

THE CRITIC.

The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

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Thirty-nine thousand recruits to the British army were enlisted in 1885, being an increase of 12,000 over the previous year. No doubt the prospects of seeing foreign active service, the depressed state of the labor market in Britain, and the comparatively short period for which the British soldier now remains in the army, are the attributable causes for the marked increase.

The Montreal flood, although it will entail serious loss and hardships in many quarters, cannot be regarded as an unmixed evil. The fire which nearly destroyed London shortly after the plague, probably prevented the latter's reappearance. In like manner—the flood in Montreal will have the effect of completely stamping out and preventing the recurrence of the small-pox scourge—by which that city was so sorely afflicted.

For a potentate out of employment, the two bungalows, fitted up by the Indian Government for King Theebaw, at the picturesque village of Rutnagherry on the Malabar Coast, may be considered as quite elegant residences. Theebaw may pine for the society of his three hundred maids of honor, and long for a glance at his sacred white elephant, but barring these drawbacks, he may consider himself a lucky fellow.

With the floods in Boston and Montreal, and the lesser freshets which are now daily reported here, there and everywhere, people are beginning to enquire as to their cause. This is not far to seek. In former years, the banks of our rivers, streams, and rivulets, were covered by a magnificent growth of timber, which prevented the sudden melting of the snow in the early spring days. The trees have now been cut down, hence the floods and freshets.

The mania for Home Rule appears to be spreading in the British Empire. The Indian "Mirror"—a native paper published in Calcutta—strongly advocates Home Rule for India, closely following the arguments advanced by Parnell and his followers in respect to Irish Home Rule. Cape Breton is fast being educated for a similar movement—the *North Sydney Herald* leading off in the agitation. If the Cape Breton members in the local legislature would sink party differences and unite as one man in demanding fair play, the separationist agitation would be quite unnecessary.

The disallowance by the Dominion Government of certain railway Acts passed by the Legislature of Manitoba, has caused some unpleasantness between the Federal and Provincial authorities. It is time the boundary lines of federal and provincial rights were definitely settled. The longer the settlement of this question is delayed, the more difficult will it be to define the limits. As it now stands, the provincial governments are determined on preserving their autonomy, while the federal government is quite as determined not to relinquish one jot or tittle of its lawful authority.

It will take many years to assimilate the different nationalities represented in the United States. With a French paper in New Orleans, a Portuguese paper in San Francisco, a Swedish paper in Chicago, and innumerable German papers being issued in New York and elsewhere, it will take at least a century to assimilate the masses. It may be an open question whether the citizen of the United States a hundred years hence will be moulded according to the pattern of the typical Yankee, or whether the 7,000,000 of blacks, now living in the Republic, will in a degree stamp the features and color the skins of the coming generation.

Strikes among all classes of wage earners have become so common in the United States, that their announcement now ceases to cause any surprise—but are wage-earners the only class in the community that are under-paid? How about the brain workers, country clergymen for example? If a salary of \$700.00 per annum is considered sufficient remuneration for the services of a man who is obliged to place his name at the head of every charity list, to contribute his quota towards building funds, bazaars, tea-meetings, picnics, etc., and is obliged to support his family in a style suitable to the dignity of his position, to say nothing of unavoidable expenses incurred by him in the discharge of his manifold duties, we should like to see those who consider it such, step into the clergyman's shoes for a twelvemonth. We fancy the result would be a strike.

The proposal of the Russian Minister, DeGiers, that the British Government should extend the Indian Railway system through Afghanistan to Herat, has revived the old cry as to Russian duplicity. The truth is, that Russia has spent her last dollar on the construction of a railway through Central Asia, which now extends south and west of the Caspian Sea to a distance of 1550 miles, reaching a point only a few miles north of the Afghan boundary. This road the Czar intends pushing on to Herat as soon as he can draw from the depleted treasury the requisite roubles. Trade between Russia and India cannot be carried on until a line connecting Herat with the existing Indian system of railway is constructed. This the Czar realizes he will not be in a position to overtake in the immediate future; hence the proposal of DeGiers.

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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 sentiment 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 climate in the Island of Cyprus is delightful, but the inhabitants are in despair over the continued increase in the swarms of locusts, which defy all efforts for their extermination.

Next month, the city of New York will celebrate its bi-centennial. Little did its founders imagine that the Settlement they planted at the mouth of the Hudson would in two hundred years become the commercial metropolis of the Continent.

William Shakespeare is a school-master in Iowa, John Milton is a carriage-builder in Illinois, while John Bunyan follows the plough in the neighborhood of Albany, New York. Can it be that the names of great men will endure long after their footprints upon the sands of time shall have disappeared?

The earthquakes and volcanoes which are now shaking to its very foundations the world of society, must in the end be beneficial to our social organism. Strikes, boycotts, lock-outs, however objectionable they may be in themselves, must tend to weaken the arm of the tyrant and strengthen that of justice.

The manufacture and importation of oleomargarine are to be prohibited in Canada. If oleomargarine is unwholesome as a food, such prohibition is justifiable, or if its sale, as butter, is fraudulently carried on by dealers, it is well to lay this embargo upon it; otherwise, we see no reason for such prohibition.

In addition to the 13,000 men forming the Irish constabulary, and the 39,000 enrolled as militia, Ireland sends to the British army a contingent of 31,140 non-commissioned officers and men. As a recruiting ground for the British army, Ireland has always been a most favorable field. Patrick enjoys the life of a soldier, and although he may sometimes grumble at its hardships, he knows that it will pay him better than working for a landlord who demands a rental equal to about twenty-two per cent. of the cash value of the produce of his little farm.