

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.

Gladstone has written an indignant letter to the press characterizing the rumor of his conversion to the Roman Catholic faith as a malicious slander. The "grand old man" has made many enemies during his long political career, but the circulation of false stories can do him no permanent injury.

The contribution entitled "Our Dumb Brothers," which will be found in another column, is somewhat speculative in its tone; but as the writer's evident intention is to ensure better treatment to dumb animals, we gladly insert it in THE CRITIC. Kindness is more potent than the lash, and thoughtfulness than kicks and blows.

It is estimated that there are in Britain between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 able-bodied men, and that the machinery in the three Kingdoms is capable of performing more work than 400,000,000 men. That is more than all the able-bodied men in the world. Through the application of steam and the improvements in machinery, Britain's productive power is increased a hundred fold.

Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton says:—"If from no higher motive than the preservation of beauty, I say to all girls in society, sleep!" Mrs. Stanton, no doubt, gives the girls wise counsel, but had she been more explicit, young ladies might have understood her better. Mrs. Stanton cannot certainly mean that young ladies are to sleep in society. She probably means them to sleep when not in society; but does she intend to recommend our young women to allow their mothers to be worn out with household duties while they are enjoying the counselled beauty sleep.

It is not probable that the criminal records of any country can show any more cold-blooded, heartless and cruel case of murder, than that committed at Amiens, France, on the 22nd ult., where an unfortunate girl, who had been deprived of her reason, was murdered by her family to save them further trouble with her, and to enable them to avoid the cost of her maintenance. The mother and brother of the victim held her naked on the bed while another brother beat her to death in the presence of a number of friends of the family, who coolly looked on while the foul crime was being perpetrated. The authorities arrested the mother and two sons, and they are held for murder, while the "friends" have been arrested as accessories. We have seldom heard or read a description of such a revolting scene in which a mother is without maternal affection, a brother acts as his sister's assassin, and so-called friends stand by to witness the foul deed.

During the recent eclipse of the sun observed at Granada, excellent photographs of the sun's feathery corona were taken. From these it would appear that the corona extends 1,700,000 miles on either side of the main body of the luminary, that is, about twice the sun's diameter. During the eclipse the light was less than that from the full moon.

The tithe agitation in Wales is producing a deep feeling of bitterness among the farming population of that section. Of the 1,500,000 inhabitants of Wales, only about 300,000 are members of the Established Church. Hence the objection to paying tithes to the clergy of the Church of England. It is time the British Parliament commuted these tithes, and allowed the church an equivalent in some other form of property. This would forever put a stop to agitations such as that which is now in full force in Wales.

The Empress of Japan is not a whit behind her enterprising subjects in falling in with customs of Western civilization. Heretofore, the inconvenient court dress has been worn by Japanese ladies on all public occasions, but the Empress has given notice that hereafter she will wear the European dress, and that the ladies in attendance are at liberty to do likewise. The language, laws, government, religion and customs of Japan, are being revolutionized, and yet the radical changes are being accomplished without bloodshed. Would that we could say as much of the reforms in Western countries.

The people of the Hungarian nationality have sprung from twelve or thirteen distinct races; but the Hungarian Diet, although cosmopolitan in its make up, is most illiberal and narrow in dealing with the Jews. By a recent enactment, Hungarians are prohibited from marrying Jews, but as the Jews or Jewesses are pretty, accomplished, and well dowered, the Diet will find difficulty in carrying out its mandate. "The man who sets his heart upon a woman is a chameleon and doth feed on air." This light diet is all that love requires, and the bright eyes of a Jewess will simply proselyte the Hungarian lover, make him a Jew and a happy man, and the Diet can bite its thumb.

Tourists visiting France now find it necessary to carry passports, otherwise they are liable to be taken into custody by the police, who are ever on the watch for foreign spies. An English yachting party and a German artist, are the latest victims to the enterprise of the over suspicious officers of the law. However annoying such detention may be to travellers, it is not surprising that in a "country of camps, barracks, and strategic lines of defence," all foreigners should be regarded as suspects, come to view out the weak spots in the land. Frenchmen never stop to reason, and the phrase "tall, strong and stupid," which is applied to the *gens d'arme*, is not without force.

Britain buys and sells in gold, while India buys and sells in silver, and as a consequence, so long as gold is the only recognized standard of value, fluctuations in the value of silver are sure to follow. From this cause much embarrassment is now being felt in financial circles in India. A few years ago, one pound sterling in exchange cost ten rupees in silver; it now costs fifteen, and the end has not yet been reached. A Royal Commission has been appointed to investigate the question, and report upon the expediency of adopting a double standard of values. Should the report be favorable, the United States and the States of the Latin Union will have reason to be satisfied.

The old barbaric Moorish bull-fights are still the chief amusement of the Spanish people; but the costliness of the pastime seems to check the too frequent recurrence of the exhibitions. From 3000 to 4000 horses are annually destroyed in encounters with bulls. The horseman or "picador," usually escapes injury, as the attention of the infuriated animal is drawn off by "cukulos," men provided with crimson banners. These are in turn supported by the "banderilleros," who are armed with darts with fire-works and flags attached. Thus bleeding and scorched, the animal is despatched by the "matador," who plunges his long straight sword into the body, up to the very hilt. All classes in Spain delight in this sport.

Those who have watched the Provincial press during the past few months, cannot fail to have noticed the number of thunderstorms which have been reported in all sections of the country; and the same remark is applicable to Canadian and American journals. Although many of the storms reported have been severe, in no instance has the streak of lightning been so remarkable as that during a thunderstorm at Plainfield, New York. A young lady was lifting a lacquered metal tray which was lying on a table in front of the window. At this moment a blinding flash of lightning caused her to throw it hastily down. The next morning, on examining the tray, it was seen to bear an excellent profile likeness of the young lady, apparently burned into the metal. The tray is to be placed in a public museum. We should like some more definite details as to this remarkable event, but if it lack veracity, it is at least cleverly invented.