

# CURRENT COMMENT

## CRITIC, POET AND CONJURER.

Mr. William Archer, one of the best known of English critics and writers has been talking to the Women's Canadian Club, and meeting some of the Canadian literary lights. He confessed to being not very well read in Canadian literature, but knew the works of C. G. D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Sir Gilbert Parker. He was struck by the originality of Bliss Carman, but evidently had not entered profoundly into the spirit of this leading Canadian poet. Lee Masters was the only United States poet he mentioned in an interview for one of the Toronto papers. When asked what had most impressed him since his arrival he declared "The one thing that has impressed and amazed me more than anything else in America was the marvellous conjuring performance of Mr. Wilson MacDonald at the Arts and Letters Club this afternoon." Those who have had the rare opportunity of seeing Mr. MacDonald's leg-de-mat will not be surprised at Mr. Archer's statement. It is unique and outside the ordinary range of such phenomena. He uses no equipment, and there is no machinery of any kind. He works with bare hands and in the middle of a group of spectators. Nobody believes any description of these feats until they see them, and Smart Alecks with stereotyped explanations of painting and duplicate rings and so forth feel very small indeed when they see the reality and are asked to apply their explanations to the facts. When the Prince of Wales was in Montreal Mr. MacDonald showed him some of his wondrous and the Prince, like everybody else was astonished beyond expression. He was intensely interested and stayed with Mr. MacDonald so long that his programme became all disarranged to the confusion of his escort. Mr. MacDonald was beset with invitations next day but despised such notoriety. "I accept invitations for Wilson MacDonald, the poet," he declares, "not for the conjurer." And Mr. MacDonald is a poet, and possibly the most distinctively Canadian among our writers. His volume, "The Song of the Prairie Land" contains some fine work like "The Whip-poor-will," "Barbary," "Saint Eliza" and "Peace," and he has another volume ready for publication which will reach a still higher level. Mr. MacDonald is a graduate of McMaster University and a great Canadian in his love for an ideal national life.

## A CELEBRATED MURDER TRIAL.

What promises to be a notable literary and legal event is being prepared for by the Dickens Fellowship of Toronto, a body organized to perpetuate the memory and work of the great humorist, and to serve his principles by contributing to the welfare of little children in hospital ward. The project in hand is to have a real trial of John Jasper for the murder of Edwin Drood. It will be remembered that "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" is Dickens' last novel only half-finished when he died. The mystery has never been revealed, although a library of books has been written on it, and a bibliography of the articles upon it would fill another volume. There have been several "endings" written of the story, more or less satisfactory, and many theories. A great deal of ingenuity has been displayed in piecing together the evidence. Some deny that Drood was murdered at all, and that Jasper, who took optimum, fancied he had done so, and then tried to fasten suspicion on officers. A mysterious character that turned up in Clotterham, which is Dickens' name for Rochester, after the murder has been the subject of much discussion. He was known as Datchery, and was obviously some one in disguise. One Dickens' expert gained much fame by originating the theory that Datchery was Helena Landless, the friend of Drood's sweetheart, and there are many clues that make this look probable. Another theory is that Datchery is Bazzard, clerk to Mr. Grewgious, Drood's lawyer. This seems extremely likely also. Another recent theory is that Datchery is Tartar, a retired naval lieutenant, who comes into the latest written chapters of the novel. The whole problem is one of the greatest puzzles in literature. Seven years ago in London on January 7, a trial was held in which the leading literary men of the metropolis participated. Gilbert K. Chesterton was the trial judge and spoiled the intention of the whole thing by refusing to take seriously as had been expected he would. J. Cuming Walter and Cecil Chesterton were counsel for the prosecution and defence. B. W. Marts and W. W. Walker Crotch were junior counsel. George Bernard Shaw was foreman of the jury, on the panel of

which were such names as Sir Francis C. Burnand, W. W. Jacobs, Pett Ridge, Hildaire Bellot, Tom Gallon, Max Pemberton, Conson Kemahan, William de Morgan, Oscar Browning, and William Archer. The legal point of the production of Drood's body was waived, and the only witnesses examined were Durdies (Bransby Williams) Rev. Septimus Cris Parkle, (Arthur Waugh) "Princess Puffer," (Miss J. K. Prothero), Helena Landless (Mrs. Laurence Clay), and Bazzard (C. Sheridan Jones). In examination both Helena and Bazzard claimed to be Datchery. The Toronto trial will probably not tie itself to this theory and will involve more witnesses, including "Deputy," Grewgious, Neville Landless, Sapsa and Tartar. Miss Rosa Bud may also be called. If the legal luminaries of Toronto contribute anything to the solution of this celebrated literary mystery, the occasion will be a notable one.

