

THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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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.

Mr. A. W. Dimock, an American millionaire, has had his wife's features carved on a meerschaum pipe, and his own on another, each pipe having cost him five hundred dollars. It is such extravagances upon the part of wealthy individuals that make the horny handed son of toil fret at the distribution of wealth, and long for the time when industrious labor shall secure its fair share of the profits of production.

Down in Texas, a negro sheriff having been killed, the negroes of his county rose to take revenge upon his white murderers. The troops of the state were called out, and the so called insurrection quelled. If the sheriff had been a white man, and his murderers colored persons, what a pow wow the affair would have created. Evidently, the color line still exists in Texas as elsewhere, and is no more likely to be obliterated.

Speculators who are fond of deals should take Horace Greely's advice, and go West. That is the land where money is made in a week and lost in a day. It is the land where stocks are boomed, and the values of real estate go up with a rush; but after all it is the land of speculation, and sooner or later the inflated balloon collapses, and the thousands of bitten ones bemoan their luck, and envy the individuals who have made money by playing upon the public credulity.

As our Thanksgiving day approaches, we can well afford to recall the bounties of Providence for the past season, more especially as we in a great measure escaped the effects of the drought which in other countries destroyed the crops, bringing the people to the verge of starvation. In Friaul, Austria, the gaunt figure of famine is lurking in every homestead; while its twin brother, the spotted fever, is decimating the population, and thousands of persons are leaving the country, dreading the horrors of the coming winter.

The reading public will hear with regret of the death of Mrs. Craik, better known as Miss Mulock, author of "John Halifax, Gentleman." To this gifted writer we are indebted for many charming stories, all of which bear evidences of the high ideal at which Miss Mulock aimed, as well as of the power of the writer to express her thoughts in pure, clear and rhythmic English. Her last work, "An Unknown Country," has just been issued from the press by the Harper Brothers, and as it embodies impressions of the writer in visiting Ireland, it will probably be read by a more extended circle than any of her previous publications, excepting it may be "John Halifax, Gentleman."

The names of some persons are said to carry weight, and, no doubt, financially and otherwise they do; but when brought to the actual test of the weight of the signature, it is found that few names weigh more than five milligrammes, about twice the weight of a hair from a man's head. So delicate are the scales which are now manufactured, that it is an easy matter to note the difference in weight between a blank slip of paper with or without a name written upon it.

Ignatius Donnelly in order to prove that Bacon wrote the Shakespearean plays, says that Shakespeare died in the prime of life, after a three days' drunken spree. This kind of proof is never convincing; and unless Mr. Donnelly can advance something stronger for his theory that Bacon was the real author of the great dramas, than mere abuse of Shakespeare, he is not likely to carry conviction to the hearts of the millions who are wont to look upon Shakespeare as the great master mind of his age.

General Booth is endeavoring to obtain the services of five thousand persons for missionary work in Zululand and the Republics of South America. We may not admire the methods of the Salvation Army, but its audacious aggressiveness is enough to make satan shake in his shoes. Whether this extraordinary missionary movement will die with the death of its promoter, or whether the organization will finally settle down as a distinctive branch of Christ's church, are questions which have passed through the minds of many thoughtful men.

The rapid rate at which the United States Government is paying for its war debt must be a matter of surprise to some of the European monarchies in which the public liabilities are as steadily increasing. In eighteen sixty-five the U. S. debt was about two and three quarter billion dollars, it is now a little more than one billion dollars. The reduction has been at the rate of seventy-two million dollars per annum; and if continued for the next twelve years, will entirely wipe out the war indebtedness.

There are State laws against the consolidation of corporations in the United States, but there are likewise no end of loop-holes by which wealthy companies manage to escape from their direct violation. This is evidenced by the recent purchase of the Baltimore and Ohio telegraph system by that great and growing monopoly, the Western Union Company. The B. & O. system has been leased for fifty years, and five million dollars cash has been paid for the privileges. The law forbids purchase outright, but does not prohibit leasing, which, however, as far as the public are concerned, practically amounts to the same thing.

The United States is no doubt a great country, but we are sometimes apt to be carried off our feet by the deluge of national statistics which is poured forth from Washington. In one of these, respecting the dairy interest, we read that one hundred million acres of land are devoted to pasturage, and that the annual yield of butter is one billion three hundred and fifty million pounds. Now, this sounds large; but as a matter of fact, it merely means that about one twentieth of the area of the United States is devoted to pasturage and crops for dairy purposes, and that the yield of butter is equivalent to a half a pound per week for each man, woman and child. Aggregations are loud sounding, but it may well be doubted whether the cows over the border are better fed, or the bread of the people better buttered than is the case in this well favored Province of our own.

The Australians are in dead earnest in preventing the French occupation of the New Hebrides. Their experience of French convict stations, such as that in New Caledonia, leads them to dread the proximity of a French penal settlement, and they are making a determined opposition against the establishment of a second station of the kind. In New Caledonia there are thirteen thousand French convicts, a large proportion of whom would, under British laws, have been condemned to the gallows, but under the French laws the most hardened villains, as well as those who have been guilty of comparatively slight offences are herded together in one station, the preponderance of the vicious element levelling the whole community to a plane of moral degradation as low as can well be imagined. Australia seeks to protect herself from becoming the asylum of the released or escaped convicts, and we sympathize with her in the decided stand she has taken.

PEACE OR WAR?

The European political sky is seldom cloudless, there are generally a few storm-clouds flitting about, attracting the attention of Christendom. Fortunately the storm clouds are readily dispersed, and the storm comes not, even when most expected. Such seems to be the position of European affairs at present. In the early part of this year it was the general belief that the horrors of another war could not long be averted. Germany and France were eyeing each other jealously, each on the alert lest the other should surpass her in warlike equipment. Even in England there was no little alarm lest France should seek in a war with the sea-girt nation an