

THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

1 50 PER ANNUM.
SINGLE COPY 3 CTS. }

HALIFAX, N. S., SEPTEMBER 30, 1887.

{ VOL. 4.
No. 39.

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W. S. Manning, Superintendent of the London Auxilliary of the Vegetarian Society, is prepared to send to all sending a stamped addressed wrapper a gratuitous packet of literature, including recipes for savory dishes, whole-meal bread, fresh fruit all the year round, and catalogue of the Society's works. These may be of service to some of our subscribers, but Nova Scotians, with few exceptions, have no scruples about indulging in flesh, fish, or fowl, and hence the vegetarian doctrines appear more theoretical than practical.

The tercentennial of the discomforture of the Spanish Armada, is to be celebrated in Great Britain next year. How strangely might the history of the past three centuries have been changed had the Spaniards effected a safe landing of their troops at that critical juncture. Three hundred years ago Spain was in the zenith of her power, and little did her people dream that the hardy Islanders of the North, commanded by such officers as Raleigh, Granville, Hawkins, Drake, Nelson and others, would one day make Britain mistress of the sea.

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 3 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.

The Government of the Hawaiian Islands has caught the national borrowing fever. An attempt to float Hawaiian bonds for one-and-a-half million dollars, has for the present, owing to trouble in the Islands, been found impossible, but it is thought that London money lenders will ultimately take the bonds at a slight discount.

Late advices from South America prove that the Spanish and Portuguese republics have determined not to be behind their Northern neighbors in railway construction. English and American engineers are in demand in Venezuela and Brazil, in which countries the railway fever has become chronic. Telegraph lines are also being constructed in Ecuador and Peru.

The Governments of Brazil and the Argentine Republic have appointed commissioners to fix the boundary line between these countries; but it is feared that the matter will not be amicably settled without a resort to arms. Might is still right, and man's judgment in international questions is largely affected by the tonnage of the guns, and the powder and shell in the magazines of the respective nationalities.

The late naval manœuvres on the English coast were taken in sober earnest by the ignorant lower class of natives in Bombay. The rough translations of the English telegrams—"Capture of Falmouth, seizure of iron-clads, capture of the mouth of the Thames," and so forth—set the community in the greatest state of excitement, and they firmly believed that England was actually in the hands of an enemy.

La Justice, of Quebec, seems to have a very imperfect idea of the proper significance of its own name, having come out with a vicious article last Saturday condemning a sentence passed by the Recorder of Quebec on one of the principal ruffianly assailants of the Salvation Army there, and "practically," says the *Herald*, "inciting to further bloodshed." The sentence is said to have caused a bitter feeling in French circles. So much for French justice and chivalry.

Germany displays but little interest in the Bulgarian problem, and perhaps this is not surprising, when we remember that the King of Holland is said to be dying, and that his successor to the throne is a little girl. If Prince Bismark can but control the regency, the Dutch monarchy will scarce survive a decade, and the German federation will add as one of its states a country renowned for the commercial enterprise of its people. Such an acquisition would be of more value to Germany than two Hollands carved from the side of Russia.

Betting is greatly on the increase in New York, and the betters are ever on the lookout for new and original subjects upon which to stake their money. The color of the eyes, the light of a man's moustache, are frequently betted upon, but the latest idea is to ask whether the number upon a bank note is odd or even, and if the interrogation be answered correctly, the bill is passed over to the lucky winner as unconcernedly as if it were a postage stamp. The speculation fever, which finds its center in Wall Street, permeates New York society, and tends to the laying of most ridiculous wagers.

Although many of the French railways are at present under the control of private companies, they will ultimately become the property of the National Government. In Sweden a movement is now on foot to purchase all the railways from private corporations, and have them worked by the Government. We believe that in the interests of the public the Government should control and operate not only the postal system of the country, but also the railway and telegraph systems. If these services were conducted by the Government, we should hear few complaints of grinding monopolies and excessive rates.

The little Spanish Republic of San Salvador is again in the throes of a rebellion, and President Menendez has declared himself the dictator of the State. According to a recent treaty Guatemala, Honduras and San Salvador, entered into an engagement to aid each other in the suppression of local rebellions, but as the two former states are now engaged in political warfare, it is probable that San Salvador will have to settle her little family broil at home. With a common origin and a common religion, it is surprising to observe the people of Central America gathering themselves under five hostile flags instead of uniting under one broad and liberal constitution.

There is said to be 240,000 words in the English language, and yet our vocabulary is so limited that we cannot accurately define in words such sensations as pleasure and pain, nor give correct definitions of life and death. Most of us believe we know what pain and pleasure are, and what life is, but if called upon to express our views, we would find it a somewhat difficult matter. An English exchange gives the following definition of pain, which may have been as clear as a bell to the writer if he had a tooth-ache at the time, but which, to our mind, leaves the question as to what is pain? in the same position in which he found it. Pain is a sensation which more or less rapidly and acutely assails the faculty of endurance. In its commonest forms it is suffering produced by nerve excitation, the elements of the nervous apparatus being either directly or by a transmitted irritation mechanically disturbed.

Volapuk, the new universal language, is making steady headway. The Volapukists held their grand international congress a few days ago at Munich, and most of the countries of Europe sent representatives. The good repute of America for enlightened curiosity was saved by one gentleman from Cincinnati. Pasteur Schleyer, the inventor of the language, took the chair, in the name of the Associations of France. He explained that Volapuk was not meant to suppress other tongues, but only to supply a new one for the common purposes of all mankind, and, in particular, for the promotion of universal brotherhood. The inventor hopes to induce the German Government to admit Volapuk to the list of languages transmissible by telegraph within the Empire. In Denmark it has been officially recommended to telegraph clerks as a subject of study. The best augury for its spread in France lies in the fact that Berlin seems to take no interest in it, inasmuch as that city was not represented at the Congress. Englishmen ought to look upon Volapuk with a kindly eye, as most of its borrowings from the Germanic languages are taken from their own tongue. The characteristically English phrase, "How much money have you?" must, we regret to say, be rendered in Volapuk by "*Moni limōdik labols.*"
—Daily News.