

THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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The editor of THE CRITIC is responsible for the news 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 exercising due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The British Government has decided to dismantle and level to the ground several of the martello or round towers in Ireland. There are in the Emerald Isle 118 of these towers, the origin of which has always been a puzzle to antiquarians.

At the late international convention, held in Vienna, Austria, the necessity for improving the water communications in Central Europe were most intelligently discussed. A canal to connect the Rhine with the Elbe has been proposed, and Bismarck has declared his determination to assist the project.

The aggregate of the national debts in Europe is twenty two and a quarter billion dollars, or \$75 dollars per head of the population. This is without taking into account the funded debts of cities, municipalities, and city states. The productive power of the people must indeed be great, otherwise the burden would be intolerable.

It is found difficult to obtain recruits for the British native West Indian regiments, owing to the demand for laborers to work upon the Panama Canal. Caesar and Sambo can stand the unhealthy climate of the Isthmus better than their white contemporaries, and they emulate the white in being ready to sell their labor in the dearest market.

In most people's minds there is a certain mistiness about the millenium, especially as to the time at which it is to commence, but how can we expect persons to have any clear ideas on a subject upon which one hundred authors have disagreed. If one accepts the theories laid down by any individual author he will have to be prepared to refute those of ninety-nine others.

A recent cablegram announces that a band of 100 gypsies is now on its way to New York, and that there is a widespread inclination among the population of Europe to emigrate to America. Here is a chance for tariff wall-builders. We have already numberless tramps and bands of rascals, to say nothing of the horse thieves styling themselves gypsies; if this continent is to be made the dumping ground for the 700,000 European gypsies, we had better at once lock to our stable doors. A race, the language of which contains no words to express God, immortality, or soul, and the members of which live by their wits, shunning honest work, would find the air of this work a day continent far from congenial.

King Milan is evidently a carpet Knight. He crossed swords with Prince Alexander, of Bulgaria, and was worsted, but in awarding medals to the Servian troops, he did not overlook the heroic nurses who had cared for the suffering and smoothed the pillows of the dying. Servian ladies now display their medals with ribbons and clasps similar to those worn by the regular troops.

The present age has been somewhat aptly styled the water-shed in British history. For many centuries the British Empire has been growing greater and stronger, and we have now reached a time when federation or disintegration is to mark its future. Nova Scotians should study well the policies of the constructive and destructive statesmen, so as to be able to give their support to the party best deserving of it.

It is to one of Wurtemberg's savants that we owe the utilization of the electric light for the night ambulance. Heretofore, the ambulance corps have, during darkness, labored under great disadvantages, and the wounded have not infrequently been overlooked and left to suffer until the dawn of day. With the new electric-lighted ambulance much needless suffering will be avoided among those who fall wounded in future battles.

Very many complaints are being made as to the manner in which the health officer at Rimouski discharges his responsible duties. According to the Quebec Chronicle, many annoying delays have been occasioned by the carelessness of this official, who, it seems, does not always deem it necessary to inspect steamers arriving at the port. Neglect or indifference upon the part of a health officer is unpardonable, as it opens wide the door for cholera and other unpleasant epidemics.

Colonial authors have until recently stood at a disadvantage as compared with authors in the mother land. The copyright of any work published in the British Isles held good in all parts of the empire, while that obtained by a colonial publisher only protected him within the colony in which the publication was made. By a recent Act of the British Parliament, any work now published under the British flag is fully protected throughout the British Empire. This is the first step towards Federation.

Boundary commissions are at present an epidemic in Asia. A Russo-Chinese commission has been appointed to settle the north-east boundary of China; a Franco-Chinese commission to settle the boundary of Annam; a British-Chinese commission to lay down the boundary of Burmah; an Indo-Russian commission to fix the Afghan boundary; and a Russo-Persian commission to define the northern limit of the Shah's possessions. By the time these boundaries are amicably settled, and the new map of Asia published, a second batch of commissions will have their work cut out for them.

About a year since, the news was flashed around the world that the white people, resident in the Upper Congo, had been seized and devoured by a cannibal tribe. Mr. Westmark, who has just returned to Europe, after having dwelt for 15 months among the Bangallas declares the rumor to have been unfounded, although the tribe with which he lived are in the habit of holding periodical feasts, at which from ten to twenty slaves are served up to their cannibal masters. Mr. Westmark declares the natives themselves are ashamed of the custom, and that cannibalism disappears with the advent of the missionary.

Railway experts have called in question the utility of the headlight upon locomotives. It is quite evident that so far as the engine driver is concerned, the head light is a positive disadvantage, as its glare prevents him from distinguishing clearly the signal lights, and so far as enabling him to guard against immediate danger, it is practically useless. The chief advantage of the headlight appears to be the warning it gives to those who are on or near the track at the time of the locomotive's approach; but since the introduction of the new railway alarm bell, its continued use seems improbable. Alarm bells are now placed at regular distances along the track, and by an ingenious but simple contrivance, the locomotive, in passing over the rails, depresses one of them so as to complete the circuit in an electric line, whereupon the alarm is at once sounded.

ATTACK ON FATHER TIME.

When "Gilder" said, "I count my times by times," he was speaking of the good old-fashioned days before competition, rush, and worry, had come to be regarded as the major part of our existence, but had he lived in this age of radical changes, he would have hesitated to give utterance to an expression that would forever have crystalized his thought. Our old-fashioned method of dividing the day into two equal parts of 12 hours each has been assailed by the advocates of the 24 hour system, who, while they leave the first 12 hours without change, alter the designations of the 12 hours p.m., by carrying on the hours numbering from 13 to 24; thus upsetting our ideas of tea and bedtime, and obliging us to teach our young people that the Curfew Bell rang out at 20 o'clock. But this system,