

# THE CRITIC:

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## 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.

**WHY THE YOUNG FOLKS LEAVE US.**—One of the chief reasons that our rural districts are being deserted, is the fact that our farmers make no returns, saving those of board and clothing, to their able bodied sons and daughters, and hence the young people leave the home and farm, and seek their fortunes elsewhere. In consequence of this the farms are not being worked to one-half of their capacity, or the farmers are obliged to engage and pay outside help. This old-fashioned idea, that it is the duty of young people to work for their parents without remuneration, is, we believe, one of the principal reasons for the desertion of our country homes.

**HANDLE IT CAREFULLY.**—We have recently been reminding our country readers of some of the details of farm life that can be attended to with profit during the comparatively leisure months of winter and very early spring. This is an excellent time for removing the large stones and stumps, which have been for many years, perhaps, a nuisance to all on the farm. They can now be removed by careful blasting, and the bit of land which they have encumbered may be reclaimed and the appearance of the fields greatly improved by their removal. A word of caution is however necessary to farmers who mean to handle dynamite for the purpose. The greatest care should be taken in dealing with this most useful and dangerous of explosives, else a fatal or painful accident may result from its use.

**THE FALL OF DE LESSEPS.**—Ferdinand De Lesseps is now a fallen great man, and the very powers which brought about his pre-eminence among men have united to make his downfall the more conspicuous. For ourselves we have little but sympathy to offer to the man whose name was so freely used by a hoard of dishonest sharpers, he whom his relatives and friends conspired to disgrace in order to shield their own dishonest transactions. The name of De Lesseps, the daring inventor, the brilliant practical thinker, is clouded, but not wholly obscured. In the coming century his great Suez canal will be his lasting monument. Let his son and son-in-law bear the shame of their own misrepresentations, and let the closing years of the old man's life be freed from the calumny. The formal sentence and imprisonment were perhaps demanded by law, but shame, everlasting shame to his deeply indebted countrymen, if the sentence is ever allowed to become more than a formality. All of us are liable to be deceived by imposters. Those of us whose minds are filled with absorbing thought, know how difficult it is for the one brain to invent, organize, and carry out in all its details a wide-reaching plan. To De Lesseps much of this work came, he achieved glory in his first enterprise, when his powers were at their best, and his helpers honest, in the second he failed ignominiously through the dishonest persons who attached themselves to him. His fall seems to have been brought about mainly by his lack of knowledge of faulty human nature.

**FOUND WANTING.**—Our public school system is commendable from many standpoints, but it falls short of the mark in the training that is given in country districts. Our geographies and other school books deal at length with trade and commerce, industrial pursuits, etc., but the practical work of the farm is disposed of in a few paragraphs, and the whole tendency of the training is to give our young people a distaste for agricultural occupations. The fact is, young Nova Scotians are being educated off the farm.

**A FRENCH INVENTION.**—Two French gentlemen who hope to make large fortunes if they live long enough have invented a medical syringe, which they have patented in all countries in the world. It has cost both time, energy and money to secure the privilege of manufacturing in the 64 countries in which a patent may be issued. An arrangement has been made with 27 countries in America, 16 in Europe, 9 in Oceania, 8 in Africa and 4 in Asia. The public will now await with interest the introduction of the invention.

**CLEANLY AND ECONOMICAL.**—The citizens of Berlin take great pride in the cleanliness of their city, and the active work which is continually being put upon the streets might be copied with great profit by many of the world's great cities. The city proper is surrounded by a farming district which receives the full sewage of the great city, and in consequence is one of the most valuable farming districts of the world. The streets of the city are in the care of 700 civil service laborers, whose duties are to brush all dirt, garbage, etc., into the sewers, and to scrub and sand the streets at the hours when there is least traffic. The results of this cleanly and economical method are clearly indicated by the sanitary reports of the city.

**A LAUDABLE WORK.**—The report of the British and American Tract Society will be perused by many, and will quicken the interest of those who know but little of the working of that corporation. During the past year a well-fitted store has been secured for the Society, and the amount of purchase has been partially paid. Twelve men have been employed as colporteurs, and a large amount of good literature, bibles and religious books have been circulated by their agency. Religious visits were made to nearly 200 Protestant families, who neglect attendance at any church, and many hundreds of similar calls were made on Christian families living in remote country places. It has also been the aim of the Society to supply Sunday school libraries, hymn books, etc., at greatly reduced rates to needy districts, and to aid in every way in familiarizing the Gospel and its teachings to those who might otherwise be shut off from the blessing of religious instruction. For a quarter of a century the Society has done a notable work for the community, and now that its income is shown to be inadequate to the demands of its greatly extended service, we trust that the sons and daughters of those who were first interested in the foundation of the Society will rebuild and restore this glorious memorial of the religious life of their forefathers.

**A REASONABLE REQUEST.**—Many Critic readers will be deeply interested in the suggestions which Captain Rowland Hill, of the steamer *Halifax*, has recently made to the Department of Marine and Fisheries at Ottawa. We have been accustomed to believe that our Nova Scotian coasts were well fenced with light-houses and buoys, but the Captain, while agreeing with the intention of securing safety to the seaman, has quite convinced us that the present provisions are both ill positioned and utterly inadequate for the need of the travelling and sea-faring public. Many of the light houses along the coasts are set in the midst of a group of dangerous rocks or shoals, when the need of the navigator is that they should be set some miles to seaward of the obstacles. The light houses at Sable and Seal Islands are singularly ill placed, and are of little service to the mariners, who learn that to sail near enough to sight them during rough weather is to sail directly into danger. In stormy weather the sound of the automatic whistling buoys is often hidden by the wilder noises of the stormy elements, and the guidance which they might afford is lost. Or as in the case of the whistling buoy at Chobucto Head, it frequently happens that the sound is carried easily the distance of eight miles to Halifax, while it cannot be heard half a mile to seaward by the vessels for whose benefit it exists. Captain Hill advocates the placing of light-ships at intervals along the outside of the dangerous coast obstacles, the placing of all fog signals well to seaward of the dangers which they indicate, and the placing of a large buoy south of Cape Sable, where a rocky coast and a deceptive mirage combine to deceive the navigator. Captain Hill is a practical man with a good sea-faring experience, and it behooves us who have so little understanding of the needs of the class of men whose cause he so earnestly champions, to further his laudable endeavors to improve the condition of our coasts, so that the yearly number of disasters may be much lessened.