

THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal.

DEVOTED TO

Commerce, Manufacturing, Mining and Agriculture.

1.50 PER ANNUM.
SINGLE COPY 6 CTS.

HALIFAX, N. S., JANUARY 6, 1897.

VOL. 5.
No. 1.

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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 3 cents.

SAMPLE COPIES SENT FREE.

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

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

Barnum's elephant Alice. Jumbo's illustrious consort, has been dissected at Bridgeport, Connecticut. In her stomach were found 300 pennies, part of a pocket knife, four walking-stick ferrules, and a piece of lead pipe. It is marvellous how the elephant held together so long with that irritating weight of miscellaneous Birmingham and Sheffield goods inside. No wonder that elephants are occasionally bilious and ill-tempered. Lead piping and bronze money may be warranted to withstand even elephantine efforts at digestion.

The effects of water drunk before meals, has been recently the subject of study to some eminent medical authorities. One beneficial effect is claimed for it—the washing away of the secretion of mucus formed during the repose of the alimentary ducts. This is particularly the case in the morning, when the gastric walls are covered with a thick and tenacious layer, which coats the food first taken, and retards its digestion. A glass of water before breakfast washes this out and strengthens the stomach. Cold water is best for those who have ample power of reaction, and hot for those who have not.

Lord Wolseley, in a recent interesting speech to volunteers, observed that "there was a great deal about the drill of the British Army as obsolete as the cross-bow." "If," says the *Broad Arrow*, "such is Lord Wolseley's opinion, why does he not hasten the process of elimination?" Well, Lord Wolseley is not only outspoken, but prompt and resolute in action. It can only therefore be surmised that as yet red-tape is too strong for him, powerful as he is. The drill book has been in process of revision for years. An immense discarding of useless manoeuvres took place in the famous issue of 1875, and the tinkers and cranks seemed daunted for a time. But subsequent editions began again to betray their handiwork. No sooner was something reduced to absolute simplicity and common-sense, than, apparently, some privileged military idiot, who had apparently the ear of the authorities, succeeded in relegating it to the old state of complication, or something as nearly approaching it, as the general advance of common-sense would allow. The *B. A.* suggests an instructional battalion at Aldershot, where all questions of Infantry Drill might be settled and determined.

Whatever may have happened to, or through, the fragments of the Big Raft, which have become a standing terror to mariners, one thing is certain, no such raft ought to be allowed to be put together and set afloat on ocean highways at a late period of the year.

English news contains an account of Mr. Gladstone having been snow-balled during his recent transit through London, on his way to the continent. The annoyance did not, probably, amount to much, but it was a disgraceful manifestation. If the venerable statesman's great reputation did not avail to protect him from vulgar insult, the fact that he was proceeding in search of rest and change to recruit over-worn strength ought to have sufficed.

The *London Spectator*, in an able article upon the negro race, arrives at several conclusions, which must have become patent to all close observers of this branch of the human family. These are—that the Africans advance intellectually more quickly upon intermarriage with other races,—that their civilization improves upon the adoption of some distinct form of religion, such as the Mohammedan, and that their social and moral elevation is dependent upon the adoption of the Christian Faith. The negro, as we know him in this country, although far from holding a leading position in society, is yet immeasurably the superior of his pagan brother in the dark continent, whose level of existence is but little higher than that of the intelligent brute creation by which he is surrounded.

The extent to which the public parks in London are becoming public forums, in which all sorts of doctrinaires, social, political, and religious, carry on a ceaseless Sunday propaganda, is the subject of comment in a portion of the English press. London used, from 30 to 40 years ago, to be one of the pleasantest, as well as one of the cheapest places to live in in the world. The difference to-day is wonderful. To the absentee of a few years foreign sojourn, it now conveys the unpleasant idea of a seething and swarming ant-hill, and the mass of its components strike the visitor as stunted, squalid, and brutal, to an extreme degree. All the parks and public places have, more or less, even on week days, lost their old charm of comparative quiet and solitude. On Sundays they are a repulsive babel of vulgar oratory. Socialist, anarchist, infidel, and ignorant bigot of every description, hold high carnival on the Lord's Day, and most of the hearers would almost as soon listen to the one as the other.

Hon. Mr. McLelan, Postmaster General, has been negotiating a parcel post arrangement between Canada and the United States, with Mr. Bell, Superintendent of U. S. Foreign Mails. A service which it was supposed would prove mutually advantageous to both countries, was agreed upon, but it is reported that the United States authorities have made some alterations in the original agreement, which, if accepted by the Canadian Government will result in the establishment of a parcel post between the two countries. From semi-official sources, it is gathered that the alterations will be accepted, and if so, the new service will go into the operation on February first next. The basis of the arrangement is similar to that now existing between Canada and Great Britain, excepting that larger parcels will be carried; and what is much more important, the rate of postage will be very much lessened. Four pounds is to be the greatest weight allowed, and the rate charged will not exceed 12½ cents per pound. The new service should prove of great benefit to both countries, and Postmaster General McLelan is to be congratulated upon his success in bringing the negotiations to such a fortunate issue.

A few days since, two lads—the eldest about 17—applied at the Police Station for shelter. Their story, which was apparently truthfully told, was, that they stowed away at Glasgow, G. B., in the *S.S. Austrian*, and that when they arrived here, they were put ashore to shift as best they might. While the steamship cannot be blamed for bringing stowaways over, it must be remembered, that if such persons were carried to a United States port, the steamer would be subject to a penalty for each, and be also compelled to take them back as "pauper immigrants." Therefore it is, that they were landed here, so that the responsibility of the steamer should cease. These lads will doubtless become a charge upon this city for a time at least. This is a most unjust imposition on the rate-payers of Halifax, to which we would call the attention of the City Fathers. If any organized body should assume the care and support of such waifs, it ought to be the Dominion Govt. and not this city. Now that steamers of many lines arrive here almost daily from foreign ports, any of which is liable to bring in it "pauper immigrants," Halifax is not safe from being obliged, under present regulations, to support as many outside paupers as those "to the manor born."