

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.

We presume all congratulatory telegrams to the Emperor William were either franked or prepaid, otherwise the old Kaiser will not regard his birthdays as in all respects satisfactory. During the late anniversary the Emperor was deluged with 1,645 congratulatory telegrams, all of which had to be read by his secretaries and promptly answered.

The New York Herald, in discussing the fisheries question, bemoans the fate of the poor Newfoundlanders, who, through the actor of the Dominion government, have been prevented from selling their bait to American skippers. Apparently the geographical and political knowledge of some American journalists is limited to the great Republic.

A new telephone, it is said, has been invented, which presents some strange features. Instead of talking into a telephone as at present when sound is to be transmitted, there is a little button attached to the instrument, which is held against the neck, throat, chest or top of the head of the speaker, and the vibrations caused by the voice are transmitted distinctly.

During 1886 the United States imported from Greenland about 8,400 tons of cryolite, or ice-stone. This is the beautiful white material used in the manufacture of porcelain-ware, door-knobs, piano-keys, and clock-dials. It is likewise used in the manufacture of alum, lye and soda. One American firm in Philadelphia, which has seven barques engaged in this traffic, entirely controls this business.

Several artesian wells have recently been sunk with remarkable success in various parts of Algeria, and one of these, in the region of the Shotts, yields as much as 8,000 litres per minute of pure water, at a temperature of 25 deg C, forming a lake of considerable size, and more than 30 feet in depth. Large areas of waste land have been reclaimed by means of the water thus provided, and similar results are hoped for in other regions which have been hitherto quite unavailable for agricultural production.

Mr. John Herbin, of Acadia College, has just published a pretty little poem entitled "The Piper's Pond." To those familiar with the Clifton grounds at Windsor, which formed part of Sam Slick's magnificent property, Mr. Herbin's poem will recall the dark, forbidding, shadowy pool, which was almost completely shut in by the thick foliage of the evergreen trees. The tradition that a Scotch piper was drowned in this pond while attempting to take a bucket of water, and that his body, owing to the depth of the pond, had never been recovered, has been familiar to every Windsorian school boy. Mr. Herbin in this poem gives promise of talent that may yet mark him as the bard of Avon.

Newspaper men in Germany are to be very careful about punctuation. The *Hofer Tagblatt* a short time ago said that a decoration had been conferred upon Count von Holstein. By an oversight an exclamation point instead of a period appeared at the end of the sentence, and for this the authorities seized the whole issue, and instituted a suit against the editor for atrocious libel.

Lord Salisbury is one of the boldest men of his age; he has undertaken to coerce Irishmen to do that which Englishmen could not do were they placed in a similar position. Through coercion the Irish peasants may be driven from the land, but they cannot be made to pay exorbitant rents for potato patches. Laws must be bad indeed when they require special enactments to have them enforced.

The United States have by law declared that no foreigner, be his calling professional, mechanical or otherwise, is now allowed to enter the Republic if, before entering it, he has contracted to fill any post. This is protection carried to the extreme; how it will work remains to be seen. If, through it, the pauper labor of Europe is prevented from competing with American labor upon American soil, its promoters will be happy.

Time was, and not so long since either, when in our country districts the entire family down to the baby turned out to church on Sunday. But the youngsters are now generally left at home until they are old enough to know how to behave themselves during service. Up in Lapland the baby Lapps, well protected in their deer skin wrappings, are buried in the dry snow in the churchyard, and allowed to sleep a peaceful sleep, while their elders attend the services within the church. Baby Lapps have the advantage in this of lap babies.

We often hear surprise expressed at the number of aimless, apathetic men that we daily come in contact with; but, for our part, we are surprised that there are not more of these easy-going, vimless persons in the province. Men are but boys grown up, and if boys are allowed to idle away one half of their time in childhood, they will probably do the same when they come to man's estate. Men are creatures of habit, and if the boys are trained to be studious, industrious, persevering and energetic they cannot make failures as men. By all means train the boys.

The provincial government could not have acted more wisely in its choice of a memorial to mark the jubilee year of our beloved Sovereign. By changing the name of the Provincial and City Hospital to that of the Victoria General Hospital, and through the legislative appropriation of \$20,000 towards the erection of a new wing, the Nova Scotian Jubilee Memorial will be one worthy of a loyal people. Mr. Fielding and his associates deserve credit for having met the public demand for increased accommodation with such promptness and liberality.

The death of Capt. James B. Eads deprives the world of one of the greatest engineers of modern times. His name will be identified in history with three great undertakings, two of them successfully carried out in the face of great discouragements and scientific predictions of their failure—the bridge across the Mississippi and St. Louis, and the jetties at the mouth of that stream, which have made New Orleans accessible for deep-draught ocean steamers. The third scheme, the daring project for a ship railway across the isthmus of Tehuantepec, making Mexico literally what Humboldt predicted it would become, "the bridge of the commerce of the world," is as yet unexecuted. Stupendous as it is, it has been pronounced entirely feasible by many other eminent engineering authorities, who believed it to be the only practicable solution for surmounting the barrier between the two oceans. Capt. Eads has left the details for this work so perfected that it is said to be easy to carry them out.

During the jubilee year building operations in Halifax will be very active. Among the improvements proposed, or now under way, are the new wing to the Victoria General Hospital, Dalhousie College, the City Hall, and probably the Church of England Institute. A new Church of England Cathedral is also projected. With respect to the latter an ingenious scheme for raising money is now in active operation in the city churches, and on all sides ladies are declaring themselves as D, F or G, as the case may be. A church dignitary styled A contributes ten cents towards the cathedral fund, and secures a like contribution from four other persons, who are styled B. These four B's each secure a similar subscription, and so on until the letter I is reached. Each I, not having to solicit further subscriptions, contributing twenty five instead of ten cents towards the fund. If the \$18,568 50 are raised in this manner, subscriptions will be obtained from 87,381 persons. Fortunately the promoters of the scheme limited the progression to the letter I. Had they gone on to Z they might have bought all the cathedrals extant, had them taken down and rebuilt in Halifax, and still have retained a sufficient surplus to endow them handsomely, that is, provided they had raised the money. After this, the story of the man who paid for the shoeing of his horse at the rate of one cent for the first nail, and so on by arithmetical progression until the thirty-second nail was paid for, will be thrown into the shade by the new cathedral progression fund.