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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 rain storm of last Sunday has left the streets of the city in a very unpleasant condition, and the advantages to the public of the street car service have been much lessened ever since the blizzard. The closed sleighs are small and uncomfortable, and of the open ones, which are much better, there are too few. Either kind, heavily loaded, is a heavy draught for two horses.

Germany and Austria, both which powers are no doubt sincerely desirous of keeping the peace, have made a move in that direction by publishing the treaty of their alliance. The expedient seems to be not without some, at least temporary, effect, as on Prince Labanoff, Russian Ambassador at Vienna, being previously informed of the intention, he is said to have replied that Russia could not officially object.

Utah, having sufficient population, is applying to be constituted a State, and has, with that end in view, adopted a constitution prohibiting polygamy. But both the sincerity of the renunciation of the obnoxious tenet, and the quality of the population, largely foreigners with anti American ideas, render Congress justly distrustful of the wisdom of conceding the status sought. If Mormonism has been so troublesome in a territory, it would be much more so in a State. It is scarcely probable that the bill will be allowed to pass.

William Millman, of P. E. Island, has been found guilty of the peculiarly atrocious and cold blooded murder of Mary Tuplin, the unfortunate girl whom he had seduced. The jury added to their verdict a recommendation to mercy, unaccountable to straight-thinking men. It is true the evidence was circumstantial, but if the jurymen were convinced, (as we are sure the public are,) their recommendation to mercy was a half hearted and altogether futile attempt to evade their responsibility. "A plague of all" -juries, old Falstaff might have said. No doubt, however, there will be a confession, which will ease the tender susceptibilities and scruples of the twelve Solons, and reconcile them to their conviction of one of the most pronounced scoundrels that ever figured in a dock.

The contributions on "Success in Life," which we have as yet been able to publish, although limited in number, have elicited a good deal of favorable comment from the Press of the Province, as well as beyond it. The St. John *Globe* favors us with the suggestion that we should extend our invitation to women of mark. The suggestion is so much in accord with our views that we had already anticipated it when we read our contemporary's notice.

Another horrible Lion Queen accident is reported from Dublin. A Mlle. Senide placed her head in the lion's mouth for the purpose of having her photograph taken in that position. The beast suddenly closed his jaws, and dragged her to the corner of the cage, shaking her and tearing her with his claws. The victim was rescued, but terribly torn. It is marvelous that these exhibitions continue to be permitted. They minister to a sensational excitement of the most morbid and hateful kind, and are a defiance to all humanity, religion and morality.

The evidently impending great European war quite obscures the struggle going on between Italy and Abyssinia. Yet this is not altogether insignificant, and might influence the Czar to precipitate hostilities while the ally of Germany and Austria is to some extent handicapped by it. Italy burns to avenge her defeat by the Abyssinians, though that was a comparatively small matter, and King John is resolved, if he can, to drive the Italians from Massowah. Italy has 12,000 men at Massowah, and an Abyssinian force of double the number is believed to be marching on them. The Abyssinians are a hardy and warlike race, their mountain heights and defiles are a strong "coign of vantage," and the result of contact may not be altogether a certainty.

THE STEAMER QUESTION.

We published last week the intelligence that the *Ormuz* had steamed from London to Melbourne in 27 days, 6 hours, beating any previous record. The *Ormuz* is the latest addition to the magnificent fleet of the Orient line. She is 6,216 tons, 8,500 h.p., engined on the triple expansion principle, with boilers working at 160 lbs. Not only does her log show a continued series of from 350 to 420 miles per day, but she actually steamed 6,111 miles without coaling!

This is a great triumph for British ship-building, and to illustrate the strides made in the art, it must be remembered that only 25 years ago the celebrated steamship *Great Britain* took 50 days to accomplish the voyage.

It may not be pleasant, but it is at least instructive to Canadians, to learn that the *Ormuz* is only one of a fleet of fast steamers sailing on the same route, and owned respectively by the Peninsular and Oriental, Orient, Shaw, Saville, and New Zealand Shipping Companies.

Not less than twelve steamers of this combined fleet could show the *Vancouver* a clean pair of heels, and in the superiority of their furnishings and fittings, they afford more comfort and luxury for passengers than either the *Vancouver* or *Parisian*.

Australasia, with a population of not less than 3,500,000, commanding all these splendid steamers, presents a curious contrast to Canada, with a population of 5,000,000, counting only four or five tolerable steamers, and a large number, compared to present day perfection, of Noah's Arks.

What is the use of trying to forge a strong chain of communication by such a vast undertaking as the Canadian Pacific Railway, if the strength of that chain has to be determined by the weak link of ancient and second-hand steamers, (Assyrian to wit, once called the Assyrian Monarch.) The impetus given to Australian and New Zealand trade by the launching during the last few years of splendid vessels like the *Ormuz* has been most remarkable, and passengers, who formerly never thought of revisiting the old country, crowd them all the year round.

It is an important question for all Canada, but it is of even more particular and vital importance to Halifax, whenever the question of an improved line of steamers is under discussion, for her position as a port, her splendid harbor, and her excellent coaling facilities, should always draw them here.

The argument may be advanced that saloon passengers are not paying freight, and that swift steamers on the Canadian routes would have to slow down for three months in the year on account of gales, fogs, and icebergs.

To the first argument, we should reply that every inducement ought to be offered to travellers wishing to visit this country, and to prevent our own western voyagers from using the New York route.

To the second, we think that quick passages during nine months would amply atone for a few cautious ones made during the remaining three months. From what cause do we remain at such a standstill in the matter of improved steamers? Partly, perhaps, from the unwise action of the Government in beating down the mail subsidy year by year, which is a short-sighted policy.