

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.

The Admiralty is nothing if not economical. The latest order in this direction, according to the *World*, is that men on board warships are no longer to be allowed to use the strands of worn-out cordage for doing up their leaf tobacco, as has been the custom from time immemorial.

With regard to the encouragement of a national sentiment in the young people of Canada, referred to elsewhere, we have much pleasure in recommending the latest departure in Canadian journalism, *The Young Canadian*. The first number has just made its appearance and promises to do much in future numbers to foster loyalty in the breasts of its readers. As is set out in the prospectus, it aims to foster a national pride in Canadian progress, history, manufactures, science, art, literature and politics; to draw the youth of the various Provinces together, and to impress them with a sense of the sacred and responsible duties which they owe to their native country. The subscription price is two dollars a year. P. O. Box 1896, Montreal.

This Province might well endeavor to emulate Ontario in the matter of loyalty to the Canadian Flag. We strive, and not unsuccessfully, to lead our sister provinces in many other respects. Let us strive not to be behind any in the matter of Canadianism. The educational authorities of Ontario encourage all schools throughout the Province to hoist the Canadian Flag on all national anniversaries. On the 13th October last, the victory of Queenston Heights was formally and enthusiastically celebrated in the public schools of Toronto, and throughout the Province the pupils in the schools were occupied writing essays on this battle. Now the *Toronto Empire* has done a praiseworthy and patriotic thing in offering a large flag as a prize to the school in each County of Ontario which shall produce the best essay on "Raising the Flag." Following this suggestion a few earnest Canadians in Toronto have compiled and published a little collection of patriotic and National Canadian poems and songs, under the same title, to be given to the authors of the best essay from each school. This is practical Canadianism. It is much to be desired that all our public schools should hoist our Flag on public occasions; and it would be well if copies of the collection of verse above referred to could be distributed among our young people. Let us see to it that our children are brought up good citizens, loyal Canadians, true patriots. Let us have it taught in our schools that it is an ill bird that fouls its own nest. In inculcating true patriotism we take the shortest way to the teaching of all manliness and honor.

We have received very few answers to our inquiry last week about chess and checkers. We wish to impress it upon our readers that if they care to have these departments of THE CRITIC continued they must let us know of their desire by postal card at once, otherwise we shall conclude that the interest taken in them is insufficient to warrant us in giving valuable space for this purpose. Let us know what you think of it without delay.

If Mr. Blaine's wisdom were equal to his energy he would be a very great leader of men. He is fertile in resources; and now, perhaps a little nettled at the meagre results of the great Pan-American Congress from which he professed to expect so much, he has called a meeting of delegates from Mexico and certain of the Central and Southern American States to discuss the project of a grand American trunk line of railway between the Continents of North and South America. The scheme is a large one, yet it should find few but financial difficulties to overcome. The odds would be very heavily against the pecuniary success of the undertaking on account of the advantageous competition of the parallel water-ways. Passengers and mails would doubtless go by the proposed line, but freight would inevitably continue to follow the water route, which is at least fifty per cent. cheaper than by rail. The great American trunk lines run across the continent, a direction in which they have no water-carriage to compete against. The South American people are hardly rich and numerous enough as yet to furnish a passenger traffic sufficient to ensure the success of an enterprise so gigantic. Perhaps, however, the American Government might consider the strategic value of the road, and its probable effect in extending United States influence to the southward, as justification for the tremendous outlay that would be entailed. Ultimately, we can hardly doubt, the road might be made to justify its existence pecuniarily; but the day is surely far distant. In that day we will perhaps be visiting the Old Country by way of Behring Strait and the trans-Siberia route, and the Atlantic Ferry will be forsaken by all who tremble at the thought of *mal de mer*.

It is not surprising that the British author, having suffered so long and so severely from the depredations of piratical American publishers, should look with jealous suspicion on the amended Canadian Copyright Act. It seems probable that, according to a strict interpretation of the British North America Act, which is our charter, the late amendments would have to be declared *ultra vires*; but an editorial in the *Herald* informs us that there is a disposition on the part of the Incorporated Society of Authors, who first raised the question in England, to come to an "amicable settlement on a practical business basis which will conserve the financial interests of all concerned." If this be so it indicates a change of heart, for the temper of the society when it first took up the subject was anything but conciliatory. It would seem that the report of Sir John Thompson, setting forth the peculiar difficulties in which Canadian publishers were placed by the provisions of the old Act, complicated by the lack of International Copyright in America, has convinced the Society that there were two sides to the question. The Act provides that if the British author fails to republish in Canada within a month of publication at home the Minister of Agriculture may grant licenses to persons domiciled in Canada to print and publish the work, though not exclusively, upon their agreeing to pay, and giving security for payment, to the author of a royalty of ten per cent. on the retail price of each copy issued, this royalty to be collected and paid over to the author by the officers of the Dominion Inland Revenue. It must be borne in mind, however, that this plan, if sanctioned by the Imperial Government, will be sanctioned on the ground of expediency rather than of principle. There is no doubt that the Canadian publisher has found himself in a trying position; but it is equally certain that the means by which he proposes to extricate himself from that position are not strictly in accord with the laws of property. The British author owns his work. He has a right to dispose of it as he will, or to refrain from disposing of it. Our Act as amended—and it must be remembered that the amendments are entirely in the interests of the publishers—does certainly interfere with the property right of the British author, and is therefore, theoretically, open to severe criticism. It may be decided by all concerned that it legalizes a lesser evil in order to prevent a greater one. If only in this way can the greater evil be prevented then there is perhaps justification for the new Act, from the point of view of the British author as well as of the Canadian publisher. Half a loaf is better than no bread, even for the British author. We must bear in mind, however, the real nature of the demand which our publishers are making. They ask that if the furnishers of raw material, *i. e.*, the authors, do not sell them their wares within a certain time, the publishers may be allowed to help themselves to these wares on certain pre-arranged and invariable terms—thus doing away with an open market and free competition. The publishers expect to get their raw material on very different terms from those on which other manufacturers get theirs.