

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 his journal. Our readers are capable of approving or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper; and after reading due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

England now proposes to make India a flour-producing as well as a wheat-growing country. Recently the work of raising £50,000 to establish a mill at Bombay, India, was achieved in a half-day by some London capitalists.

France demands of Great Britain a time limit to the occupation of Egypt; but, until the finances of Egypt have been placed upon a sound basis, and her governmental institutions reformed and strengthened, the occupation of the British must continue. This is not only the policy endorsed by all British governments, but it is the policy of the British empire.

Jay Gould has frequently increased his fortune by \$100,000 between sunrise and sunset, but of all lucky Americans the luckiest was he, who, during the Anglo-Chinese war, was taken prisoner and thrown into jail for twelve hours, his captors believing him to be an Englishman. The prisoner not only saved his neck, but he obtained his release and likewise as compensation for the indignity of false imprisonment, an indemnity of \$31,600.

Some of our Halifax liquor dealers are between the devil and the deep sea. Not having obtained licenses under the Provincial Act of 1886, they must either close up their establishments or pursue their business in violation of the law. In their opinion the Act itself is "ultra vires," and they have resolved to test its validity in the courts. meantime, the Legislature is asked to suspend, for a short time, those clauses which affect the Halifax dealers. If the law is "ultra vires," or if there is any reasonable doubt in the question, the Legislature should consider well the memorial of the liquor dealers, but if there is no room for questioning the validity of the Act, it should be allowed to stand as at present.

Law and justice are by no means synonymous. In proof of this, we would call attention to the fact that Mr. George F. Baird, Conservative, has been declared elected by the presiding officer in Queen's County, N. B., although his opponent, Mr. G. G. King, had obtained a decided majority of the votes cast. Mr. King lost his election through a technicality, his deposit having been placed in the hands of the returning officer by a gentleman who was not Mr. King's authorized agent. Mr. King complied with the spirit of the law. He put up the amount required to be deposited by law, and ran the risks of its forfeiture. The right man paid the deposit, and the proper man eventually received it, but because the agent was not fully authorized, Mr. King has lost the seat to which in justice he is entitled. Alas, the crookedness of the law.

The monopoly of the bell telephone in Canada is virtually at an end, but while competition in most matters is the life of trade, it is to be hoped that the public are not to be put to the inconvenience of having several telephone exchanges in each city. If the bell telephone company is wide-awake, it will put down the rates so as only to allow a fair margin of profit; if it does not, other companies will seize upon their territory, and we shall have a war in rates.

Fraudulent trade marks placed upon inferior goods by foreign competitors has seriously injured the manufacturers of Sheffield and Birmingham. In like manner the fraudulent labelling of canned lobsters will injure that trade in the Maritime Provinces. In the American markets, all the best lobsters caught and canned in this province are labelled as having been the product of the United States lobster fisheries, while the inferior and smaller sized lobsters are canned and labelled as Nova Scotian. This is not as it should be.

Is it not time that we had a constitutional revision of the B. N. A. Act. As matters now stand, the people of Ontario believe that they are bled by the smaller provinces, while Nova Scotians are of opinion that the West absorbs an undue proportion of public money. Constitutionally, the confederation is weak, but there is no reason why it should remain so. Sir John Macdonald and the Hon. Edward Blake should agree to an armistice. Two heads are better than one, and conjointly they might put the Ship of State in such good repair that she would weather the gales for many a year to come.

The number of parliamentary candidates, who, during the recent elections, forfeited their deposits, was abnormal. The law is framed to prevent bogus candidates from offering, but, for the life of us, we cannot see why the unfortunate man who polls less than 50 per cent of the voters recorded in favor of the successful candidate should, in addition to defeat, suffer the loss of \$200. A "bone fide" candidate who fights out the battle to the bitter end is generally bled pretty freely, but this is no reason why he should be mulcted by a law framed to protect the public against bogus candidates.

President Cleveland in vetoing a bill for the relief of some Texan farmers, said that "although the people supported the government, the government should not support the people." This epigrammatic saying deserves to be inscribed on the walls of every public building throughout the length and breadth of this Dominion. Individuals, companies, towns and cities in this country lean too much upon the government, appearing to believe that the only enterprise required is that which succeeds in securing government assistance for general or private undertakings. We may call upon Hercules until doom's day, but for success in this world, we must depend upon ourselves.

From a provincial standpoint the award made by the majority of the arbiters in the hospital and poorhouse matter is very satisfactory, but by Halifaxians it will not be considered equitable in any sense. The claims and counter claims made by the province and city are enough to puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer, but this is no reason why our astute legislators should not investigate these claims in an impartial spirit and give their verdict in accordance with the facts. The citizens of Halifax very generally regard the award as grossly unfair, and if this be true, it should not be difficult to substantiate the fact. Parsimony should not be placed in either scale, but the balance should be adjusted so as to leave room for no reflections.

The adulteration of food is unfortunately one of the growing evils of the day. Many condiments such as pepper for example, contain less than 40 per cent of pure pepper, the remainder, according to Canadian analysts, is ground cocoonut shells, and according to British analysts, ground olive stones. This adulteration reminds us of the story of the Dutchman, who, finding that the milk with which he was supplied was watered to an unwarrantable extent, surprised the milkman by appearing one morning on the steps holding two cans. "Ah," said the dealer, "you want a double supply I see." "No," said Franz, "dis can is for de milk, and dat one for de water, an' I will mix them to suit myself." So we say; let us have pure pepper, and we will have the cocoonut sawdust to suit our taste.

Gladstone's star is again above the horizon, and it is probable that before many months it will be in its zenith. Lord Salisbury has utterly failed to grapple successfully with the Irish question, and his government no longer retains the unqualified support of the Liberal-unionists. Parnell has agreed that in any measure of home rule for Ireland, the Province of Ulster should not be included, and this concession, it is believed, is satisfactory to Lord Hartington. If we read the signs of the times aright, Gladstone, Hartington, and Parnell, will soon take steps to overthrow the present government and form a new ministry, which will have the confidence of the Liberals, the Unionists, and the Parnellites. Politics is a strange game, and the new moves puzzle the most experienced players.