

Among other localities Prince Edward Island has been singled out by the pessimists as an example of the "exodus" which is assumed to be going on at a rate which threatens depopulation. School statistics, however, fail to confirm the desired showing. The school population which in 1877 numbered only 16,000 now exceeds 23,000, an increase of nearly 50 per cent. in twelve years. This may not appear to be a very rapid advance, but it is inconsistent with the "depopulation by exodus" theory. The exodus howl will be found to abate its volume of wail as the census year draws nearer and nearer.

A bill is now pending in the American Senate which exceeds in stringency against the Chinese anything yet enacted. Canadian legislation as yet, to the credit of the Dominion, falls a good deal short of that of the United States in its disregard of the international rights of Chinamen, and it is to be regretted that we have given way to following so unconscientious an example even at a long distance. The recent spectacle of an unfortunate Chinaman kicked from pillar to post, and actually kept on the Niagara suspension bridge for a number of hours, was scarcely creditable to the christianity, or even decent hospitality, of either nation.

It is by no means an infrequent occurrence to us to notice in the columns of some of our country contemporaries our editorial notes, &c., inserted without acknowledgement of any kind. We are but little disposed to cavil in ordinary cases—small fault-finding and over-punctiliousness not being at all to our taste—but we cannot refrain from hinting to a northern contemporary which is, moreover, so good a paper that it can well afford to claim no credit but that which rightfully belongs to it, that it is scarcely fair journalism, not only to appropriate a nearly entire letter of a special, regular and particularly bright contributor to THE CRITIC, without the slightest acknowledgment of its source, but to alter the heading of a contribution written especially and exclusively for this journal.

As might have been anticipated the indefensible action of General Middleton has produced its natural result in an opposition motion for the repeal of that section of the Militia Act which prescribes that the Commander of the Canadian Militia shall be an Imperial Field-Officer. We expressed our opinion on this point last week. Sooner or later the country looks for General Middleton's resignation, which, however, will hardly constitute atonement for the slur his ill-advised course of action has brought on Imperial officers. Of course well-informed people know that there are more Outrams, Havelocks and Gordons in the Service than there are men who allow cupidity to over ride the true military sense of honor, but there are some people who are not well-informed.

Dr. Goldwin Smith seems to have his counterpart in Australia in the person of Sir Charles Lilley, the Chief Justice of Queensland, to whose separatist utterances we had recently occasion to refer, but which appear to have been received with the general condemnation of Australian public opinion. "No practical statesman," says the *Australasian*, "no man of average common sense, can believe in the prophecies of Sir Charles Lilley, who has taken to the business of the seer too late in life to have any hopes of creating a body of faithful adherents. His imagination is lively but uncontrolled—it wants fixing to the ground like a captive balloon." Taking to the seer business too late in life has been also the error in judgment of the erratic and discontented ex-Oxford professor, and the same indifference to his vaticinations seems to attend him as that which is meted out to his antipodean coadjutor in disaffection.

It is difficult to resist the impression that there is something spasmodic in the frequent manifestoes and apparent new departures of the German Emperor; and the speech of the new Chancellor, General Von Caprivi, at the opening of the Prussian Diet seems to reveal the fact that the Kaiser and his Minister fail to grasp the tendencies of the Empire to constitutional liberty of speech. The new Chancellor—and it can scarcely be without Imperial prompting—announces his determination to curtail instead of enlarge the sphere of newspaper information, and even intimates that the Government will retain newspapers in its own interest for the purpose of influencing public opinion abroad. It is not easy to imagine a system more calculated to foster discontent and the radicalism which the Imperial power so dislikes, and of which it stands in wholesome dread. Its effect will undoubtedly be the still more rapid spread of democratic ideas, and seems directly to provoke rebellion against a star-chamber ministry and a muzzled press.

The accommodation of the Provincial Museum, the Institute of Science and the Art School in one central building is an idea that meets with very general approval among the citizens of Halifax. A petition to the City Council to grant a site for this building on the southern end of the grand parade has been very largely signed by the business, professional and working men of Halifax, and will no doubt receive due consideration at the hands of the City Council. That a handsome building upon the site named would improve the general appearance of the parade goes without saying, but it has been urged that the occupation of this site would in a measure close up one of the lungs of the city. To speak of lungs in a crowded metropolis and to acknowledge the need of them is justifiable, but to raise the point in Halifax is superfluous, seeing that our city with a length of three miles has an average breadth of little more than half a mile, that it is flanked on the east by the open harbor, and on the west by the Citadel Hill and an extensive common. Such a building as that proposed should occupy a prominent and convenient site, and the one suggested is excellent and deserves the hearty endorsement of progressive Halifaxians.

