

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.

A Lunenburg correspondent writes, complaining that the selling price of fish in our own markets, is seriously affected by French competition, the French Government granting a bonus on each quintal of fish exported. This is certainly bringing coals to Newcastle with a vengeance. Free trade in fish with Newfoundland and the United States is advantageous to our dealers as well as to those who catch and cure fish, but countries adopting the bounty system should be squarely met by a countervailing duty.

An English officer who was reporting upon the recent manœuvres of 40,000 Russian troops at Krasnoe Selo, says—"The Russian army moves like a great machine, which, if everything works smoothly, is both powerful and effective; but should anything take place that has not been expected or provided for, this military machine at once becomes unworkable." He believes that Russian troops would prove no more formidable an enemy for the British than they did during the Crimean war.

The frequency of the desertion of soldiers from the regiments stationed at Halifax and elsewhere, have induced us to make some inquiries as to the pay and rations allowed the men. Recruits usually enlist under the belief that they are to have free rations and a clear shilling sterling a day, but as the rations served out are not sufficient to keep a man in good condition, the soldier's pay is subjected to numerous deductions, which, with the stoppages for other purposes, practically reduces the amount received to sixpence per day. As a rule, the British soldier enters the army under a delusion, and when he discovers his mistake, he naturally desires to cut the service.

Some of the papers opposed to the Government have found a weak spot in the Conservative armour which they are prodding to good effect with lance and spear. Many of the immigrants who have been assisted by Canadian money to have their homes in the old world, are far from desirable settlers; some of them, indeed, are little better than our own pauper class, and as this class is already sufficiently large, it is the height of folly to run the chance of increasing it by importations from abroad. Of course, it may be urged that it is impossible to discriminate between desirable and undesirable emigrants; but we see no reason why the assisted passages should not be restricted to those who have had one year's experience as farm laborers. This would cut off the city and town idlers who now take advantage of the Government's liberality.

When Geronimo, the daring Apache chief, surrendered to General Miles, of the U. S. army, he did so with the express understanding that he would receive an unqualified pardon. It seems, however, that General Miles exceeded his instructions in agreeing to such terms of surrender, and the U. S. authorities are endeavoring to find some loophole by which they can avoid keeping faith with the Indian warrior. If the councils of justice prevail, Geronimo can afford to smile at the dilemma in which his captors are placed.

The readers of THE CRITIC, who have had the pleasure of perusing the many poetical and other contributions of G. G. C., will be glad to learn that he has just been promoted to the rank of Major and has been ordered to Cairo. Major Challice has our most sincere congratulations, in which many of his Nova Scotian friends cordially join us. We trust that the increased responsibility of his position will not prevent his continuing as one of our most valued contributors. To such an observing writer, Cairo and its environments should offer an attractive field.

Hero worship is by no means so uncommon in these prosaic days. Go where you will, to village, town or city, to province, colony or state, you will find men raised far above their fellows in the estimation of the public; but these heroes of the people are not always infallible beings, although their judgment is generally regarded as far above that of the average man. Ideals we all have, but those who have studied human nature closely, know well that few men intellectually, morally, or otherwise, succeed in reaching the standard they have set up. Great men are never great men in their own eyes.

The New York Times, with commendable enterprise, has sent out an expedition under Lieutenant Schwatka to explore and report upon the interior of Alaska. The party has already discovered several unknown rivers, and climbed to the top of some lofty peaks, but the ascent of Mount St. Elias, the Alaskan giant, was found impossible. The expedition reached an elevation of 7,200 feet, about half way up the mountain side, where its further progress was stopped by the precipitous glacier-like face of the mountain, it being completely covered by an ice crustation many feet in thickness.

Chestnut gongs are now purchasable in Halifax, and our old punsters will have to take care not to inflict stale jokes upon their listeners. The gong is fastened to the waistcoat, and its wearer gives it a sharp ring when he hears a work-out joke or "chestnut." The New York Witness, an evangelical newspaper, suggests that the introduction of the gong into the prayer meeting might have the effect of diminishing the number of hackneyed phrases and apt quotations so generally indulged in. The silver-tongued reformer will probably be heard in our city clubs and public halls within the next few days, and puns which shoot wild of the mark should be eschewed.

Nothing surprises us now-a-days, but to hold direct communication through 7,000 miles of telegraph wire is nevertheless remarkable. A telegraph office in London was lately put in direct communication with Teheran, Persia, 3,800 miles distant. Then Kurrachee, in Northwest India, was added, then Agra and at last Calcutta was switched on, with which direct conversation was held through 7,000 miles of wire at twelve or fourteen words a minute. The Calcutta operator could hardly be convinced that he was talking with London. Before many years it will be possible for a telephone operator to stand before a transmitter, and holding the receiver to his ear, hear his own voice after it has travelled round the world.

English and French fishermen have been getting into trouble for violating the Treaty of 1843, in which the waters within the three-mile limit were reserved by each nationality, to the inhabitants of each country, respectively. For years it has been the custom of British fishermen to put into French ports on Saturday night, in order to spend the Sunday on shore, and Frenchmen fishing on the British coast have never hesitated from availing themselves of similar privileges. It appears, however, according to the Treaty, that this is a direct violation of the Articles of the Convention, and the authorities on both sides of the channel are now keeping a sharp look out for poachers. Seizures and fines are now the order of the day.

The nose has probably attracted more general attention, and been the innocent cause of more witty remarks than any other of our facial features. Its shape has been the theme of many a poetical effusion, while its color has prompted some of the most humorous sayings on record. Physiognomists claim that a large, medium, or small-sized nose, clearly indicates the brain power of the individual who owns it, but as we have seen intellectual men with small noses, and stupid persons with large ones, the exceptions make the rule worthless. One interesting writer has written on the joy of one's nose, claiming that life is immeasurably sweetened by the pleasure we experience from smelling exquisite perfumes, both natural and artificial.