

# THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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The potato war introduced into France as an article of food by the philanthropist Parmentier against popular prejudice. The centennial of this event was celebrated this month at his native place, Montdidier.

The mortality among the British troops in Egypt is, during this season of the year, very great, and yet at the present juncture to withdraw even a portion of the army of occupation would lead to disastrous consequences. The Mahdi's successor is ever on the watch to take advantage of any movement that indicates an evacuation by the British; and it is evident that the positions now held will have to be retained until the restless inhabitants of the Upper Nile grow tired of the land blockade.

The present Mikado of Japan, who is as yet but 34 years of age, having secured through a peaceful revolution the abolition of the Feudal System throughout his extensive island domain, is now engaged in establishing a representative parliament, with a responsible government. Count Ito, well known in the United States, is to be President of the new cabinet, which is to consist of eleven ministers. The young Mikado, who claims to be the 123rd Sovereign in a continuous dynasty, will, if nothing unforeseen occurs, be a greater benefactor to the Japanese people than any of his predecessors.

We have received from the publishers, Messrs Clarke & Co., of Cincinnati, a copy of Quick's "Essays on Educational Reformers," (cloth, \$1.00). The essayist has presented the public with a dozen chapters on the great writers on Education, from Ascham to Spencer, and the growth of those theories of education which are so rapidly gaining ground. The book, besides being a condensation of a small library of the best known educational works that have appeared during the last four centuries, contains the author's own opinions on many of the theories treated of. It will be found both interesting and instructive to any teacher whose aim is to keep abreast of the age.

In *Lippincott's* for June the Labor Question is fairly treated, from the optimist's standpoint, by Mr. F. Perry Powers. Perhaps it is as well for everyone having only an outsider's interest in this question to entertain the optimistic view, so long as that does not hinder possible reforms. The worst enemies of the laborer are, first, the adviser of strikes, second, the influential outsiders that condemn without trial all organizations of labor. Persons of the second class think they have the right to settle all questions as to the claims and deserts of those whom we call on Sundays our brethren, on week days the masses. It is now clear that Martin Irons is no friend to Powderly. Mr. Irons poses as a man who earnestly desires the lower classes to be helped; but he is clearly of opinion that the said Mr. Irons ought to be appointed to do the helping, and that the said Mr. Irons, tho' by no means indigent, is more deserving of help than anybody else. There is a great deal of human nature about this Mr. Irons.

Unlike the *Pall-Mall Gazette* which, in the settlement of the fishery dispute would have Canada unrepresented, the *London Globe* fully appreciates the intensity of our interest in this question, and is evidently well informed as to the value of our great fisheries. The *Globe* says: "No doubt the good sense of the nations will amicably arrange the difficulty regarding Canadian fisheries now perplexing us, but when we remember what gigantic consequences sometimes grow from small beginnings, such, for instance, as that contemptible little stamp tax we insisted upon 'our colonies in America' accepting, all must view with dread this squabble over a bucket of mackerel sounds insignificant in its bare facts, this outbreak marks the painful truth that there is hardly any question of which nations are so jealous as that of their fishery rights, and Canada especially, in her ocean banks, owns a deep sea harvest field that she would fain keep to herself. Nor can any patriotic Englishman mistake the reason of her earnestness. It is more than simple cupidity. As a Canadian observes, 'when we consider the thousands of miles of coast open to the fishermen of the Dominion, the 60,000 hardy men who now devote time and labor to the development of their salt water breeding grounds, the millions of dollars which these fisheries produce annually, and the ever-increasing number of emigrants that the Old Continent sends every year to the land of timber and big lakes, - our kinsmen naturally feel that a naval greatness is possibly also in store for them, and look to their fisheries as the cradle of their future naval strength.' How effectively a wonderful coast and vast inland seas nourish sea-roving instincts may be estimated when we reflect that Canada, though in her 'long robes' compared to other countries, is yet the fourth maritime nation of the globe."

## MILE STONES OF PROGRESS.

The mile-stones of the progress of our civilization during the past century, which are indicated by the great National and International Exhibitions which have followed each other in quick succession, will show to posterity the immense strides in advance made by mankind in this comparatively short period. In the earlier part of the eighteenth century small district agricultural and industrial exhibitions or fairs were held in both

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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 forming or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper, and after giving due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

There can be no doubt that Britain was stimulated to take immediate action with regard to Burmah, by the knowledge that the French were fighting for its possession, and it is therefore not surprising that the announcement that the exceptional monopoly held by the French of the valuable ruby mines in Upper Burmah has created a sensation. These mines cover an area of about 50 square miles, and under King Theebaw, for a small tribute, leased to a French Syndicate, the company having power of taxing the inhabitants.

The Canadian Pacific Company have positively decided to give the thirty-four hour system a fair trial within the Western division of the railway. The first through train from Montreal to the Pacific will, according to the time-table, arrive in Winnipeg at eight p. m., and Regina at half-one p. m. the following day. These, according to the new arrangement, read twenty o'clock and thirteen thirty, such a radical change in our count may suit the railway authorities, but will certainly be inconvenient to the general public.

The officers of the German cruiser "Albatross" recently exacted from native chiefs of the Gazelle Peninsula an indemnity for their discourteous conduct towards German traders. The Captain of the "Albatross" succeeded in obtaining as an indemnity 900 fathoms of shell money, which chief reluctantly paid. With this mile of string shells the Germans will be able to purchase an unlimited supply of coconuts, bananas and other tropical fruits; but the native chiefs will feel sore at the imperative summons which compelled them to shell out.

When Lord Dufferin, by proclamation, announced to the subjects of the King Theebaw, that the confirmation of the annexation of Burmah by British India would probably reach Mandalay by the end of June, he little thought that his words would be interpreted by the ignorant Dacoits to mean that the British would not enter into actual possession of the country until that time. But this is the construction of his proclamation as taken by the natives, and hence the plundering, incendiarism and general disorder which has marked the past few months in Burmah. Evidently the Burmese were in literal translations, thinking that until a staple government was established they had license to conduct themselves as they chose.