

THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

1.50 PER ANNUM. }
SINGLE COPY 3 CTS. }

HALIFAX, N. S., MAY 6, 1887.

{ VOL. 4.
No. 18.

CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

EDITORIAL.	
Taxes and Taxation.....	1, 2
Defective Weapons.....	2, 3
Italian Laborers for the C. B. Railway.....	3
Notes.....	1
CONTRIBUTED.	
Truro Jottings.....	5
All Sorts from Port Hood.....	6
White Slavery.....	6, 7
Truth.....	7
MISCELLANEOUS.	
Chit-Chat and Chuckles.....	3
News of the Week.....	4, 5
Religious.....	6
Parliamentary Review.....	8
Commercial.....	8, 9
Market Quotations.....	9
Serial.....	10, 11
Mining.....	12, 13
Home and Farm.....	15

THE CRITIC,

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

BY

CRITIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Edited by C. F. FRASER.

Subscription \$1.50 per annum in advance. Single copies 3 cents.

SAMPLE COPIES SENT FREE.

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

The editor of THE CRITIC is responsible for the news 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.

Fashions are fancies, and hence their constant change. The world is just now threatened with the Chinese style of coiffure. Several ladies in Halifax have already adopted this new or old method of dressing the hair; and, whether becoming or not, we presume everybody will have to follow the fashion and pronounce it "just lovely."

A German scientist attributes the recent earthquakes in Italy and other violent disturbances to the influence of the sun and moon on the earth, and predicts further disturbances every month this year. The most violent will occur in September and October, but will not necessarily be earthquakes, but may be simply gales and unusually heavy rainfalls.

A curious strike is now going on among the priests in the Island of Chios. The people in some of the parishes have refused to pay their tithes, and the Bishop of Chios, according to the usages of the Orthodox Greek Church, has placed them under an interdict, whereby the priests are forbidden to baptize, marry, or bury the dead. The parishioners have appealed to the Sultan of Turkey for a settlement of the differences. Abdul Hamid has no love for Christian dogs, but he will probably insist upon their paying the priests that which they are justly entitled to receive.

As will be seen by reference to our advertisement THE CRITIC purposes issuing a special Jubilee number, the contributors to which are all natives or residents of the Maritime Provinces. The names of many of the writers are well-known both in Canada and the United States, and the reputation of these is in itself sufficient to ensure an enormous sale for this special number. We have aimed at making it one of the best specials that has ever been brought out in the Maritime Provinces, and that we have succeeded in making it such will, we believe, be very generally acknowledged as soon as the Jubilee number is placed upon sale.

A history of Mexico, by Mrs. Fanny Chambers Gooch, will shortly be published by a New York house. The writer spent six years in Mexico studying Mexican life, and as, through the kindness of President Diaz, she has had access to the Mexican Archives, her book will probably both surprise and interest the reader. President Diaz is delighted with Mrs. Gooch's success and intends having her history, which he considers most authentic, translated into Spanish for the use of the Mexican people. Lady historians were known in Japan before the Norman Conquest of England, but among Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Americans they have never taken a prominent place.

The battalions of the "White Czar" are composed of men drawn from thirty distinct nationalities, who do not even have the common bond of religion to unite them, there being Greeks and Roman Catholics, Jews, Israelites and Pagans in the ranks. Military service is obligatory in Russia, each conscript who comes up to the required standard of five feet in height being obliged to serve ten years. Exceptions are made in the case of persons who have received instruction in the schools, a term of four years being required from those who can show a certificate of having passed through the primary schools, of eighteen months for those who have taken a course in the high schools, and six months for those who have graduated from the University.

The hardships which our forefathers had to undergo in felling the forest primeval, and in making homes for themselves in the New World, have made us more practical and less superstitious than we otherwise might have been, but even in this country we find traces of that traditional water-worship, which a study of early English customs and Danish folk-lore would lead us to believe was at one time very general in Europe. Wishing-wells and wishing-springs are not unknown in Nova Scotia, and even the fair Acadian maiden has been known to pin cross straws and throw them into the water, eagerly counting the bubbles—each of which is supposed to denote a year—and their number their years before she may be married.

Stanley, before leaving Zanzibar for the relief of Emin Bey, made an arrangement with Tippu-Tib and six hundred of his followers to proceed by steamer round the Cape of Good Hope and up the Congo to Stanley Falls, from thence Tippu-Tib and his company are to push on to Lake Albert, where Emin Bey and his black garrison are now located. Upon Stanley's arrival at Lake Albert the force from Stanley Falls is to be employed in transporting to the Congo River the seventy-five tons of ivory which Emin Bey has collected. Tippu-Tib's freight charges are thirty dollars per loaded load, and he expects to transfer the ivory to Stanley Falls in three, or at the most four round trips. The ivory is valued at \$300,000.

The new Irish land bill is somewhat vague in its provisions, and it is not probable that it will at all meet the exigencies of the case. Under it primogeniture is abolished, and arrangements are made for the transfer of land by a cheap registration. While it makes no provision for a reduction in the judicial rent it provides that landlords may enter into a new lease with insolvent tenants, or annul the leases and appoint the tenants as simple care-takers of the properties upon which they may dwell. The abolition of primogeniture and cheap registration are the good features in the new bill, but it is certainly a doubtful expedient to allow an insolvent tenant to take out a new lease on better terms than those of the old lease, while solvent tenants cannot secure a fair reduction in rents. Virtually, it is a premium on insolvency, instead of a straightforward reduction in rent-charges.

A military paper, *The Broad Arrow*, complains vigorously of the system under which retirements on age are conducted in the British Army, arguing that age is no test of efficiency, mentally or bodily. Many men at 50 are more physically fit for hard work than others at 30; still the physically fit man of 36 is forced to go on a pension, his place being taken by a man younger, it is true, but not of the same stamina. The number of strong, active, intelligent officers at the present moment pensioned or half paid is a scandal to the country, and a crying injustice to the taxpayers. Let the army be kept up, nay, let it be increased, but do not, whilst officers are still in the prime of life, force them to retire from the service and try to exist on a beggarly pittance. If an officer is unfit to serve at 25, pension him; if he is fit physically to serve at 60, retain him, no matter what his rank.

TAXES AND TAXATION.

The Jews appear to have had a strong aversion to the tax-gatherers, and all down the ages men have been endeavoring to avoid taxation; and many and bitter have been the controversies which have taken place upon the imposition of new taxes. During the time when England was at war, and had to face fearful odds, her statesmen have been at their wits' ends to devise means for replenishing the depleted treasury, and many expedients were resorted to which we would deem very peculiar, if not indefensible. During Queen Elizabeth's reign, a tax of one shilling per annum was imposed upon all persons refusing to attend the Church of England services, and in the reign of King William III, a tax varying from 50c. to \$150, was levied according to rank upon the parents at the birth of each child, while bachelors and widowers without children, were reminded of their duty by the annual tax, which they were called upon to pay for their "single blessedness." In the latter part of the last century, when England was engaged in the Napoleonic struggle, the ministers were at their wits' ends to raise money; and hence almost everything was taxed; the very window glass