

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 exercising due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

With the year which closes to-day another link in the century's chain is broken, leaving fourteen more yet to be enjoyed before the century itself gives place to another. Many of our readers, we hope, may live to see the advent of the 20th century, but for the present we shall content ourselves with wishing one and all of them a bright, happy and prosperous New Year.

The German Reichstag has so far failed to respond to the Chancellor's demands for an increase in the army and navy estimates. Prince Bismarck is not one to brook defeat, and he probably considered it the best policy to allow the members to return home for their Christmas holidays before deciding to cut down the vote for these two services, in the hope that when they return they will be in a better humor to deal with the proposed increase.

As a rule, most persons prefer paintings which depict some stirring or well-known scene. The "Battle of Waterloo," or the "Return of Napoleon from his exile in Elba," would attract and rivet the attention of those who do not claim to be judges of the painting art; but it takes an artistic eye as well as an educated taste to appreciate some of the more beautiful representations of still life.

Mr. Stevens, the bicyclist, who is attempting to ride round the world, has written to a contemporary from Teheran giving an amusing account of the effect produced upon the native mind by the arc lights which the Shah has recently had placed in the square of the palace. It is the lighting up that astonishes them most of all. The general conclusion is that nothing but the direct instrumentality of Sheitan could produce an instantaneous illumination of such dazzling brightness.

How many of our Nova Scotian snow-shoe clubs are to be represented at the great gathering of Canadian snow-shoers to take place in New York next week, under the auspices of the Oritani and Canadian Clubs? Mr. George M. Fairchild, President of the Oritani Club, and Mr. Erastus Wiman, President of the Canadian Club, are making preparations to give their fellow-citizens from Canada a cordial reception. Four hundred blanket-robed snow-shoers from Montreal, and at least two hundred from Quebec, have made arrangements to attend, and Bengough, the celebrated caricaturist, has been engaged to lecture in Steinway Hall during the week. The affair is regarded as one of the coming social events of the winter in New York society.

There is a crisis in the French War Department. It is discovered that the Goo government cats, detailed to catch mice in the army clothing store-houses, have been overfed and have quit work. A reduction in their rations is ordered.

In looking over the names of Halifax merchants and professional men we cannot fail to note that the majority of our leading citizens to-day were born and brought up in the country. Unquestionably the city-bred boy has greater advantages, educational and otherwise, than the country lad; but, as a rule, everything is cut and dried for him, and hence he never develops that individuality in character which marks the boy who has been reared in the country.

Sir T. Spencer Wells, in his address before the sanitary congress recently held in New York, gave expression to some wholesome truths with respect to the capabilities and endurance of women. He pointed out that for every instance of disease in mind or body caused by overwork, many examples could be shown of young women breaking down from want of mental occupation, deficient exercise or too luxurious living. Woman's sphere is unquestionably the home, but her usefulness need not be limited within the four walls of a dwelling house.

An effort is now being made to form a great colonization company of those persons who own land within a radius of fifty miles of the city of Winnipeg. During the boom this land was eagerly bought up by speculators, homesteads being held for sale at exorbitant figures. Owing to this, the tide of emigration passed westward to the available lands of the C.P.R., and Winnipeg was left to be a city in a comparatively unsettled country. The new company, it is hoped, will, by the inducements offered to immigrants, soon bring under cultivation the millions of acres of fertile land, the virgin sod of which has never yet been turned.

The disgraceful suit for divorce which Lord Colin Campbell has brought against his wife has at length been brought to a close, after an eighteen days' trial. The jury have declared Lady Colin Campbell innocent of the charges brought against her by her profligate and licentious husband, and no divorce is to be granted. Lord Colin Campbell who has, throughout the whole affair, acted as though his wife had been a vagrant, will have to pay the costs of the suit, which amount to \$175,000, and these will have to be extracted from his father, the Duke of Argyll, who is far from a wealthy man.

The British occupation of Egypt has been a somewhat profitless enterprise from a national standpoint, but to the Egyptians it has been an unmixed blessing. France, who deserted Britain at a most critical time, is now demanding with Turkey that a limit be placed upon the British occupation; but, as Lord Salisbury and Gladstone have both said, "the limit is one, not of time, but of the work to be performed." Egypt is now quiet. Her financial affairs are in a satisfactory condition and her enemies within and without are silenced, but the evacuation of the country by the British, although within measurable distance, cannot yet be undertaken.

The citizens of the United States have wiped out the dark blot of slavery, but the stain of Mormonism has not yet been obliterated. Wales is the great mission field of the Mormon emissaries, and annually hundreds of Welsh girls find their way to Utah to become the wives of their brothers-in-law, and yet the U. S. government has, so far, failed to grapple with the evil successfully. Perhaps the reason for this may be found in the looseness of the marriage laws in many States of the Union; for, after all, it is a distinction without a difference whether a man have several wives at the one time, or by easy divorces have a number successively.

Some one has suggested that instead of giving each child a name at birth he or she should be assigned a number, thus obviating the confusion which results from several persons in one place bearing the same name. We have seen this idea elaborated in a lengthy article, but confess that the writer only confirmed our belief in the wisdom of family names being continued. They are in themselves scraps of history and revelations of human interest, compared with which mathematical exactness would be prosaic. To address your letter to Mrs. 9,832,701 might be more convenient than to give the full address of a certain Mrs. Jones or Mrs. Smith, but no one save a crank would ever think of giving the idea a practical test. We have standard time on trial just now, and that is enough for the ordinary mind to grapple with.

AFFAIRS IN BURMAH.

The comparative ease with which the British overthrew King Theebaw has given rise to the belief that Upper Burma will be readily brought under the influences of a civilized Government. But, unfortunately, the military and civil authorities have not to deal with the people as a whole, but rather as a mass of unrelated units. Each village acknowledges its tribal head, but the people of one village have nothing in common, so far as government is concerned, with those of the surrounding villages. It will,