Some of our discontented compatriots—if any compound of the word patriot can be legitimately applied to our unpatriotic pessimists—seem every now and again to derive a measure of comfort and consolation from the blattancy of a few Australian secessionists. Says Sir Arthur Hodgson, whom we have quoted in another note, "Our colonies have nothing to gain but everything to lose by secession—an absurd idea limited to the addled brains of a few young and inexperienced Australian politicians fired by the perusal of impassioned post-prandial eloquence."

It is reported that the increasing and apparently incurable deafness of the Princess of Wales has become a source of great anxiety to the Royal Family. If other reports which have been recently circulated are at all correct it is to be feared that the state of the Princess' health altogether is far from satisfactory. Should it, unhappily, not improve it would be a matter of sincere sorrow to the people among whom she is so popular. There are also continuous rumors of the increasing infirmity of Her Majesty the Queen, which, it is to be hoped, is not so serious or decided as would appear.

We are continually hearing of the enormity of the debt of Canada, which amounts, let us say, to \$250,000,000. It is instructive to take note in this connection of the following passage from a paper read before the Royal Colonial Institute by Sir Arthur Hodgson, a veteran Australian politician:—"The borrowing power of our Australian Colonies would appear to be unlimited, amounting to the almost incredible sum of £170,000,000 sterling—all raised by debentures in England on Colonial securities, endorsed by the British flag; but in the event of a possible secession—which is too ridiculous to contemplate—to what serious extent would the value of these debentures be effected?" £170,000,000 would represent a sum of nearly \$800,000,000 for a population of 3,000,000.

The retail price of camphor has, we learn, advanced this spring to double its former cost, first because of its comparatively limited supply, and secondly by reason of the number of new uses in arts, science and manufacture which have of late been found for it. The camphor forests of Japan are at present the only source of supply in any considerable quantity, and, although better and less wasteful processes of collecting the gum have recently displaced the old Japanese methods, there is every prospect of a great scarcity. Among the causes which are exhausting the available supply, celluloid, which is every day coming into more widely extended use, and is composed of camphor and gun-cotton, absorbs a continually increasing proportion, but it appears that camphor is an important constituent part of the new smokeless powder with which all Europe is now trying to fill its magazines, and the demand for this purpose will cast into the shade that of any other manufacture. Unless, therefore, the powder concoctors succeed in discovering some other substance to take its place there will soon be no camphor in the world available for its old-time uses, and as the scarcity will be a reality even the chemists will not make their usual proportionate profits out of it.

We have had the pleasure of an interview with a gentleman of the Newfoundland delegation who has had access to the text of the treaty of 1713, and to all the original documents connected with and bearing upon it. This gentleman is thoroughly posted on the French fisheries question, and we gather authoritatively from him that the privileges accorded by the treaty were merely permissive—to catch fish and to erect stages and temporary buildings for their curing. As usual, undue concessions were on the point of being made by the English diplomatist entrusted with the negotiation, but they were fortunately never formulated. The British Government has, therefore, an undoubtedly clear case, and it is one which it will be a lasting disgrace to the Empire, apart from other serious considerations, to fail in upholding with the sternest resolution. It is beyond all question that no such thing as lobster-packing ever occurred to the parties to the treaty for the simple reason that no such process was then, or for more than a century afterwards, dreamed of, and it is equally beyond question that no concessions to France were contemplated which were calculated to interfere with the natural rights of the people of Newfoundland, little as the Colony and its industries were valued at that now remote date.

The Mississippi is, among the great rivers of the world, unique. Instead of deepening its bed it lifts up, by the continuous deposit of silt by itself and its great tributaries, its whole valley higher and higher. It has done so through the past ages, and continues to do so with unfailing vigor and effect. The more immediate effect of the process is the overflow of its banks, more especially in the lower portion of its course. Sixteen hundred miles of "levees" have been the result of the constant endeavor to confine the ever-rising waters and obviate the damage and dangers of the overflow, and it is now evident that the "levees" must be extended and built greater than ever. "A river," says the *Montreal Witness*, "whose tendency is to loiter on its way and build its bed still higher, must be contracted, forced into a narrow way and sent hurrying to the sea with its load of sediment, and the broad and fertile valley, which is in many instances lower than the surface of a river prone to enormous fluctuations in volume, must be saved from being deluged. The Mississippi Commission of the United States, a body of experts who have control of the Federal Government's interests upon the river, are strongly in favor of a perfect levee system under which the channel of the river will be so contracted that it will be forced to scour out its channel and to carry all its sediment to the Gulf of Mexico." The expense will, of course, be both continuous and enormous.