

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 his journal. Our readers are capable of judging 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.

Premier Mercier, whose party now has a majority of twelve in the Quebec Legislature, hopes to be allowed to regain milk the federal cow.

British rule in Egypt is appealing to the hearts of the populace. Through it, forced labor has been abolished, and the Egyptian now begins to regard the Anglo-Saxon in the light of a deliverer. The abolition of forced labor has made Britain's occupation of Egypt less precarious.

The great English railway companies are crying out against the patronage by rich men of third class passenger carriages, the rate being but a penny per mile. These should take their cue from Canadian railways, where the second class cars are made so uncomfortable that the Indians find fault with the accommodation.

The committee having in hand the Victoria Memorial Art School are pushing on the project energetically. With three thousand dollars as the city's contribution towards their funds, they may reasonably expect that through Legislative and private subscriptions, a commencement will be made such as will assure the success of the enterprise, and make it one of the permanent institutions of the city and province.

The British American Claim Agency, of New York, has been proved to be one of the greatest swindles of the age. The persons representing this company advertised extensively that \$480,000,000 now lay in the Bank of England, awaiting the claims of the American legatees. These claims the company offered to investigate for a mere trifling cash deposit. 30,000 persons were thus inveigled; but the exact amount paid in by the dupes has not yet been ascertained. The "next of kin" are remarkably plenty when there is any prospect of pocketing handsome bequests, but it is surprising how many of them have been taken in by such transparent frauds as the above company.

Three thousand nine hundred and eighty-four new books were published in Great Britain last year, besides which there were 226 new editions of former publications. These were subdivided as follows:—Theology, including sermons, 752; educational, 572; juvenile works and tales, 445; novels, 969; law and kindred subjects, 33; political and social economy, trade and commerce, 246; art, science, and illustrated works, 178; voyages and travels, 221; history and biography, 350; poetry and the drama, 93; year books and serials, 294; medicine and surgery, 171; belles-lettres, essays, and monographs, 479; and miscellaneous, 407. It is almost impossible for any man to read a tithe of the works in which he is especially interested, yet still the multiplication of books goes on apace. What a lot of good reading we all must miss? Yes, and what a lot of trash, too?

If the Province receives nearly sixty thousand dollars from the City of Halifax in virtue of the award of the arbiters, the Government should expend \$20,000 in enlarging the present Hospital. According to the Report of the Medical Board, its wards are already so over-crowded as to prevent the admission of many applicants. This is a state of affairs which might most fittingly be obviated in this, the year of Jubilee.

The members of the Provincial Legislature do well in looking after the wants of their respective constituencies, but in the rush of other business, they should not overlook the lamentable condition of the paupers in some counties. The Government and a majority of the House are avowed Liberals. Let them prove their Liberalism by enacting a law which will make white slavery impossible in the land. Humanity, Philanthropy, and Christianity, call for immediate action.

Sir Isaac Newton fully understood the laws of gravitation and their effects, so far as this terrestrial sphere is concerned, but it would probably astonish even his vivid imagination to learn that if the force of gravitation were increased to that of the sun, the weight of an ordinary man would be increased to about two tons. Thank fortune our earth's gravitation is as it is. Fancy a two ton papa with a ton and a half mamma on his knee, and a four hundred pound baby in the cradle. With these conditions even Brigham Young would have been satisfied with one spouse.

The common-sense of the community emphatically condemns the few Halifax liquor sellers, who have encouraged their customers to make a public display of themselves by drinking the liquor purchased on the sidewalks in front of the saloons. The law may be *ultra vires*; it may be unnecessarily stringent; but when men undertake to break it, or to evade it in this high-handed and indecent manner, they most assuredly make a mistake. Public opinion in Halifax may not be prepared for Prohibition, but it is fully prepared to frown down any attempt to encourage liquor-drinking in the public thoroughfares.

We are pleased to announce, on the authority of the Quebec Chronicle, that an application is to be made at the coming session of the Dominion Parliament, to extend the charter of the company which has undertaken the construction of the bridge at Quebec, elsewhere referred to in this issue. Sir Adolphe Caron has undertaken to engineer the bill through Parliament, and so far, its success is assured. The company will ask the government for a guarantee upon its bonds; and as it can be proved that the bridge, when built, will yield a fair return upon the outlay, we assume the government guarantee will not be withheld. This should be good news for Halifax shippers, and to those who are fully alive to its bearing upon Halifax as a winter port.

Our American cousins would like to abolish the Treaty of 1818. They claim that at the treaty of peace, when Great Britain acknowledged the independence of the United States, the two Governments agreed to a subdivision of the empire, making the North American Fisheries common property, and that the rights then obtained were subsequently restricted by the Treaty of 1818. This, from an American point of view may entitle them to fishery privileges from which they are now debarred, but they will first have to dispose of the existing treaty, which stands awkwardly in the way. If Uncle Sam has a good case, he should not fear to present it before an International commission; but from his hesitation to do so, we might infer that he has not faith in the justice of his own cause.

WANTED—A NEW ELECTION LAW.

In each successive election campaign the attention of the public is forcibly drawn to the urgent need of more vigorous laws against bribery. We say this without being at all influenced by the protestations of the defeated party at the last or any other election. A beaten political candidate is apt to be fertile in excuses and reckless in accusations. But if he really has any faith in the truth of the charges he makes against the legality of his opponent's election, the public may rely upon his taking steps to obtain redress. The mere assertions, then, of a defeated party do not influence our opinion. But it is a matter of notoriety that the grossest corruption exists in some parts of this country in election campaigns. We know of one constituency in which the buying of votes has been so reduced to a system, that a regular tariff has been established,—five dollars being paid for a vote in the Dominion, and two in the Local elections. One result is, that money wins the election; another is that honorable poor men shrink from a political contest.

It is a consolation to know that we are no worse off in this respect than our neighbors. In the United States, the distribution of money at elections, and of patronage after them, is such as to stir the indignation of every honest citizen. After the late elections in Massachusetts, an American paper relates as a matter of fact:—"The Democratic aspirant (for the senatorship) the man who would have been elected if his party had secured a majority of the members, supplied his henchmen with what he supposed was a sufficient amount to secure a majority; and it would have served the