

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 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 spread of scientific knowledge in the State of Massachusetts and the general interest now taken in scientific investigation, is shown by the fact that three hundred observers have enlisted in Massachusetts to take thunder-torn observations this summer.

Light-houses and beacon lights along the Canadian and American coast have been greatly increased in number during the past few years. The new light placed on a shaft held by the Bartholdi statue at the entrance to New York harbor, will be seen ninety miles out at sea.

The accuracy of written contracts is usually supposed to be of prime importance, but when errors do creep in they are infrequently occasioned by a disproportionate expenditure. The Town Council of Edinburgh has just paid an expert ten guineas to examine a discrepancy of three shillings in a paving contract.

Siberia has been described as a country of mountains, morasses, and ice, but its value as a fur-producing country is indeed wonderful. During 1885 no less than 10,000,000 animals were killed in Siberia, from which Russia and Europe in general drew their supplies of bear, wolf, ermine, beaver, fox, and other skins.

General Grant once said that he never could make money, because when he had it he never understood its true value. Had the General lived to participate in the profits upon the sale of his book he would probably have changed his mind. Not only have the sales of this work been large in English speaking countries, but it has likewise been extensively circulated in Europe, and now that it has been translated into Japanese is finding a ready sale in the land of the Mikado.

The city of Liverpool, Eng., is ahead of most cities that we know in the names of her streets. Albeit some of these names are old they are unique and original as applied to streets. Most of them are from English or American authors. There is, for instance, Shakespeare Street; and not far off are Falstaff St., and Viola St., Rosalind St., and Olivia St., Hotspur St., and McBeth St. Then there are Dryden St., Wordsworth St., Byron St., and Longfellow St. There, too, is Tennyson St., and close by it Enid St., Elaine St., and Shallotte St. Here Dickens St. enjoys the pleasure of proximity to Pickwick St., Winkle St., Tupman St., Bombay St., Darritt St., Nickerby St., Copperfield St., Micawber St., Pecksniff St., and Sam Weller St.

Those who protest against inoculation for disease never seem to take the facts into consideration. Of 7,000 persons inoculated for yellow fever by a Rio Janeiro physician only seven died of the disease, although the epidemic was of unusual intensity. Seafaring men will not be slow in availing themselves of such a sure remedy.

The strength of the German element in the United States may be gathered from the fact that during last year 19,642,870 barrels of beer were consumed. We have not seen the statistics as to the consumption of spirituous liquors, but as this rate is nearly two barrels of beer per family, we should think that Kentucky whiskey is at a discount. Reforms move slowly but surely.

Nine-tenths of all that we know about pre-historic times has been gathered from the cuneiform writing found in the ruins of Babylon and elsewhere. The historical scribe in ancient days was accustomed to write upon tablets of clay, these were afterwards baked and placed upon the walls in public buildings. With such crude methods of perpetuating knowledge the work performed by early writers appears marvellous.

Finding the freed colored men unwilling to work upon the plantations for a mere subsistence, the Southern planters are utilizing the rejected Chinese labor of the Pacific coast. Truly the progress of events is noteworthy. The African unwilling to submit to a second term of serfdom demands a just remuneration for his labor, but his Asiatic cousin who boasts of milleniums of civilization, accepts the situation and appears content with his much-loved diet of rats and rice.

The farmers in Wyoming have recently discovered that the stalks and seedheads of sunflowers form an excellent fuel. The sunflower seeds are planted in hills like corn, upon good land, and after the top flower has ripened the stalks are cut near the ground, the seed heads are placed in a shed to dry, while the stalks are left for several days in the open air. In Russia and many parts of Central Asia the sunflower fuel has been used for centuries, and it is found in many respects equal to the best coal.

As the marriage feast is a burden to an Indian family, so is a funeral to a Burmese household, says the *Times* of India. However poor he may be in worldly goods, in case of death occurring in the Burmese family, either of father, mother, or any senior member of the household, the funeral must be an expensive affair. If the head of the family has no money in hand he must sell either household goods, cattle or crops to meet the heavy expenditure. An effort is being made to effect a reform in this matter.

The increased consumption of oatmeal in Great Britain and the United States, as well as in our own country, must be encouraging to growers of oats in this and the neighboring provinces. Oatmeal is undoubtedly one of the most wholesome and nutritious articles of food now in general use, and as its comparative cheapness places it within the reach of all classes, it is sure to increase in popular favor so soon as people realize its value as food. During the winter months oatmeal porridge will be found a most palatable breakfast, and the more it is used the better for our people.

M. Remenyi, the celebrated violinist, has been travelling in India, playing the part of a political observer, as well as musician, and he sums up his deductions from what he has seen as follows in the *Madras Mail*: "Englishmen ought to be more proud of having been able to govern India's vast population than of any anything else. No other nation on earth could have undertaken such a great task with such glorious results. Don't misunderstand me. I do not mean to say that England's rule in India is perfection—far from it; but it is the best possible under the million of difficulties which must have obstructed the path of the English; and I repeat it again, and with emphasis, that Englishmen ought to congratulate themselves on the happy result of their government of glorious, grand old India, for through her colonizing genius, England has done more good to humanity than thousands of visionary utopists and politicians."

The Railway mileage of the globe is equivalent to twelve times the distance around the earth at the equator. In 1840 it was less than two-thirds of its diameter being but 4,990 miles. The following table shows the railway mileage in the respective divisions of the globe:—

	1884—Miles.
Europe.....	118,510
America.....	149,670
Asia.....	12,730
Australasia.....	7,540
Africa.....	4,100

Through the agency of electricity, banks, warehouses, and shops, are now made burglar proof by electric alarms which notify the proprietors or their employees without warning the thieves who break into such establishments. If burglar alarms were more generally used than they now are robbers would find their business unprofitable, and instead of preying upon society would have to earn their living like honest men.