

# THE CRITIC:

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

After much thoughtful consideration the Government of the United States has decided to check the immigration of diseased or pauper settlers by enforcing a quarantine of twenty days. Although this regulation is ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the continent from the cholera, it will speedily have the effect of checking undesirable immigration, as the steamer companies will no longer be able to offer low rates as an inducement for the westward journey.

A comparatively unknown writer, Mr. Watson, seems to be first in the race for the laurel-ship vacated by the death of Lord Tennyson. The ode in commemoration of the dead master-singer has been much admired. *The Illustrated London News* and the *Spectator* have both pronounced in his favor, and the British Government has recognized his genius by allowing him for one year a Royal bounty of a thousand dollars. It is not improbable that the coveted position will also be offered him, when the propitious announcement is made of the marriage of Prince George of Wales.

It is more than probable that help will again be needed for the starving peasants of Russia, whose plight is indeed most pitiable. Notwithstanding the prompt help of last winter and the abundant harvest of the present autumn, great need prevails, for the crops of the peasants have been seized by the landlords to pay for the rents of the little farms. Such a state of affairs is a foul blot on the Russian Government, and if another application for help is permitted to be made to the outside world, many will consider, notwithstanding Mr. Talmage to the contrary, that the Czar is by no means so gentle father-like ruler that the great Divine would have us believe.

Lord Rosebery has made a most diplomatic reply to the government of France on the much discussed Newfoundland question. He does not think that he can improve, he modestly states, upon the policy of the Salisbury government, and will therefore not introduce any of those reformatory measures which for very different reasons both Canada and France demand. A minor but very urgent annoyance to Canadians is the whiskey smuggling which is being carried on from the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon to the region of the Lower St. Lawrence. So long as France retains these islands it will be almost impossible to prevent this demoralizing illicit trade. Lord Rosebery is such an ardent radical that he might be content to form his own foreign policy in preference to pursuing a policy which has been satisfactory neither the old continental power nor to the young Dominion.

There are few of us who do not enjoy in private a good stretch and yawn, although we have been brought up to believe that such behaviour is not suited for public exhibitions. A German physician has, however, come out as the champion of the comfortable habit. He claims that in yawning the muscles of the lower jaw and the breathing muscles of the chest are most healthfully expanded. In the yawn proper the eyes are closed, the ears raised and the nostrils dilated, while the tongue, the palate and the uvula are alike stimulated to action. Dr. Naegeli styles yawning the "natural massage of the muscles," and advises people to indulge freely in the habit, and by the constant practice keep in order those muscles which are seldom used. He claims that chronic lung troubles may be warded off in this way, and recommends a course of yawning to those who are suffering from throat or nose disease. Ear-ache and the accumulation of wax in the inner ear are alike prevented by the new treatment, which is certainly a simple one and worthy of a fair trial.

The Rev. George Webb, of Niagara Falls, has attained an unwilling notoriety for his championship of a doubtful clause. The reverend gentleman had made complaint of the Goring family who inconsiderately refused to remove their clothes line from above the foundation walls of Mr. Webb's new church. Naturally the workmen were annoyed at their propinquity to the domestic wash, and it is possible that both mud and mortar were splattered upon the offending garments. On the night of Saturday, November 12th, Mr. Webb decided that the trouble should end. The image of the damp and flouting household linen seems to have turned his brain, and he determined to cut down the clothes line before the wash-day should arrive. There seems to have been a clear case of trespass and damage to property against the clerical light, but the decision was in his favor and his discharge was given. Meanwhile the Goring family are other, according to German custom, saving up for a yearly wash, or they have been put to the financial inconvenience of having their wash done out.

The lack of proper press laws has been felt severely in France during the past year. The once severe press restrictions were utterly done away with in the year 1831, when the public prints were at once lowered in their tone. Libelous accusations were made in the great daily papers, and thousands of immoral publications were kept openly before the public that would brook no censorship. The obscenity of the press became a national disgrace, yet up to the year 1899 the Chamber of Deputies threw out every bill framed in an endeavor to control the trouble. Six months ago, when the reports of the dynamite explosions began to grow frequent, a reaction took place, for it was evident that the license given to the anarchists who incited the violence was one of the chief causes of the demoralization. The first restriction has therefore passed in the Chamber of Deputies, and hereafter it will be a crime on the part of any editor to incite the people to violence through his publication. This measure is but a temporary one, and is only valuable as an indication that at last the people of the Republic have become conscious of the terrible evil which an unrestrained press is capable of committing.

The adoption of the waifs of Great Britain has become a prevalent practice throughout our Province, and several zealous men and women, such as Dr. Barnado and Miss Frye, are devoting their lives to furthering the welfare of the needy children by finding homes for them in our Dominion. The work is a most laudable one—the results in the main have been most favorable, and scores of children are rescued each year from a life of degradation and poverty. There are many, however, who, while willing to adopt children, are fearful of bringing these little offshoots into their homes, lest the possible hereditary tendency to a criminal life should assert itself. To such people we would plead the cause of our Canadian children who are growing up in the Babies' Homes, the orphanages and the poor-houses of our provinces. Why should not a larger number of these little ones enjoy the privileges which are accorded to their British cousins. They are even a more promising class, for they have not been contaminated by the vice of great cities, and they will not compare as the little immigrants so often do the new country with the old, to the disadvantage of the former. A still more important fact is that the children's parentage may often be ascertained, and the tendency to pauper or criminal ways may be estimated. Many of the little creatures are of respectable parentage, and have been orphaned in their early infancy. Through no fault of their own or of their parents are they thus set adrift in the world. In the cases where the same care and affection which is given to the immigrant children has been bestowed on provincial children of the class we mention, only the best results have been obtained, and if through the writing of this paragraph the fate of one of these little ones is brightened, we shall feel amply repaid.