

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 Notes, 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 seeing or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper; and after taking due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their own judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The recent death of John G. Sixo brings to mind that some years ago he received an annual salary of \$5000 from the New York Ledger for publishing one short poem each week.

It is a curious result of a faulty drawing of State lines that a strip of territory between Kansas and Texas belongs to neither, and is known as No Man's Land. The people there have organized a kind of a territorial government, and are getting on very contentedly.

In view of the strict censorship which Russian officials make of all telegrams which are sent from St. Petersburg, it is difficult to understand the present position of affairs in Russia; but sufficient is known to prove that the Czar's life is menaced on every hand, and that his enemies are to be found in all ranks of society, and even among his own courtiers.

It has generally been considered an indispensable part of the formality of taking an oath in an English court that the witness should remove his ring, if he happens to wear one, before taking the book in his hand. Recently a judge has had the courage to give an opinion that there was no reason for doubt whether a man may not swear a perfectly good oath with his ring on.

A great sensation has been caused in literary circles in London by the discussion which has taken place over the appropriation by Mr. Rider Haggard, of the poem which appears in "Jess," "If I should die to-night." That they were not his verses is now quite certain, as their previous publication in several magazines and newspapers has been proved. The verses are sweet and touching, and their author, whoever he or she may be, deserves to be known.

A company in New York City is endeavoring to perfect a process for the desiccation of garbage, with a view to utilizing the vast quantity of city refuse now dumped in the sea from garbage scows. The matter to be treated is run through a chute into one end of a revolving cylindrical oven about sixty feet long by ten or twelve feet in diameter. The oven, which is strongly constructed of boiler iron, is inclosed in a brick furnace, one end being higher than the other. A fire in the furnace keeps an equal heat in the oven, and the latter is slowly revolved by a steam engine. The garbage refuse enters at the elevated end, is thoroughly stirred and dried as it slowly travels from one end to the other of the revolving oven, and emerges from its lower end desiccated and inoffensive.

During the heat of the election campaign the Quebec Mercury, a Conservative journal, made charges of hoodluming against Mayor Langelier, which have since been investigated in the courts and proved to be utterly groundless. The editor of the Mercury has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment in addition to having to pay a heavy fine. It is a pity that the editors of all the newspapers who have indulged in this despicable kind of political warfare had not to undergo a similar sentence. How many of the five hundred editors of Canadian papers would, in this case, be now behind the bars, is a question that party journals might discuss with advantage.

The experiment of workingwomen's clubs, which was begun in New York about four years ago, has succeeded far beyond the expectations of its promoters. In the parent society during the past year there has been an average attendance of 106 members. They have rooms in the central part of the city. With dues amounting to but twenty-five cents a month and some extra fees for the payment of teachers, they enjoy advantages which were formerly out of their reach as individuals. Among the occupations which have been exercised to advantage by the parent club and the many branches that have sprung up in New York and vicinity are dressmaking, type writing, millinery and drawing.

In the centre of the tobacco warehouses at the London docks there is an immense kiln, which is kept continually burning day and night, and goes by the name of the Queen's tobacco pipe. The English Government has a different way of treating confiscated articles than that in use in this country, one of them being to utilize them as fuel for what is termed the Queen's smoking. Whenever merchandise is seized for non-payment of duty, or because it is considered under the law as in a damaged or unsalable condition, it is taken to this great kiln and is buried there, the owners having no remedy. There is a similar but smaller Queen's tobacco pipe in the Government tobacco warehouses at Liverpool.

It is not quite clear as to what has caused the present strained relations between Great Britain and Hayti. On the one side it is affirmed that Britain is simply pressing the Haytian Government for the payment of an old debt, but this is denied, and the cause of the trouble is attributed to the controversy which has grown out of the leasing of certain forest lands on the Island of Tortugas to a Madame Maunders; who, having failed to pay to the Haytian Government the stipulated rental, was deprived of the use of the property. As Madame Maunders is a Haytian by birth, we cannot see what the British Government has to do with her claim, but that it has in some way become mixed up in the affair, there is little reason to doubt. Madame Maunders' claim amounts to \$725,000.

The dispute with Venezuela, which is said to have caused the British Minister to withdraw from Caracas, is the old one about the boundary of British Guiana. The frontier line of these British colonial possessions has never yet been determined. The dispute on the question has been not only with Venezuela, but with Brazil, and it dates back several generations to the time of Dutch control. The British claim is founded largely on that of physical or natural boundaries, and demands, in its extreme form, the inclusion of all the regions drained by the waters which find their outlet into the river Essequibo. If this claim should be admitted it would cover an area of something like 80,000 square miles, extending as far as the Coruytin, which separates British from Dutch Guiana. But Venezuela's claim would greatly reduce this area. Hitherto the controversy has not been pushed to extremes, but some mining discoveries in the disputed tract west of the Essequibo have revived it. There would seem to be a fair chance for arbitration in a question of this character.

The pet theory indulged in by so many of the lords of creation as to the inferiority of the fibre of woman's brain seems to have been thoroughly exploded by the way in which she mastered the abstruse arts and sciences when once she had the chance. When the history of the present century shall come to be written the advancement made by women as regards education, both social and professional, will be one of the most conspicuous incidents recorded. This advancement is conceded as phenomenal, even by those who never doubted woman's mental capacity, and the inferior-brain-fibre fanatics are fairly put to route. They, however, find some small consolation in pertinaciously clinging to the statement that we have no great female musicians, and that the women artists have in the past gained fame solely from their scarcity. They forget that even so late as fifty years ago the systematic training of women in music and art was a thing almost unknown. It is true that women of even a remote day learned a little music as a polite accomplishment, but the thorough training tending to develop talent to the utmost was unheard of, while an art school for women did not exist, and the list of artists of that day represents merely isolated instances of such instruction. That any one of them succeeded in winning a name is marvellous, considering the difficulties with which they were hedged about.