

# THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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Hundreds of persons suffering from throat and lung diseases have been greatly benefitted by a trip to Jerusalem, and it is said that visiting Palestine will in a few years be considered no great novelty. The *Jewish Messenger* says that Palestine is recommended as an appropriate residence for consumptives, as many sufferers have been perfectly cured by the pure air of the Holy Land.

The negroes in the free Congo State, while enjoying the blessings of a stable government, are exposed to all the evils resultant from a comparatively free traffic in liquor. The negro, like the Indian, has no control over his tastes and appetite, hence the use of intoxicants with him soon becomes habitual. In the equatorial regions of the Congo the unrestricted use of liquor is quickly followed by death or disease.

Weston, who has been aptly styled the father of American pedestrianism, has organized a summer camp on Long Island for the purpose of giving instruction in walking. The old veteran, who is pronounced by medical authority to be in a perfect state of health, has since 1867, walked upwards of 63,000 miles. Those under instruction are obliged to walk twelve hours per day for six days, carrying additional weight of 40 pounds.

The diamond trade of the world has grown to immense proportions, and from it the diamond diggers at the Cape of Good Hope and Brazil reap rich rewards. The mines in the latter country are owned and controlled by the Emperor, Don Pedro. In the sea-board towns of Holland and Amsterdam diamond cutting is one of the leading industries, and the gems may be purchased in these places for a small proportion of what they cost elsewhere when set in rings and brooches.

It is stated that only about one third of the people of New York and other large cities are regular church goers, and Mr. Moody gives it as his opinion that the field for evangelists is practically unlimited, and that hundreds of young men could be profitably employed in the work of evangelization. At his summer school, at Northfield, Mass., Mr. Moody has been giving instruction to 250 students from 80 of the leading colleges in the United States.

Railway construction has in many countries been pushed beyond the needs of the people, and as railway stocks are seldom gilt-edged, it appears strange that the work of constructing new and apparently needless railways goes forward with such rapidity. The share stock and indebtedness of the railways of the world has now reached the fabulous sum of \$25,000,000,000, eight billions of which has been expended in the United States. Truly George Stephenson's observation of the tea-kettle has led to marvellous results.

Since November last the members of the British Commons have endured an unusual strain of parliamentary and electoral excitement, and it is therefore not surprising that the proposed autumn session meets with little favor on either side of the house. By February next, the usual month in which parliament is convened, the government will be able to submit a definite scheme for Irish Home Rule, and it would be but fair to grant the interim between now and February for the full consideration of such an important question.

The Speaker in the British House of Commons, who receives a salary of \$25,000 per annum, is supposed to give his decisions with strict impartiality. The fact that the present Speaker, the Right Honorable Arthur Wellesley, Peel, has recently been elected to the position for the third time in thirty months, proves him to be a man of sound common sense and clear judgment. The office of Speaker of a deliberative body is far from a bed of roses, and the man that can discharge his duties to the satisfaction of both political parties is to be congratulated.

Habits, like manners, are the result of training. If we wish to inculcate habits of saving and prudence among our young people, and prevent their being imbued with the extravagant spirit of the age, we should encourage them to save their pennies during the earlier years of youth. Since 1874 over 23,000 savings banks have been opened in the schools of France, in which the children have deposited nearly \$2,500,000. Birmingham, Eng., which in 1876 had two school penny banks, had eighty-six last year, in which \$15,000 was deposited.

Almost everyone feels an interest in the derivation of some of the most popular words and phrases. The following may be new to some of our readers: The word "pamphlet" comes from Paphlagonia, "Punch and Judy" from Pontius and Judas, "Bigot" from Visigothia, "Humbug" from Hamburg. It was a piece of Hamburg news not accepted. "Tabby" is from Atabe, a street in Bagdad, where silken stuffs called Atabe, or Taffety, were sold. These goods have wavy markings, like a cat's coat. "Old Scratch" comes from the demon Scratch, who still survives in the superstitions of Northern Europe. "Old Nick" is from the demon Nikar, a dangerous water demon of Scandinavian legends.

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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Last summer bicycle tours were the order of the day, but this year tours on horseback are the prevailing fashion. With the luggage forwarded by the railway or stage, a party of pleasure seekers are left unencumbered, free to reach their destination by the pleasantest available roads or byways.

The progress of free education in Britain is encouraging, although not altogether satisfactory. According to the latest published reports five million school places are provided in the board schools of England and Wales, giving one half million more sittings than there are pupils in attendance.

There was a time when life insurance was regarded by the matron of the household with a certain degree of antipathy, but as years roll by, and the need of insurance becomes better understood, fewer objections will be heard. Nearly \$2,000,000,000 would be due were all insured Americans to die at once. Nearly \$1,000,000,000 has already been paid on death losses in America.

The state of Burmah is still far from satisfactory, and although a correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* has criticised our remarks with respect to this new Indian possession, we are still of the opinion that strong measures will be required to induce all classes of the Burmese to quietly acquiesce in the British occupation. That this is true is proved from the fact that the Indian government have deemed it necessary to reinforce the army in Burmah, there now being 25,000 men stationed in that country.

We frequently hear surprise expressed at the wonderful industrial development of Germany, but it is seldom that we read of the real cause of this development being recognized by outsiders. The French government has made investigations at the German technical colleges and schools, the result of which is, that M. Vachon, the commissioner, is satisfied that Germany owes a large amount of her industrial success to the provision made years ago for the technical training of her artisans. M. Vachon appears to have been particularly struck by the excellent arrangements of the metal, bronze, and ironware schools of Iserlohn, Remscheid, and other places, and the weaving-school at Crefeld. There is no doubt at all that a good deal of credit is due to these institutions and others of the same sort for the present position of Germany as an industrial country.