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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.

Dr. Koch, who was making experiments in the cure of consumption, had better not have said anything about it until he was sure, for it is now announced that he has ceased experimenting, and it is presumed that his methods have proved a failure. Thus those who had their hopes raised are doomed to disappointment.

The Toronto *Empire* is inculcating loyalty in the hearts of the school children of Ontario by offering a Canadian flag to one school house in every county and city in the Province of Ontario. The school in each county or city to receive it will be determined by competition by the pupils in essay writing, the subject being "The Patriotic Influence of Hoisting the Flag on the Schools."

The announcement in the September number of the St. John *Educational Review* that three rare specimens of plants, one of them being *Aspidium fragrans*, had been discovered in the Cobequids, near Parrsboro, was commented on in a humorous strain by a contemporary, with the result of drawing from the *Review* a charming article on the subject. "This fern," (*Aspidium fragrans*.) it says, "has no common name because it is not a common plant. Very few Nova Scotians or New Brunswickers have ever seen it or will ever see it. * * * Why is it that this arctic and most exquisite of the shield fern tribe grows in dwarf but fragrant clusters in solitary statelyness, from the edge of some nearly inaccessible cliff, over a waterfall which gouges its wild way into Pirate's Cove on the Strait of Canso, and over the Niagara of Nova Scotia, where the tawny flood of the Moose River leaps from the Cobequid Range to the lands beneath, and over the crystal Minnehaha, where the falling white foam forms a portiere in perhaps the most picturesque sylvan cave scene of these provinces? How could this delicate little plant, this fragrant arctic member of a coarse and common family, plant itself in so few and at so distant points? It never could, it never did. It tells a pathetic tale. Long ere Glooscap and his people played their pranks in the virgin forests of Nova Scotia, when the glacial winter of ages was slowly retreating northward, and the arctic sting was even in the summer breath, *Aspidium fragrans* probably flourished in every ravine and along every stream. Possibly the increase of temperature made the habitat less favorable, and the fern is slowly but surely dying out, remaining yet only in the most favored spots, where deep gorges and the vapor from the waterfalls combine to keep it cool. It is a most interesting relic of a past age; older than the red man's skull, or the treasures of the stone age."

Perhaps for the Russian Government the fear of public opinion is the beginning of wisdom. It is announced that there will be a reform in the judicial system of Siberia. This may, however, be nothing more than a subtle Russian pleasantry, as it would seem difficult to reform what is so conspicuous for its non-existence.

The Alhambra, which was recently seriously damaged by fire, is to be restored. A Royal Commissioner was appointed to make an enquiry into the origin of the fire and prepare an estimate of the cost of repairs, with the result that he thinks the damage done can easily be covered with \$70,000, but the restoration of the Court of Albarca and the Arrayanez Gallery will require considerable time. It is thought that the fire was not accidental. Queen Christina shows much concern for the repair of the Alhambra, and has expressed a desire to contribute towards the expense.

American naval authorities have been examining the nickel mines at Sudbury, Ontario, to see if the supply is sufficient to justify the American Government in adopting a combination of steel and nickel for the armor plates of their ships of war. They report the supply as practically inexhaustible. As Canada has what amounts to a monopoly of the production of nickel ore in great quantities, and as the Swansea smelters have a monopoly of the secret methods by which the ore is reduced, the protection of America's navy from the shot and shell of her foes will soon be confided to the care of Wales and Canada.

The Zambesi River difficulty has all but wrought a revolution in Portugal, and has certainly overturned a government in the passionate little kingdom; but the British Empire has not been profoundly moved. Yet even the British Empire might take a more lively interest than it does in a question involving the control of some six hundred thousand square miles of fruitful territory! The Zambesi is the chief river on the East coast of Africa, the fourth in importance on the Dark Continent. It has four mouths, which were long supposed to be impassible save for vessels of the lightest draught—an illusion which was fostered by the Portuguese from interested motives. One of these mouths, however, that known as the Kongone, has a minimum depth of eighteen feet on the bar at high water. The river maintains this character for but a short distance, and for the navigation of all the lower Zambesi (where falls and rapids do not make navigation impossible,) the most suitable craft are sternwheel steamers of not more than eighteen inches draught, like those in use on the Upper St. John, in New Brunswick. The new British gunboats, which the Portuguese have just attempted to shut out of the river, are of this type, and designed for those waters. The upper river, above the famous Victoria Falls, and its great tributary the Shiré, which drains Lake Nyassa, are much more open to navigation than the lower stream. The Portuguese have their settlements on the Zambesi, viz., Zumbo, Tete and Senna, which are in the condition of decay which seems chronic in Portuguese colonies. The basin of the river is inexhaustibly productive of such commodities as beeswax, indigo, India rubber and sugar cane; and the possibilities of the region, under judicious management, are tremendous.

It is interesting to note the similarity of sentiment between Sir Hector Langevin and Principal Grant touching the relations between the two great races which make up the Canadian people. They agree in appealing for a better understanding between English Canadians and French Canadians, and in emphasizing the fact that the interests and the future of the two sections are inseparably linked together. On our own side it is necessary to remember that the French-Canadians are a minority, and would probably have suffered the fate of minorities sooner or later if they had not made themselves somewhat so obtrusive to be overlooked. If they have seemed to us at times extravagant in their claims and selfishly local in their aims, we should consider the exigencies of their situation, the absorbing vigor of the race against which their individuality has had to struggle for self preservation. It is not surprising that a spirited and virile race like the French-Canadians should make vehement protest against even the remotest possibility of having their identity merged in that of their ancient conquerors. There is little room to doubt that the masses of the French-Canadians have a sound practical loyalty to the British Crown and the Canadian Confederation. In a certain powerful French-Canadian romance, depicting the time of the conquest of New France by England, and brimming with what we may call French-Canadianism, one of the leading characters is a Seigneur who has fought with passionate loyalty under the flag of the Bourbons. After the cession, however, he accepts the new order of things; and on his death bed he says to his son and heir. "Serve thy new sovereign as faithfully as I have served the King of France, and receive my blessing!" It seems to us that this may be taken as an indication of a healthy sentiment at times concealed beneath the rampant "nationalism," so called, of Quebec politics.