

THE CRITIC:

A Maritime Provincial Journal.

DEVOTED TO

Commerce, Manufacturing, Mining and Agriculture.

{ \$5.00 PER ANNUM.
SINGLE COPY 5 CTS. }

HALIFAX, N. S., FEBRUARY 17, 1888.

{ VOL. 5.
No. 7. }

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We are glad to see that the communication of A. H. on leprosy in THE CRITIC of 20th ult., has attracted the attention of several of our contemporaries. Our contributor speaks from his own observation, and, although he in no way exaggerates the possible danger, but states that the disease has, so far as he knows, not spread to any great extent, yet its existence at all, and any increase, however small, seem to call for legislative measures.

A veritable case of broken-heart presented itself a short time since at a work house in Liverpool, G. B. At the post-mortem examination of a woman aged 60, the heart was found to be the seat of a veritable rupture, extending from the apex upwards. It was entirely due to natural causes of disease, unconnected with any violence, and of course equally unconnected with the old sentimental idea formerly attached to the term "broken hearted."

An English exchange says:—General Tchen ki-Tong, military attaché to the Chinese Embassy in Paris, has written to M. Franck, Professor of the Academy of Sciences, to thank him for making him a member of the French Anti-Atheist League. He takes advantage of the occasion to enlighten Europeans on an interesting point of Chinese theology. The General says it is not true, as the materialists declare, that the Chinese are atheists. On the contrary, they recognise and proclaim the existence of God. He protests against the attempt made to prove that Confucius was a materialist. He says that God and Heaven are synonymous terms among the Celestials. Moreover, as further proof of their belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, he informs us that the word atheist does not exist in the Chinese language, and that the Emperor of China is regarded by his subjects as the representative of the Divinity.

Adams, the real discoverer of the planet Neptune, has calculated that the friction of the tides actually slows the revolution of the earth to the extent of about an hour in 16,000 years. It is therefore coming to rest, though, it must be admitted, after a leisurely fashion. A conclusion arrived at by Prof. Adams can hardly be called a theory, but, call it what we will, it is a confirmation of the marvellous prescience of Newton, who maintained that the motions of all bodies in space suffer retardation, and will ultimately cease. Nevertheless, though, as we said, the process is leisurely, it is not, when we come to think of it, by any means inappreciable on the great scale of astronomical periods. An hour in 16,000 years means $7\frac{1}{2}$ minutes in 2,000 years. It would therefore seem that the length of the day may, if the calculation be correct, and if no counteracting conditions exist of which we are ignorant, be longer by $7\frac{1}{2}$ minutes than it was 112 years before the Christian era, i. e., about the time when Marius was charged with the conduct of the Jugurthine war.

The sidewalks of our goodly city are a source of annoyance and of danger, both to residents and to visitors at all periods of the year. In the summer they are uneven, because they are unscientifically laid. In the winter they are either covered with snow to a depth of several inches, interspersed with ridges running laterally and inclining on either hand, or else they are a glare of ice, on which it is impossible to walk, except with the greatest caution, and then at the probable risk of broken limbs, or of danger to adjoining property in the shape of glazed windows. We submit that this state of things is not creditable to the civic authorities. The ridges to which allusion has above been made, are caused in the first place by people walking during a snowstorm in the footsteps of their predecessors, generally along the middle of the sidewalk, and thus beating down a path under their tracks. When the owners of properties endeavor to comply with the law, which requires them to clear the sidewalks in front of their premises, they generally clear a portion of the loose snow, but do not remove the ridges. When a heavy rain falls on snow covered or frozen streets, ice rapidly forms, and at night the danger is greatly augmented by the uncertain and flickering illumination supplied by the electric light system. Existing civic laws, we believe, seek to compel the clearance of snow from the front of their houses by the occupants, and forbid the sprinkling of ashes. If this be correct, both regulations are conspicuous failures. Householders and shopkeepers disobey both with absolute impunity. But there is this difference in the rationale of the disobedience. Disregard of the former provision creates a danger; disregard of the latter may save many a broken limb. It is quite a moot point whether it would not be far more expedient that the Corporation should charge itself with clearing the pavements, than that a futile law should remain on the civic statute book, while, so long as nobody clears them, the householder who sprinkles ashes deserves very differently of his fellow citizens than to be set down, even in theory, as a breaker, (or at least disregarder,) of an existing law. It is really high time that the City Council took this matter into their serious consideration.

THE CRITIC,

Published every Friday, at 161 Hollis Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia,

BY

CRITIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Edited by G. F. FRASER.

Subscription \$1.50 per annum in advance. Single copies 5 cents.

SAMPLE COPIES SENT FREE.

Remittances should be made to A. M. FRASER, BUSINESS MANAGER.

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 judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The British Navy has been strengthened during the past year by the launch of three ironclads of the first class, the *Trafalgar*, 11,940 tons; the *Victoria*, 10,470, and the *Sans Pareil*, 10,470; of four "belted cruisers" of 5,000 tons each, and six smaller vessels. The speed of the two larger classes is, respectively, 16 and 18 knots, and their armaments are very heavy. Efficiency has also been increased by the introduction of the new Armstrong .36 pr. "quick-firing" gun.

It has been recently stated that a curious feature of death by blizzard is the fact that not unfrequently the victim becomes insane before dying. It is said to be affirmed by persons of extensive N. W. experience, that instances are numerous of people being found with evidence of having lost their reason before dying. They seem, it is said, to have been seized with an irresistible desire to strip themselves and wander off naked. In one case a person was discovered, entirely naked, half a mile from the last article of clothing he had tossed aside. Considering the numbing, paralyzing, and exhaustive effect of the intense cold which invariably accompanies these storms, this statement seems to us to wear a somewhat apocryphal aspect.

Ultra-science, or "finicking" pseudo science, whichever you like to call it, has been for some years propounding from time to time a great deal of hypochondriac stuff about the effect of one edible or potable, or another, to which a healthy organization does not stop to give a thought. Even the cup, which notably "cheers but not inebriates," does not escape. A modicum of sense appears in a recent article in the *Lancet* on this subject in the following sentence:—"Whilst there is no evidence to show that tea causes organic changes in the nervous tissues, yet if such exist, tea may readily aggravate some of the symptoms." "Tea," it is added, "may act as a factor in causing neuralgia, hysteria, and allied affections. When taken constantly, in large doses, dyspepsia usually intervenes before irreparable harm is done to the nervous system." Just so. People can be immoderate with tea as well as with anything else, and sedentary people should not drink too much of it. But in the bush, or on the prairie, people laugh at these fastidious fads and fussy anxieties.