## DRUGGERS AND DOCTORS.

Medical gossip has been pretty active in Toronto recently. First the Commission appointed to investigate Dr. Glover's alleged cancer cure came out with a report to the effect that there was nothing in it. Dr. Glover thought they might have reported to him before they published what they had to say. But why should Dr. Glover expect better treatment than Dr. Jenner or Dr. Simpson or Dr. Hahnemann or Dr. Paracelsus or any other pioneer in medicine? Dr. Glover's patients think they know more about the effect of his medicine than the committee of doctors, and they declare they feel better after the Glover treatment, and patients who were given up to die by regular practitioners are alive after being treated for weeks and months. To this the doctors reply that if you live it isn't cancer. To prove that it is cancer the patient must die. To prove that he can cure cancer Dr. Glover would have to revive him again. Dr. Glover naturally refuses to interfere with the undertaker. After the Glover report another doctor poisoned two women by injecting the wrong drug into their systems. This has led to some nervousness on the part of patients who do not yet feel prepared to depart. The druggists themselves naturally make the most of these experiences, and assert that their record compares favorably with that of any drug system whatever. A new eclectic school of medicine is growing up and growing in favor with the public who prefer to be cured by any means than to die under regulation treatment. The Lindlahr Institute of Chicago is electric in its methods which are not drugless, but based chiefly on the principle of nature cure, minimizing the use of drugs, eliminating injections, serums and vaccines altogether, and relying more on diet, on physical adjustments and hydro-pathic treatments to assist nature in restoring the upset conditions. And the Lindlahr people say they never lose a patient. They use all the methods that anyone has found successful and they have no prejudice against curing a patient by any means that may be found effective, even if it never had been used before. A good many people think that the doctors are growing too arrogant, and believe that they should be allowed to choose the kind of treatment they want without involving the practitioner in a prosecution. If the doctors are afraid of competition in matters of life and death surely there is something wrong with their system.

## WINTER ON THE FARM.

A generous supply of grain roots,ilage and straw is regarded by the authorities as fully compensating for any shortage of hay in the provision for live stock, and the outlook is therefore considered good for such stock. A suggestion is made for the benefit of those who do not manage their feeding economically and fail to make the most of what they have. This is to use a measure of ensilage and chopped straw as the basis of a bulky ration for cattle. Cattle are fairly plentiful but hogs are scarcer than for some years. Dairying is not going out of favor. Many farmers are looking into the matter, and people who can manage to do so are keeping a cow or buying milk direct from those who do, so as to get fresh milk for their children, experience having shown that they thrive better than on the pasteurized article. It is to be observed that this observation applies to young children. The mild weather gave still further opportunities for plowing which were not missed. Winter wheat was bare in many districts, but no harm was reported up till the time of the zero dip. This slackened speedily and there is expectation of an early spring. But the weather is not to be relied on, and the usual winter routine should not be evaded.

## EVERYTHING GOING OUT



## EVERY FARMER SHOULD HAVE SUPPLY OF ICE FOR SUMMER

COMPARATIVELY EASY TO SECURE AND STORE ENOUGH IN GOLD MONTHS TO ENSURE COMFORT AND HAPPINESS IN HOT

It is a well known fact that many of the defects of our manufactured dairy products may be traced directly to lack of proper cooling facilities at the point of production. The use of ice on the farm would not only remedy many of these expensive losses but would insure the benefits of a refrigerator to the farm household. There are few Ontario winters that do not bring about periods of freezing weather which allow the harvesting of ice of a sufficient thickness to be stored for use during the warm weather. The increasing demand for a higher quality of dairy products makes the storing of ice a very important factor and it becomes more pressing each year if dairymen are to reap the full reward for the care, labor, and investment in the production of dairy products; in the price to be obtained for high grade products and in the prevention of losses which frequently occur from the attempt to manufacture over ripe, gassy milk and sour, yeasty cream into cheese or butter. In the production of milk for the condensed, powdered milk and market milk industries ice is almost a necessity, as the raw material for the production of these products must be sweet on arrival at the factory and must be produced under the very best sanitary conditions. As a means of relief from worry regarding the keeping of milk and cream in good condition during week ends and overnight in the warm weather there is probably nothing which gives greater satisfaction than to be in a position to place the cans of milk or cream immediately after milking or separating in an insulated tank in which is placed cold water and ice and find that when required for delivery they are in prime condition, sweet and acceptable to the purchasers and fit to make the very highest type of dairy products. In addition to the importance of ice in connection with the cooling of milk and cream, its value in the household must not be overlooked. With a supply of ice, the housewife can preserve her butter, eggs, meats and fruit for a considerable length of time. It will also enable her to have a greater variety of food during the hot weather and to provide ice cream and other refreshing desserts. Further, its use in the sick room must not be forgotten. When milk and cream producers become familiar with the advantages of ice they will take the necessary trouble and precaution to put up ice every year. It is with a desire to assist those who wish to take advantage of the ice crop this winter that these few notes are written.

