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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.

A quill penmaker says that no pen will do as fine writing as the crow's quill. It requires the assistance of a microscope to make a proper pen out of such a quill, but when made it is of wonderful delicacy. The steel pens of the present have very fine points, but somehow a finer point can be given to a quill than has ever been put on a steel pen.

INTERESTING FOR THE HEN.—A curious method of fish hatching has long been practised in China, where hens are not only tortured by hatching broods of water-loving ducks, but are actually made to hatch the spawn of fish. The method is to collect the spawn from the water's edge, and to seal it with wax in an otherwise empty egg-shell, which is placed in the nest of a setting hen. A few days of warmth will ripen the spawn sufficiently for the next move, which is to empty the contents of the egg into water, well warmed by the heat of the sun. A few weeks of careful shielding from too great light, heat or cold, will elapse before the fishy offspring are quite fitted for their battle with the elements. The emotions of the feathered mother on beholding her finny brood are not recorded.

OUR ADOPTED TERRITORIES.—The statement that the boundaries of the British Empire have been enlarged by over two millions of square miles since 1861 will not probably pass without challenge. It is indeed a startling statement, yet it is an exceedingly well-founded one. Nearly 400,000 square miles were added by Gladstone in 1861-1862. These districts were Rotumah, the Tonga Isles, and Egypt. It should be noted at the same time that the foreign policy of the Gladstone Government was far from vigorous notwithstanding this creditable showing, for during the same period the Transvaal, Zulu and, and the plains of the Sudan passed out of the protection of Great Britain. Lord Salisbury's foreign policy has been both far-sighted and popular with his British Constituency. In the two years between 1886-1888 over 1,790,000 square miles were obtained. Among these territories are Upper Burmah, Royal Niger, Col Pahang, British East Africa, British South Africa and New Guiana, while the superiority of the Salisbury Government is attested by the fact that there is no corresponding loss of territory to offset the great gain of the Empire. It is a curious fact that there is but one opinion in the British or Colonial mind as to the acquiring of promising foreign territories, while at the same time the land acquiring propensities of other nations are ridiculed and are held in disrepute by all Britons. The epithet of "land-grabber" might as well apply to the Salisbury Government as to the sordid attempts of our less acquisitive neighbors.

WHAT WILL THEY DO ABOUT IT.—Owing, it is supposed, to the heavy losses sustained by the English fire insurance companies by the disastrous fire at St John's, Newfoundland, these companies have instructed their Halifax agents to advance the rates throughout Nova Scotia from thirty five per cent upwards. This advance would tax the Halifax insured from \$200,000 to \$300,000 per annum more than in previous years, and as the new rates would come into operation on the first of March, the matter has created no little excitement in the city. The agents of the British companies have done their best to obtain a reconsideration of the order, but their efforts proved futile. A crisis was reached a few days ago when the Eastern Assurance Company, through Manager Cory, withdrew from the Nova Scotia Fire Insurance Association, and declared that the proposed advance was unjustifiable and unnecessary. Just what the British companies are going to do about it does not appear, but if their Canadian competitors have sufficient back-bone, they will have to listen to reason or be content to discontinue the majority of their risks.

LIVELY FOR THE AUSTRALIANS!—Our Canadian settlers, although they have many hardships to endure, are not compelled to wage the war of extermination of kangaroos and rabbits, with which our Australian friends are so occupied. The sheep-runs are especially infested by the kangaroos, and by a smaller species of marsupial, the wallaby. In South Australia, notwithstanding that hundreds of thousands of these animals are slaughtered yearly, the plague does not seem to have been stayed. The government offers a liberal bonus for skins of kangaroos, and the local tanners keep up a lively demand, but the kangaroo lopes along as unconcerned as if no warrant were out for his arrest. The chief objection to the kangaroo is that he consumes the grass intended for the sheep, and that he frightens the flocks away, but much graver objections are urged against his co-worker the wild rabbit, who has been the pest of the settlers for the past twenty years. The pair taken out by an English settler thrived famously, and their progeny have thickly settled over the mainland. During the past ten years the government of Victoria have expended \$885,000 on rabbit extermination, but as yet there has been no appreciable result. In many parts of the country they have increased so rapidly that colonists with their flocks and herds have been forced to move to more rabbitless portions, and to give up the struggle of extermination.

FOREIGN MISSION WORK.—There are perhaps few people in this world of trouble who have more annoyances to put up with than those who have devoted their lives to the service of God in the field of foreign mission work. Strangely enough, the chief trouble is not from the heathen for whose enlightenment they have given up so much, but it is caused by the willful action or the clouded understanding of the nominally christianized men and women who should aid in the mission work instead of thwarting it in every direction. Missionaries in China and Japan testify that the European and American residents do not heighten the tone of civilization in these countries. On the contrary they frequently throw off restraint, and although nominally Christians, lead a heathen life in a heathen community. Nor are many of them content with this. Men who have acquired the language, write taking articles for the native publications, in which they make statements, which, though absurd to us, are yet taken as gospel truth by credulous natives. For instance one writer, whose assurance must have been considerable, has for the past year scoffed at the missionaries and their efforts, by repeatedly stating that Christianity was in vogue only among the lowest classes in America—that it was an out-grown faith—a cluster of superstitions. The missionaries are sent to engage in active personal work—they are not in foreign lands to engage in endless controversy with men of their own country, and the lies are permitted to go unrefuted. Another serious grievance is that the missionaries are frequently misunderstood by the members of the churches who support them. Not knowing the insuperable obstacles in the way, they consider that the work should progress more rapidly, and at less expenso. A certain hard-working class of our people have the idea that the missionaries live in luxury because they hear of the servants kept for their use. They forget that the custom of the eastern countries entails attendants, and they forget also a distinction which is vastly more important between varieties of labor. If they wish to support a missionary, half of whose energies are to be expended on dish-washing and household labor, let them do so, but if they wish that the full energy of the missionary be spent in evangelistic work, then let them provide for that purpose the trivial sum which will suffice to employ the necessary attendants. The time of the missionary is incalculably valuable, and should never be wasted in servile or unnecessary labor, which can be cheaply performed. The noble band of devoted men and women from our Province are already in the mission-field, and every effort should be made by their fellow-men and women to advance and not neutralize their efforts.