

THE FRONTIER LABORER

WHAT IS BEING DONE FOR HIS BENEFIT.

Reading Camp Association in the Camps of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Frontier life has a thrilling charm that makes its story irresistible to the average mind. There is in the heart of every man and woman a secret yearning for primeval Nature, a whispered "call of the wild," an irrepresible desire for adventure spiced with danger, and when the story of camp life is told, instinct asserts itself and claims an affinity. The mining camp suggests the majestic grandeur of the mountains; the ranching camp, the wild liberty of the plains; the lumber camp, the beauty and the hidden secrets of the forest; the river-drivers' camp, the thunder of the cataract and the roar of the rapids. Moreover, these camps are so full of the element of danger, so remote from the quiet homes of civilization, that the lives of the men who labor in them suggest brave deeds, perilous tasks, hairbreadth escapes, wonderful adventures.

In this article, the writer purposes to give a short account of the work done by the Reading Camp Association in the frontier camps of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

WHAT STARTED THE WORK.

Some eight or ten years ago Mr. Alfred Fitzpatrick, then a student at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, found it necessary to make a personal search for a long-lost brother. Mr. Fitzpatrick traced his brother to the Pacific slope and there discovered that he was engaged in the lumber industry somewhere in the Rockies. Month after month was spent visiting lumber towns and camps and at last the brother was found in a small town south of San Francisco. That search opened the eyes of the young student from Queen's. He saw that thousands of intelligent men were forced by their occupation to live many months at a time far removed from the moral and intellectual influences of civilization. Further, he perceived that, though these men were brave, generous and trust at heart, the total absence of any elevating and refining influence, the unsupplied want of legitimate entertainment and means of intellectual development during the evening, the forced separation from the uplifting presence of loved ones, had smothered all the innate spiritual ambition in the souls of the men, had restricted their knowledge of things outside of their daily life, had demoralized the whole character of their thoughts and had made these camps hotbeds of vice and degradation. Fruitful sources of profit to licensed hotels and houses of evil reputation. The revelations made such a profound impression upon the mind of the student that, during his search, he formed the resolve to devote his life to the work of improving the moral conditions of frontier laborers and bringing spiritual and intellectual light into the darkness of frontier camps.

SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

After completing his college course, Mr. Fitzpatrick began his efforts towards establishing a system of education in the lumber camps of northern Ontario. His aim was to erect in each set of camps a building suitable for a reading camp, to supply the reading tents with newspapers, periodicals, and an assortment of the best books, and to place in charge of all the reading camps Christian students who would labor with the men through the day and instruct them during the evening. The reading camps would provide a place where the men could spend the leisure hour in comfort and quietness and away from the offensive atmosphere and vile conversation of the main camp; the reading material would furnish means of profit and entertainment for the long winter evenings; the student would influence the men for good by personal contact through the day and develop their minds by a course of instruction at night. The need of a clean, quiet and well-lighted room in which the men could spend the evenings was evident from a knowledge of the cramped quarters and the filthy condition of the sleeping camp; the necessity of giving the men an opportunity for instruction in the elementary branches of education was suggested by the fact that at least thirty per cent. of them could neither read nor write; and the absolute demand for healthy literature and Christian influence was manifest by the scenes of debauchery which took place when the camps broke up in the spring and the men poured into the frontier towns.

Such a scheme could not fail of being ultimately successful because of the extremely humanizing character of its nature, but, as is the case with every pioneer movement, the opening of the campaign was marked by serious difficulties, constant checks, discouraging defeats.

The lumber companies were apathetic, the shanty foremen hostile; the former cared nothing whatever about the condition of the men after working hours, the latter were jealous of any infringement on their feudal authority and shared all the old time prejudice against any effort toward the education of the laboring classes. Added to this was the hindrance arising from

A LACK OF FUNDS.

for, at that time, people not directly associated with the lumber industry knew very little either about the daily work of the shantyman or his moral and social condition. One instance will illustrate the difficulties which Mr. Fitzpatrick had to overcome. After repeated endeavors, he obtained the consent of a certain lumber company to establish a reading room in one of their lumber camps near Sault Ste. Marie. The foreman of the camp was a French Canadian and an old timer, and for a long time he positively refused to allow any such place to be built in his set of camps. Nevertheless, Mr. Fitzpatrick persisted in his request even in the face of blasphemy and invective, and at last received the curt permission to "go ahead and build."

