

THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

We have heard it whispered that the Local Government has practically decided to do something tangible for Cape Breton. We hope so. All friends of the Local Government who know the present temper of the Eastern counties hope so also; and with us they hope that something handsome will be done before the next election.

The New York cheese dealers have sent a circular to the factories from which they drew their supplies, directing attention to the fact that American cheese cannot be sold in Europe as advantageously as that exported by Canadian dealers, owing to the better keeping qualities of the Canadian cheese. Honesty pays in the long run, and the factories which turn out the better article must retain the trade.

A novel piece of artillery has recently been turned out at the arsenal at Woolwich, which promises to be of great service in future campaigns. This Howitzer consists of a thin steel tube which is closely wound with wire, having a breaking strength of one hundred pounds to the square inch. Its bore is ten inches and it throws a shell of three hundred and sixty pounds with a velocity of one thousand feet per second. The weight of the gun is about three and one half tons being about one sixth of that of the ordinary size gun of the same calibre and power.

The efficiency of the officers in the British navy is being severely criticized by those versed in naval affairs. It is, however, generally conceded that the time occupied in official duties, the enforcement of discipline, and the carrying out of minute details, leave little time for the officer to devote to the theory and practice of his profession. The critics acknowledge the precision and perfection with which the daily round of duties are performed, but they fear that the qualifications which render a man an able officer in times of peace would in no wise fit him to hold the same rank in the event of war.

Mr. Eads of Mississippi fame has completed the plans and specifications of his projected ship railway across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and feels confident that the enterprise will prove both successful and remunerative. The road bed of this railway will consist of six parallel tracts. At the termini there are to be immense stocks, into which cradles may be lowered; the ship or steamer is raised by means of these perfectly adjustable cradles to a level with the tracts, is borne across the Isthmus and lowered in the dock at the opposite end. The idea is certainly a novel one, but ship owners appear to regard it with distrust, and claim that it will be quite impossible to make the cradle so adjustable in every part as to prevent the bulging or fracture of the ships' plates. In these days of wonderful mechanical and engineering enterprises, it is well to reserve judgment until a practical test shall have proved the success or failure of any undertaking of the kind.

Matrimony appears to be on the decline in the United States, there now being but seventeen male willing to take their chances in the lottery of marriage, as compared with twenty-one in 1860, anxious to enter the charmed circle and taste the sweets of conjugal bliss. Our grandmothers were wont to say that a married man saved more money than his bachelor brother. This may have been true in the good old times, but we incline to the belief that it would scarcely hold good in the present day. Marriage among the middle and upper classes is now regarded as a luxury, not to be indulged in by the possessor of a wrinkled purse.

It is stated upon apparently good authority that the Russian government have engaged the services of one hundred American cow boys for service in Central Asia in the event of a war between Great Britain and Russia. It is somewhat difficult to understand of what advantage such an insignificant handful of foreigners would prove to Russia, and their engagement would scarce be worthy of note, were it not that their service under the Russian flag would incline the American people to sympathize with the Czar. Such a result would serve to check the march of civilization, and cause the goddess Liberty to hang her head for very shame.

We have several times called the attention of our readers to the Short Line Railway, upon the location and construction of which so much depends. We have pointed out how great would be the advantage to Halifax should the shortest and most direct route between Montreal and this city be chosen for the location of the railway. We have studiously avoided, however, expressing any direct opinion with regard to the Pope Railway, feeling certain that upon the representatives of this city devolved the duty of demonstrating that line to be the shortest and most direct route to the Maritime Provinces. We have requested Messrs. Daly and Stairs to put themselves right before their constituents in this matter, and prove that the support they gave to the measure was defensible and could be shown to be in the interests of Halifax. Once more we ask these gentlemen to rise and explain. An interested public anxiously await their reply.

In many respects Cumberland is the banner county of this Province. It has received a fair share of attention from both Federal and Local Governments, and probably deserved all it has received. About \$125,000 of the public funds went into a railway scheme the object of which was to develop the coal industry in that county. Now of this amount the Island of Cape Breton contributed its due share, and this enabled the Spring Hill coal to compete with its own. In common justice something ought to have been done to compensate Cape Breton for this. The coal mines of Cape Breton are worked by private enterprise only, even the coal railways in Cape Breton County have been built entirely without governmental aid. The carriage of coal in Nova Scotia proper on the public railways at the public expense, and the non-existence of government railways in Cape Breton, place that Island at a manifest disadvantage; and every fair minded Nova Scotian will agree to any wise measures calculated to relieve Cape Breton from the undue burdens she bears.

The Anti Slavery Association in London has been induced by Colonel Stanley to aid in the fitting out of an expedition to visit the Upper Congo in the heart of the dark continent. Stanley is of the opinion that from this point the southernmost Egyptian garrison in the Soudan can be readily relieved, and as the country is fertile, productive, and well watered, the expedition will not be exposed to the privations and hardships which would result from following the Nile route. Moreover they would, if well reinforced, be able to hold what may be considered the key to Central Africa, which would enable them to destroy the slave trade without difficulty. General Gordon in his diary frequently refers to the Congo and endeavors to impress upon his readers the necessity of a British expedition being sent to the head quarters of that noble river. Stanley urges the Association to stand to the noble work in which they are engaged, so that they may each at the close of life be able to say like the hero of Khartoum, "I have done the best I could for the honor of our country. Good-bye."

The corporal's guard which, under the banner of the Salvation Army, opened its volley on Sunday last in Halifax, upon the strongholds of the Devil in this city, have their work well cut out for them, and while many a sincere Christian may smile at the martial methods they employ, no one can for a moment doubt the earnestness of those engaged in the work. The success which has attended the efforts of the Salvationists in London, New York and other large cities has certainly been marked, and is probably due to the peculiar novelty of their appeals, which cannot fail to affect persons of a nervous or sensational temperament. The army itself is one of those phenomena of the 19th century, which, like the rose in mid-summer, buds, blossoms, and decays, before we realize that it has really lived among us. With the close of the century this peculiar school of religious enthusiasts will have passed away, but we may fairly hope that the seeds that it has so profusely scattered among the low and degraded of society, may yet blossom forth like the sweet-scented rose of the coming year.