(1) Ice may be stored in a special building erected for the purpose or in a partitioned space in the corner of a shed or other farm building. No

floor is required, although some system of drainage or several inches of coarse gravel may be employed if the soil is clay. At least one foot of sawdust should be placed under the ice and from one foot to eighteen inches of dry sawdust over the top, and at least one foot of sawdust between the ice and the walls of the building. Draw the heat from over the ice by ventilation.

(2) In packing the ice keep each tier of blocks as level as possible, and have the blocks about one size. Do not place sawdust between the tiers of ice but fill all crevices with crushed ice or snow, making the mass as nearly a solid block as possible. Cut straw, hay or chaff may be used as a substitute for sawdust; but if used, then double the space is necessary for packing around the sides and over the top of the ice.

(3) During the summer keep the holes which may be caused by wastage well filled, and occasionally rake over the top of the sawdust to a depth of three or four inches, in order to keep the top dry. This will help to save the ice.

(4) It is estimated that ten blocks of ice eighteen inches by thirty-six inches by ten inches thick will weigh one ton, and one ton of solid ice measures thirty-six cubic feet. If one cubic foot weighs approximately fifty-seven pounds, and if one hundred pounds of ice were used per day for four months, this would amount to about six tons, or sixty blocks of the size mentioned. From one and a half to two tons of ice per cow is considered necessary to cool the milk for the season.

Allowing for wastage, a building, or space, 12 feet by 12 feet by 11 feet high should supply space, if the ice is carefully packed, for a herd of 15 to 20 cows. The amount of ice to store will, of course, depend upon wastage and the different purposes for which it is used.

(5) All the equipment that is necessary for ice harvesting on a small scale is a cross-cut saw, with one handle removed, and a plank to use as a straight edge, in addition to one or more pairs of ice tongs and an ice hook.

If several farmers can co-operate, the work can be done more easily and quickly. In such a case an ice plow could be used to good advantage and a simple derrick erected. A strong upright or base that will slide readily over the ice, with a long pole fastened at the top of the upright, to act as a lever, will answer the purpose. A pair of tongs fastened by a chain to the short end of this lever and the rope on the long end with provide all the machinery necessary to swing the heavy blocks to the sleds.

## AVERAGE ATTENDANCE NOT TWENTY IN 5,500 ONTARIO RURAL SCHOOLS

Progress in educational work does not begin with the Department, but with the people themselves, stated J. R. Bell, consolidated school lecturer of the Department of Education, Toronto, during the course of an address at a meeting of the Sarnia Township Rural School Improvement Association. Continuing the speaker stated that the most important subject of the present day is the education of children. The great forward movement started in the churches should be continued in the schools, as religion and education go hand in

hand, during the course of an address. Turning to the educational problems of Ontario he said that one of the difficulties at the present time is the fact that so many schools have such a small attendance. In 5,500 rural schools the average attendance is less than 20. In one particular school the cost of teaching three pupils was cited at \$900. Another obstacle, according to Mr. Bell, was raised by the scarcity of teachers. Sometimes trustees have engaged teachers with only entrance certificates.

## THE SPICE BOX

HOT STUFF GLEANED FROM EVERYWHERE.

Why do not the hold-up men form one big union? Then they can declare a sympathetic strike against anybody who refuses to be held up.—Toronto Telegram.

Harding's request that his inaugural be of the simplest nature has, according to a news despatch, left Washington "all dressed up and no place to go." Somewhat in the same position as the agnostic at his own funeral.—Winnipeg Free Press.

Boston aims at being a great fish centre. That should be easy, judging by the success of Mr. Ponzl.—Calgary Herald.

Just about the time a man decides to open an account in the savings bank he glances in the coal bin and changes his mind.—Cobalt Nugget.

When bone-dry comes into effect there will be still more ships 'twix the hip and the dip.—London Free Press.

The Foreign Relations Committee of the American Senate recently refused to approve a treaty that would permit the extradition of Yankee wife deserters who have come to Canada. Watch our population grow!—Canadian Opinion (Toronto).

A tree will make a million matches and a match may destroy a million trees.—Oriskany Packet.

Izzet Pasha is said to have gone over to the Nationalists. It isn't true, Izzet?—Montreal Star.

Ill fares the land, to hastening its a prey, When men make laws who should be pitching hay.—Toronto Telegram.

Some men are born with troubles, others acquire troubles, and still others have political jobs thrust upon them.—Winnipeg Free Press.

One's social progress may be slow, but there is no danger of being ignored by the federal and civic tax collectors.—Ottawa Journal.

A Russian doctor has discovered a process for making men transparent. Old stuff. The woman have been able to see through them from the beginning.—Guelph Mercury.

