

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 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 Japanese Government has requested the Italian Government to appoint a lawyer to proceed to Japan to act as the legal adviser of the Japanese authorities.

Owing to the spread in Japan of what we are pleased to call civilized customs, European and American manufacturers are finding a ready sale for their wares in the Island Empire. Almost every Jap of note now carries a watch, and the decided preference that is shown for stem winders, proves that the mongolian appreciates a convenience quite as much as does his caucasian brother.

The residents of several of the eastern counties of Ontario, the larger number of whom are of French origin, have expressed a desire to have these counties incorporated as a part of the Province of Quebec. The idea of a third or central province between Ontario and Quebec with Montreal as its capital, has several times been mooted, and it is not at all beyond the range of possibility that it may yet take definite shape.

An American firm in Newark, N. J., manufactures 150,000,000 corkscrews annually. Just think of it, have the people taken to drinking stimulants, or are these corkscrews sold for the convenience of those who take kindly to patent medicines containing twenty to forty per cent. of alcohol? If we could only cork up the mouths of some people and screw the truth out of the public, we should find that nine out of ten periodically resort to a pet tonic which their physicians have neither ordered nor analyzed.

The two Frenchmen who recently camped out for three consecutive days on the summit of Mount Blanc, are being lionized in Paris, and M. Vallot, who projected the expedition, has been invited to read a paper upon the subject before the French Chamber of Science. From what we have read of M. Vallot's mountain expedition, he has little to tell the world, having that the cold on the top of the mountain was nearly sufficient to make flint of marrow, and that the wind blew at such a rate that it was impossible to make headway against it.

The number of successful burglaries which have been carried out of late in various parts of the Maritime Provinces, should lead persons to be a little more cautious than they have hitherto thought it necessary to be. Locks and bars are but preliminary precautions, and these in a proverbially honest neighborhood are too often overlooked. Persons in possession of large sums of ready cash should be careful not to let the fact become known, as such knowledge invariably stimulates avarice, which is followed by covetousness to possess by means fair or foul.

One of the most pleasing epic-poems which we have read of late is the "Black Prince," by Douglass B. W. Sladen, who is the foremost among Australian poets. Mr. Sladen's style is forcible, and his insight into the characters of the historical persons he refers to, proves him to possess a clear knowledge of human nature. In the portions of the poem describing the wars in France, and the famous Picard field, Mr. Sladen displays a power which at once rivets the attention, and fairly fascinates the reader. The poem is one that should be read by every school-boy and school-girl interested in the deeds of the brave Black Prince.

A new portable and unsinkable lifeboat has just been patented by Mr. Robert Chambers, of Dumbarton, and, as it only occupies one-fourth of the space usually taken up by an ordinary ship's boat, it will probably find favor in the eyes of ship owners. The boat, which is 26 ft. long, and capable of accommodating 40 persons, is but 14 inches in depth, but is fitted with waterproof canvas wash-boards, which are raised perpendicularly when required by galvanized iron stanchions and rails. Should this boat prove stout enough to weather a heavy sea, it will be an important addition to the life-saving apparatus of the world.

Miss Agnes Ramsay, the lady senior in classics at Girton College, is spoken of as a simple unaffected girl of twenty, but, as she is just now the rage in London, she is not likely long to retain her sweet simplicity. Fancy a girl of twenty to whom the Queen has sent her photograph, who has been introduced to the Crown Prince of Germany by the request of the heir apparent, and whom the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Secretary of State are invited to meet at dinner, keeping a cool head and preserving the even tenor of her way without being spoiled. The thing is impossible, and Miss Ramsay, blue-stocking though she may be, will suffer if she long continues the pet of society.

Abdur Rahman, the Ameer of Afghanistan, has not much faith in false prophets. Not long since, one of his subjects predicted in his presence that the Russians were about invading the land, whereupon the Ameer, taking the man at his word, ordered him to ascend to the top of a tall tree near by and remain there until the Muscovites put in an appearance. Guards with fixed bayonets were placed beneath the tree to prevent the prophet's descent, and he finally, after days of suffering, died, a victim to hunger and thirst. If Wiggins could only be made to stand on the topmost height of Asphatoggan and be kept there until one of his Atlantic cyclones comes along, he might realize a fraction of the suspense and anxiety which his lunatic forecasts cause.

The Nizam of Hyderabad has won his way to the hearts of the British people by his proffered pecuniary assistance in strengthening the defences of India. The astute Mahomedan ruler declares that he has taken note of the fact that while the Indian revenue remained almost stationary, the public expenditure has steadily increased, and, as the money had been expended in strengthening the northwestern frontier against a possible Russian attack, he desired to contribute two million dollars for the same purpose, as the safety of his kingdom was dependent upon the continued supremacy of the British in India. The old Nizam further said that in event of war his Mahomedan troops would aid the British. This good news from India has caused very general satisfaction, and it is whispered that the polished Irish Governor General, Lord Dufferin, has, by delicate diplomacy, made the Nizam the warm ally that he is.

An eminent French scientist named Professor Velpeau, believes that consciousness is retained by individuals for a longer or shorter time after decapitation. In proof of this, he states that by a preconcerted arrangement before the execution of Dr. Pummerass, that criminal agreed to wink the eyelid of his right eye if he understood what the professor whispered in the ear of his bodyless head, while the lid of the left eye was to be kept widely open. After the guillotine had done its work, Professor Velpeau picked up the head of the victim and whispered the words agreed upon, whereupon the lid of the right eye closed, while that of the left remained wide open. We do not vouch for the truth of this story, because we know it is a difficult matter to tip a wink to any person with one eye while the other remains quiet even when the thorax, abdomen and limbs are properly attached to the cranium, but aside from this, the question of consciousness after decapitation opens a wide door for speculative thought.

DISASTROUS COLLAPSE OF THE GREAT WHEAT DEAL IN SAN FRANCISCO.

The extent to which modern speculations are carried, has just been well exemplified in San Francisco, where a gigantic attempt to "corner" the wheat market, has ended in the ruin of the principal manipulators.

Rapid communication by rail and steamship, the facilities for sending instant instructions by the telephone and telegraph, almost, as it is said, annihilating time and space, and the buying and selling of stocks, grain and provisions, on margins, without actual delivery, give speculators the oppor-