

blatantly denounces all regulations as outrageous, runs at full speed through crowded streets, laughs and puts on more speed when a horse bolts, and skips the town when he runs down a pedestrian. In point of fact, he has no more "right" to careen through the highways than he would have to insist on rifle shooting in the public parks.

And the task before the community is to restrain this tenth man without needlessly inconveniencing the other nine. Speed limits, as at present administered, are utterly farcial. If low enough to remove the real and serious danger, it is so low as to rob the automobile of the properties that will ultimately render it most valuable. As generally constituted, the limits are so low that they are frequently passed in complete innocence, and the usual plan of police traps to catch the offenders generally gets the wrong men. No speed limit can be properly enforced as generally managed, since no man without using a stop watch can definitely state whether the speed was a quarter mile above or below the limit.

There is just one way in which a speed limit can be enforced—by absolutely forbidding the use on public highways of motor vehicles capable of operating above the limit on level ground, under penalty of permanent forfeiture of license and fine if necessary. The maximum speed of a vehicle can be tested before licensing, and re-examined if there is reason to suspect fraud. This would be drastic but effective, and it is "up to" the law-abiding majority of automobilists to see that it is made unnecessary."

Another fruitful cause of accidents arising from the high speed of public vehicles is the rapid rate at which street cars are driven. This danger is never absent a moment from the streets, nor likely to be until a different system is adopted in regard to the drivers, called "motor-men." These persons are being continually changed and men put to the work who are novices. As a rule the men are fairly competent under normal conditions; but conditions are constantly arising which they are unable to meet.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The Panama question is assuming the form of a great party issue in the United States upon which the next Presidential Election will to some extent depend. Whether justifiably or not it is not questioned that before the revolution broke out which ended in Panama breaking away from Colombia, the preparations for it were known to the president of the United States and aid given to the rebels by an American force. The holders of Panama bonds are now anxious about these securities. As the new Republic was hatched under the auspices of the United States Government in order to secure territory for its own enterprise, the Isthmus Canal, it is bound in honour to protect the bondholders whose property has been made practically worthless by the recent revolution.

Toronto seems to be having a return of the expansion fever from which it suffered so severely some years ago, and has suffered ever since. Then an enormous area was taken into the city until there

was room enough for a million of citizens. Streets were laid out, graded and sewered before there were any signs on them of human habitations. The project now is to extend the civic boundaries along the entire northern limits. This, it is said, "would give the city ample room to grow for twenty years." If we are not much mistaken there is room in the present area of Toronto for double its present population. Further extension ought to be the effect of pressure for more room, it is a wasteful business to have a city's area far in excess of requirements.

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The House of Representatives, New Zealand, adopted the Preferential Trade Act on 18th inst. By this legislation a duty of 20 per cent. is imposed upon the following goods when imported from countries not in the British Empire; bicycle parts; wire ropes, sheet, bolt and bar iron, steel rails, printing paper, etc. On a large list of goods the duty is raised when sent from outside the Empire; including potted fish, pianos, paper, paper hangings, etc. These goods are or might be exported from Canada. The measure is especially interesting just now as it is New Zealand's method of showing sympathy with Mr. Chamberlain's policy.

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To-day ends the season of navigation for 1903, so far as this port is concerned. It has been a busy season, but the development of this port is still seriously hampered by the lack of tonnage to bring grain here "en route" to the Atlantic. What the possibilities are may be judged by the volume of wheat shipped to and from this port having, for the first time, exceeded that of New York.

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The citizens of St. Thomas will vote on 4th January next, on a by-law to be then submitted under which the city would be authorized to give a bonus of \$20,000 to the Pere Marquette Railway, also exemption from all taxes, excepting school taxes, and furnish water to the railway works at a reduced rate. These grants are to be conditional on the railway expending \$125,000 on the building and machinery of works to be used for the usual purposes of a railway establishment. If it is ever justifiable for a city to grant a bonus it is in a case like the above, for a railway is a permanent institution, it is not like an individual firm which depends on a bonus for its capital, and which may pull up stakes and move elsewhere at short notice. St. Thomas has had a hard row to hoe in financial matters of late, we shall be glad therefore if the new railway works bring grist to its mill and add to its population and prosperity.

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In commenting upon one phase of the Alaska award we pointed out that if the principle on which the coast line was defined by the American commissioners were applied on the North Atlantic Coast, that coast would extend to this city on both sides