore his mandates. A long list of prohibited editorial subjects is pinned up in each editorial sanctum. There must be no casual reference to the Jewish question, there must be no criticism of a high-handed action of the law courts, and the editor who dared to refer to the church schools would be trifling with his liberty certainly, and not improbably with his life. It is the press censor's particular care that no paragraph concerning the Czar's intentions or movements shall reach the public, who, as a consequence, know less of their sovereign than they do of the Premier of Canada. When three warnings and punishments have been meted out to any offending editor, his paper is confiscated. Naturally the journalistic profession is not a popular one—the risk of liberty and property is too great to be willingly assumed, and at the present day there are actually only four daily newspapers published in the Empire of the Czar.

While we are continually congratulating ourselves on the progress and enterprise of our Canadian fellow-citizens, we might at the same time profitably consider the still more "go-ahead" spirit which is characteristic of our Australian brothers. The eight hour movement, which has agitated the whole manufacturing world, was long ago fought out in Australia, the Australian system of ballot casting has been long established in Great Britain and is coming into vogue in almost all parts of America; the railways of the Island Continent have been run, not at the expense of the people for the benefit of stockholders, but as the property of the Government they have been made to serve the interests of the public cheaply and well. Notwithstanding the taint of convict blood which is attached to many of the prominent politicians and Government officials, the strictest honesty has prevailed in the administration of public affairs. Dishonesty and downfall are synonymous terms and equivalents for our expressions of "boodling" and "white-washing" are not in use. New Zealand very gallantly and justly has conferred full citizenship upon female citizens, greatly to the delight of the advocates of female emancipation. There is little doubt that within a generation or so the whole of the Western and a great portion of the Eastern Continent will follow the latest example set them by the plucky little colony.