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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.

RYE FROM OATS.—It is a generally accepted fact that like bogets like either in the vegetable or in the animal kingdom, and yet Dr. Macdonald of Wickham, N. B., claims that he has been able to raise rye by sowing oats. The oats were sown in April last. After they had grown a few inches they were clipped, and the operation repeated until the month of July, when the heads were allowed to form. The result was undoubtedly a crop of rye, but to our mind the difficulty that presents itself is as to the actual variety of the seed sown. Some varieties of shelled oats and rye are not at all unlike in appearance, and it is quite possible that both the seed dealer and the doctor were mistaken as to the seed sown. If our supposition be correct the doctor's system of pruning did not affect the nature of the crop except in so far as it delayed the forming of the heads.

HUMAN FALLIBILITY.—We have grown accustomed to the fact that it was a lack of human forethought that caused the *Victoria* to founder. All the ingenuity of modern science was not enough to ensure that she would float. The system of air-tight compartments was a flat failure, and the sinking of the ship was a testimonial to human fallibility. Perhaps, however, the strangest incident connected with the *Victoria* is that the Admiral's despatch box was found floating. The box was of curious construction. It was lined heavily with lead and its bottom was perforated in order to ensure its sinking. It contained the code of signals, and all precautions had been taken to prevent its falling into the hands of an enemy in the event of an unfavorable engagement. At the present moment the mighty ship so carefully constructed to float lies fathoms under water, and the despatch box which should have sunk lies at Whitehall.

THE LESSON FROM THE SARNIA.—We trust that before these lines reach our readers the *Sarnia* will have reached her destination in safety. As yet there is little reason to fear that any ill has befallen her, and although the action of Captain Couch in refusing aid from the *Ripon City* has been severely commented upon we have yet to learn that he acted unadvisedly. The *Sarnia* broke her shaft when she was but two hundred miles off the coast of Newfoundland, yet as she was a thoroughly equipped sea-going vessel the captain thought best to continue on his course. Under existing laws captains of disabled steamers or vessels are shy of accepting help unless the ships are in extreme danger. Had Captain Couch accepted the offer his company would have had to foot an enormous claim for salvage, and in all probability the captain would have lost his position. The officers at sea learn to appreciate the delicacy of a captain's position and to trust to

his judgment implicitly. Yet it is unfair to the captains, to the companies and above all to the passengers and crews that there is not a definite international understanding on the subject. Salvage claims would then be met and paid promptly without litigation. Representative ship-owners of all nations should agree on a common ground of procedure, and a recognized board of arbitrators taken from their number should decide on all questions of salvage.

YOUNG JACK TAN.—It is commonly supposed that the present efficient state of the British Navy is caused by the regular training which is accorded to the seamen who begin their career as lads under excellent training. While this is in part true it should be remembered that it is only since 1852 that a regular naval training school has been in vogue. It is now possible for a lad to enter the service at the age of fifteen. In return for his training he agrees to remain in the service for a dozen years after he has attained his eighteenth year. The positions of leading seamen, second and first-class petty officers, warrant officer, chief gunner and chief boatwain are all open to him, and after twenty-two years of service he is entitled to a pension or to a position in the coast guards service. As the young naval aspirants are comfortably lodged and cared for during the period of training, and as they are protected from forming tobacco or drinking habits they are in many ways more fortunate than their land-living brothers.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE.—It is impossible to estimate how much harm is done by the sensational newspapers of the day. They constantly present morbid pictures of life which cannot but injure the minds of all who are easily impressed. They gloat over the horrors of hanging and of electrocution and excite nervous readers to an unnatural degree. A sad case has recently come to light in Rochester, N. Y., where a once sensible woman has besought the courts to restrain the Brush Electric Light Co. from using her body as a meter to measure electric currents. The horrible fancy has possessed the woman ever since she read a blood-curdling account of the last electrocution at Sing Sing. The case is a pitiful one, for the woman's mind is, it is feared, permanently deranged. The question now arises as to who is accountable for her disorder. Nervous people should certainly avoid reading sensational articles of that description, but we doubt if any paper has the right to devote columns to the recital of horrors. In our opinion the sensational newspapers are responsible in no small degree for much of the crime and nervous suffering of the time.

A QUESTION OF PRECEDENCE.—There has been rather a disgraceful tempest in a teapot in the popular little watering place of Point-au-Pic. The summer visitors of 1886 combined to erect a church to be used alternately for the Anglican and the Presbyterian service, and all has gone well until recently, when a Toronto clergyman, with a desire to curry favor with the wealthy American visitors, read the prayers for the Royal family, interpolating between the petitions for the welfare of Our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria and Albert Edward Prince of Wales, the name of Grover Cleveland, President of the United States. The Canadian worshippers seem to have had no objection to praying for the welfare of the great Democrat, but they demanded that he be placed after instead of before the Prince of Wales. The visiting strangers contended that Grover should be allowed precedence if necessary of Queen Victoria herself, and a great deal of ill-feeling was caused. It is an unseemly thing that the squabble has arisen, and it is much to be regretted that it was not overlooked as a mere matter of bravado. There is certainly no reason why Canadians should be narrow-minded and illiberal in matters of such trivial import.

A TRANSPLANTED DUKE.—There is comparatively little known of the duchy of Saxe-Coburg Gotha to which the Duke of Edinburgh has fallen heir. Oddly enough the Duke and his uncle, late ruler of the duchy, both declined to accept the throne of Greece thirty years ago, Duke Ernst on the ground that he was needed in Germany, and the Duke of Edinburgh because of his close proximity to the British throne. It will now be necessary for the Duke to relinquish all claim to the throne of Great Britain, but as an off-set he inherits sovereign power over two hundred thousand people distributed over an area of 760 square miles. There is also a family property of millions of dollars to be handed down to the heir along with the seat in the Imperial Bundesrath. The Duke is admirably adapted for the duties of his new position. He is an able well educated man with a decided leaning towards the customs of German life. His marriage with the only daughter of Alexander II of Russia, as well as his own British and German connection, will aid in making him a powerful ruler. His daughter Maria is the wife of the Crown Prince of Roumania, and his first cousin Ferdinand is Prince of Bulgaria. The chief matter of regret is that the British Navy will lose in him one of her ablest and most powerful commanders, and that his beloved wife with her pretty daughters will of necessity reside in Germany.