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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.

CATS—Specimens of the odd appearing cats known as the Siamese, introduced into Europe during the last few years, were shown at a recent London exhibition. The ground color of one of the specimens was pale cream, slightly darker on the hind quarters, the color of the extremities—the muzzle, ears, tail and four feet—being a very dark chocolate, approaching black.

WASHINGTON BESIEGED BY OFFICE-SEEKERS.—So great is the rush of office-seekers at Washington that the President and the members of his cabinet find it almost impossible to keep up with their regular duties. Since his inauguration the President has arisen at seven-thirty a. m., and his day's duties have not ceased until after two a. m. of the day following. This is down right hard work, and proves that in some respects at least the President's lot is not a happy one.

PUBLIC CLOCKS.—Twice a day the boom of cannon posts the citizens of Halifax as to the correct time, and it may be that this monitor is considered sufficient, and accounts for our deficiency in public clocks placed in the towers of public buildings and other conspicuous places. These abound in other cities, and the hours and sometimes the halves and quarters are chimed out by powerful but pleasant toned bells. The old clock on the Citadel still points out the time with some uncertainty with its maimed hand or hands, but the market clock has changed owners with the market building, and now its familiar face, gazed at by thousands daily through sheer force of habit, gives back no intelligent signal, and its voice is forever hushed. It stands in just the right position for a public clock, the post office, the customs and the ferry are all near by, and an effort should be made to have it set going. If the city will not bear the expense let a subscription be started, and we believe sufficient cash will be guaranteed to once more revivify this old and faithful public servant. The last and most eccentric public clock we notice is the one in the tower of the Intercolonial Station. It has three dials, and purports to give standard time. If ever a clock should be exact it should be this one, but truth to tell a more erratic time piece does not exist, and the traveller who relies on it is almost bound (no slang) to be left. It is a Government clock, and, like most Governments, in its will desire to please everybody it pleases nobody. The east dial is now handless, the south is sometimes right, but the west is invariably slow. Even at the expense of another deficit let Minister Haggart give the travelling public a genuine surprise by making this clock show the correct time on all of its faces.

FAST ATLANTIC LINE.—We seem to be fated to fail in all our efforts to secure a fast Atlantic service for Halifax, and, worst of all, we are divided as to what kind of service we want. Some of our leading citizens say that a fourteen knot service is all that is required, and sneer at the advocates of a line of ocean grey hounds, the best that floats both as to speed and carrying capacity, as visionary and impracticable. What we want to do is to make up our minds as to exactly what we do want, and having settled this point to unite in forcing our views on the Government.

CIVIC TAXATION.—The lien law, a most excellent means of securing the prompt and certain payment of city taxes, was largely the work of ex-Mayor Mackintosh. In framing it and pushing its confirmation by the Council and the Assembly he was guided by the belief that it would save so much that was lost under the old method of collection that it would in the end tend to lower the city rate. Councils, however, seem to imagine that their sacred duty is to spend all the money at their disposal, and as the Halifax Council has proved itself no exception to the rule one of the ex-Mayor's objects has been defeated, and the rate of taxation has steadily advanced. This, in the face of the hard times, is becoming unbearable, and it is time that a change of policy was introduced and strict economy enforced.

MARRYING OFF THE STRENGTH.—The departure of an old and the arrival of a new regiment gives cause for much thoughtless laughter at the expense of the girls who are left behind. It is conceded that they have no hope left but to take up with some new arrival, and, having amused ourselves with the comic side of the question, we dismiss it without thinking of the bitter wrong that is connected with it. The soldier always has proved and always will prove irresistibly attractive to feminine hearts. Like moths around a candle they flutter about, too many only to be singed and destroyed body and soul, but still there are many who almost heroically maintain their purity. These, however, are met with proposals of honorable marriage, and consent only to find that having married "off the strength" their position is little if any better than that of their frail sisters. In fact that marriage in such cases has only been a bait to lure them to destruction. It is a bitter, cruel wrong, this performing of the marriage service where the soldier has not the sanction of his officers, and the law should be amended forbidding the issue of marriage licenses or the publishing of banns in such cases. We do not pretend to say that many of these marriages do not result in happiness and constancy, but the many wives left behind with the departure of each regiment are proof sufficient of its dangers, and they should be frowned down.

THE INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY—Under the economical management of Mr. Haggart the receipts and expenses of the Intercolonial have not last been made to balance, and the large deficits of the past have now been overcome. Only one conclusion can be drawn from this, and that is that for years the road has been extravagantly and recklessly mismanaged. Since Mr. Haggart has assumed control he has really impaired the efficiency of the road, and the volume of business has been largely decreased. That he has been able to make it self-supporting with diminished receipts only emphasizes the fact that the large deficits in former years were unnecessary, and proves that there must be a screw loose somewhere. Some hundreds of thousands of dollars have been lost to the country, and the one great public work in the Maritime Provinces pronounced an incubus to the detriment of the whole section, while now it is proved that with honest management there should have been a surplus. Some one must have been profiting at the expense of the country, and a rigid investigation should be made to find the guilty party or parties.

In connection with the above subject the remarks of Mr. Kenny are pertinent. He pointed out that freight had not been despatched according to agreement, and that the Grand Trunk had really discriminated against the Intercolonial in favor of its Portland branch by failure to supply cars to move the freight. But can the Grand Trunk be now blamed for such a policy? It sought two years ago to secure competing connection with the Canadian Pacific for the traffic of Halifax by extending the Temiscouata Railway to Moncton, thus gaining a short line to Halifax all on Canadian territory. The time was propitious to give the Maritime Provinces the boon of two great competing through lines, but the golden opportunity was allowed to pass, the Government would not grant any aid to the project, and to day the Canadian Pacific drains the business of the Intercolonial, and the Grand Trunk, thwarted in its efforts to gain direct entrance to Halifax, has thrown up the sponge and directed all its energies to make Portland the Winter Port. Who is to blame for this? The only possible answer is—The Government!