We note that one association is objecting to marriages where the contestants—beg pardon, contracting parties—are not of sound health. Quite right. If anybody must be chosen for a hard job, let it be somebody who is healthy.—Winnipeg Free Press.

Death and taxes are regarded as sure things which humans cannot evade. The only difference, however, is that death is sometimes painless.—Portage LaPrairie Graphic.

## THE ROUND TABLE

"WHERE WE MAKE FRIENDS OF BOOKS."

"Son of Power," by Will Livingston Omfort and Emma Ki Dorst. Published by S. B. Gundy, Toronto.

His real name was Sanford Hantae, but the boys of the Chicago streets nicknamed him Skag, and presently, in faraway India, he won a name and title for himself—Rana Jai, "Son of Power." This because he, who had run away from home when his mother died and had become an animal trainer in a circus, had there learned first to conquer himself and then to conquer animals, especially tigers, the "big cats," into whose cages, he went with complete fearlessness. And because wild animals interested him more than anything else, and because of the tales he had been told by the wise old trainer, A'ac Hina, he went to India. And there those adventures befell him which are related in the dozen short stories—for, though divided into chapters, they are really short stories—of which the book is composed.

Cadman, the American traveller and writer, was Skag's earliest friend in India. It was during his first adventure with Cadman that he proved himself possessed of what the other called "the Good Gray Nerve." But it was on account of what happened in the "Great Grass Jungle" which the natives called "The Peace-of-Fear" that Skag received his title of "Rana Jai." For there he "held the king of all serpents from his chosen prey" as he would man before him had ever done. And there, too, the first heard of her who was named "Gul Moti"—"Rose Pearl"—and whom men called unattainable. It was not, however until Skag met the priests of Haguman in "The Monkey Glen" near the banks of the Nerubada, and at their bidding followed them to a certain English

bungalow, that he saw her, Carlin Deal, the "Rose Pearl," the unattainable, whose family was "demanded from two extraordinary romances, both of which were celebrated by the marriage of an imperial Indian woman—one Brahmin, one Rajput—with a British man of noble family," and had succeeded in making of the usually degrading mixture of the two alien races a thing of honor.

After this first meeting Carlin becomes almost if not quite as prominent a figure in these tales as the "Son of Power" himself.

Interesting and colorful, these stories, though written with a collaboration, are thoroughly characteristic of Mr. Comfort. The ancient animal cults of India, the priests of Haguman, the monkey god, and the strange relationship which exists between an elephant and his mahout, seem to have fascinated him, and are stressed in several of the tales. That splendid dog, the Great Dane Nola, plays an important part through most of the book, doing wonders during the terrible hours when the magnificent race along the roads and through the open jungle to the rescue of the two women, Margaret Annesley and Carlin Deal. It was then that Skag "wedded" in the Deputy, a man un-fold, after the mysterious manner of the English.

Plenty of excitement and many thrilling moments are to be found in these dramatic stories. They are, of course, of unequal merit, the elephant tales being, generally speaking, the best in the book. But though parts of the volume make rather too great demands upon the reader's credulity, it is, on the whole, a fascinating piece of work, vivid, picturesque, full of color and the glamour and mysticism of India.

## SIGNS OF REVIVAL IN SHOE BUSINESS

WHOLESALE PRICES ARE 15 PER CENT. BELOW THOSE OF YEAR AGO.

With a reduction of about 15 per cent over the wholesale prices of a year ago, wholesale boot and shoe dealers report that there is every sign of revival of business in these lines.

Wholesalers are now booking orders for fall delivery, and although the new season is just opening, the indications point to a return to normal selling conditions. Shoe factories in Eastern Canada and the United States have practically all resumed operations, many of them working at present to full capacity.

While the wholesale price of all lines is about 15 per cent. below that of a year ago, it is conceded by the trade that the consumer will not purchase boots and shoes very much cheaper than he has been able to do during the past few months.

Two ways of putting it—"That girl is certainly a good looker." "Yes, she's out of sight."

## WOOL MARKET REPORT.

The market for Canadian wools seems to be more active, probably due to the fact that a number of mills have exhausted their stocks on hand and have been forced to buy in order to keep running. The Boston market also seems to be showing more activity, some of which is believed to be more or less speculative. More interest appears to be centered around fine and medium wools than for some weeks past. Prices, however, show very little advance over recent quotations.

## Delights and Difficulties of a Garden.

The delights of a garden don't need classifying, but some of the difficulties do. The first is to find the right place in which to make the garden. It should be in a locality where the sun will shine on it for at least five hours each bright day. It should not be where the soil is so thin and the rocks so near the surface that the garden will burn out during the summer. It should not be under or near large trees; the trees will not only keep the sun off, but will draw all the moisture and plant food from the soil. Nor must the garden be in a spot that gets flooded.