

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 this 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 judgement.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The annual cost of picking the cotton crop is said to be \$40,000,000, this sum being principally disbursed among the colored population.

The latest Yankeeism is "recentmost." The word, we presume, would answer as the line of demarcation between the present and past.

A correspondent asks us to name the chapters in the Bible in which references are made to the "pulpit, ferry-boat, and outlandish women." Perhaps some of our readers will answer the question for us.

With the new Austrian repeating rifle, forty shots per minute can be discharged. Armed with this weapon, the Austrian Infantry should give a good account of themselves in the event of war.

According to the *Popular Science News*, man's length of life is slowly but steadily increasing. If this be true, and we still continue to live at the rate of ten years in one, Methuselah's age may soon be thrown in the shade.

The doctrine of protection has been steadily adhered to in France, but it is probable, ere long, the people will try a change of policy. The French industries are now so firmly established that they have nothing to fear from the adoption of a free trade policy.

The friends of Dalhousie College owe a debt of gratitude to Sir William Young for his generous gift of \$20,000 towards new University buildings, and now that the City have given to the Governors of the College that portion of the South Common, bounded by Robie, Morris, Carleton, and College streets, we may hope to note the rapid growth of the University.

Wet blankets are to be used to protect the Artillerymen, when serving their guns, from the rifle balls to which they are frequently exposed. It is said that a rifle bullet will not pass through two wet blankets hung one behind the other, one foot apart. The experiment should be tried during the coming season by some of our volunteers.

War is now becoming such a costly undertaking that few States care to engage in it, except there be a prospect of realizing some direct benefit; but the European nations, even in times of peace, are enormously taxed, in order to keep themselves fully prepared in the event of war. Europe can now put into the field an army of 9,000,000 men, the annual cost of maintaining which mounts into the dizzy billions.

When Sir Joshua Reynolds was asked how he accounted for his uniform success as an artist he replied that he always endeavored to make his last work his best. Spurgeon, taking his cue from this statement, lately preached a powerful discourse, taking for his text, "You're best always;" "If" said the preacher, "the young men of to-day were to take my text as their motto, and closely adhere to it, what a veritable paradise this world would become."

We presume that Mr. Charlton's bill to limit the length of speeches in the Dominion House of Commons to one hour and a half, will share the same fate of many other good measures; but Mr. Charlton should not be discouraged. The public are tired of reading six-hour speeches, the pith of which could have been said, and said with effect, in twenty minutes. The day of long sermons and editorials is done, and the evening of that of long speeches is at hand.

A Nova Scotian, writing from Melbourne, Victoria, in February last, says:—"The heat is intolerable, being 146 degrees, Fahrenheit, in the sun, and 93 in the shade. Dust winds, sirocco like, are very prevalent. The price of wool is unusually low, and the sheep are dying for lack of water. There has been no rain for months, and I do not know how long the drought may last. Blueses are fond of leaving their own country, but they may go further and fare worse than at home."

Walking-clubs are now most fashionable in the cities and towns of the United States. The membership of the clubs seldom exceeds ten in number, their object being to secure a pleasant party for a brisk walk of three miles before breakfast, or five miles in the afternoon. Now that skating, snow-shoeing, and tobogganing are out of the question, and tennis not yet seasonable, our young people should fall into line with their American cousins, and at once organize walking clubs.

The frequent and oft-recurring rumors of the retirement of the Hon. Edward Blake from public life, are, we hope, without foundation. Canada has few men in either party possessed of the ability or honesty of Mr. Blake, and his retirement would be little short of a public calamity. We are glad to notice, that during the present session of Parliament Mr. Blake has allowed his lieutenants to share with him the work which a loyal opposition is called upon to perform.

It is to be hoped that the Government will never give its consent to the union of the Grand Trunk and Canada Pacific Railways. The formation of such a powerful railway monopoly would check the growth of our young Dominion beyond calculation. The people's money has been granted to encourage the building of these highways of commerce; but they cannot stand idly by and allow these corporations untrammelled to grind them between the upper and nether mill stones of a huge monopoly.

No matter how well proportioned our manhood may be, we always have two angular points which are more or less sensitive. Men may meet each other in the most brotherly manner on the broad platform of charity, or upon the extensive field of harmony, but upon the plains of politics and religion there is constant warfare. When men agree to disagree they tacitly consent to follow the roads preferred by them, even though they may be as divergent as the Poles.

Fancy the calm assurance of a man who professes in this nineteenth century to abolish representative government! And yet this is virtually what Prince Bismarck proposes to do, if the German Reichstag further oppose his measures for consolidating the Empire. The iron will of the German autocrat may be inflexible, but if he expects to succeed in stemming the wave of democracy now sweeping over Europe, he has pitted himself against a movement, the progress of which he is powerless to stay. Bismarck as an organizer, is a success; but as a leader or director of public opinion, he is a failure.

PAUPERS TO BE PITIED.

Few persons who are familiar with the County of Digby, and who have a knowledge of its great natural resources, would imagine that the people of that prosperous section of Nova Scotia would be content to perpetuate a system of dealing with the county poor which has been shown to be fraught with such grave evils. We have perused with care the Report of F. H. Bell, as Commissioner, employed by the Government to make enquiry as to the condition of the poor of Digby, as also the evidence adduced by the witnesses called to attend the court held by him in September last. From