Then a new difficulty presented itself. The foreman would not allow any of his men to put up the building unless they were paid by Mr. Fitzpatrick, and he would not grant any of his stock of lumber to be used in the construction. Discouraged but not dismayed, Mr. Fitzpatrick went back to Sault Ste. Marie, begged and borrowed money for material and wages, hauled lumber into the camps, cut logs out of the bush himself, hired a few men for a couple of days—and built the reading room. As soon as lumbermen began to understand the value of the reading camps, Mr. Fitzpatrick was given opportunity for his endeavors and with the help of a few public men who realized the importance of introducing the elements of civilization into Canadian back woods, he gradually extended his system. In time, the government was persuaded to do something in the matter and now

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES

are circulated among the camps by the Department of Education and lumber companies are forced to build reading camps for the benefit of their men. Moreover, as a result of the efforts put forth for the benefit of the shantymen, the laws governing the sanitary arrangements of the camps are more rigidly enforced than formerly and every foreman is compelled to have a hospital in connection with his camp. The compulsory attendance of a doctor at least once a month to each gang has also been instituted.

Much of the success that has attended the work of the reading camps in the lumber woods has been due to the splendid service of many of the instructors placed in charge of them. Every instructor sent out has been a college man and some have been University graduates; these fellows have worked right with the gang in the white pine forests throughout the day, and at night done everything in their power to develop moral, intellectual and social culture in a place where formerly gambling and dancing had been the only evening occupation, and filthy stories the only topic of conversation. The writer has seen reading camps full of men and boys pouring over newspapers and periodicals, eager learners of young French habitants learning to read and write English, big, strong, English-speaking axemen and teamsters sweating over their lesson in reading or arithmetic, and even an old man of seventy standing before the blackboard learning the alphabet. He has also known of boys sixteen or seventeen years of age who lived near the camp and far from school to be sent by their parents to work in the woods that they might "get a little schooling" from the reading camp instructor.

After a few experiments in lumber camps had proved the practicability of camp education, the work was organized under the name of the

"READING CAMP ASSOCIATION."

with an executive composed of public men having interests in the north country. Reading rooms were also established in mining, fishing and railway construction camps; in reading camps erected in the famous Cobalt country, miners have received scientific instruction from Government experts; at the fishing camps connected with the whitefish industry at the north end of Lake Winnipeg the Gospel message has been given to the Icelandic and half-breed fishermen of Keewatin; and along the line of railway construction in Algoma and Temiskaming box-cars have been utilized for the purposes of the students sent out by the Reading Camp Association.

A short time ago the Macedonian cry came from the West. The enormous amount of railway construction between Fort William and Edmonton absolutely demanded a considerable extension in the system of camp education and as a result,

fine, large reading tents were bought and distributed among the camps extended along the three main trunk lines. Most of the laborers in these camps are newly-arrived immigrants and the peculiar conditions arising from the fact seemed to demand, first, that the British should be provided with facilities that would enable them to spend the evenings in reading—for no class of men is more assiduous in reading than the British workman; second, that the foreigner should be taught the English language—for the welding together of the races can only be accomplished by teaching them

A COMMON TONGUE;

third, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ should be promulgated among these camps, not so much by public exhortation as by the daily life of Christian students working among the men and quietly telling the blessed news in moments of confidence. The efforts of the Association have been directed towards these ends and, so far, with encouraging results. Swedes, Italians, and Galicians attending evening classes in English; prospective farmers from the British Isles taking lessons in geography and agriculture; men of different languages and customs combining in sacred concerts directed by the students; surely these are indications of social, intellectual and moral development and predict bright prospects for our country.

The Reading Camp Association is interdenominational. It embraces every Christian effort; it ministers to men of all creeds. Co-operating with the churches, the Association seeks to work out the practical lessons of Him who taught in the wilderness upon the mountain-side, and beside the seashore. Is it too much to ask for this work the support of every man with money to spare, the love of humanity in his soul and the best interests of Canada at heart.

JOSEPH WEARING.

LIONS AS BENEFACTORS.

Not the Worst Enemies of African Settlers.

People who go to the Zoological Gardens and see the gentle antelope and the timid zebra will be surprised to learn that these two pretty animals are far more feared by the settler in the districts where they roam, such as British East Africa, than the lion, which looks so much more fearsome in the Zoo. The reason for this was explained recently by Mr. David Garrick, a Londoner and a well-known traveller, who also gave an interesting account of the recent exploits of ex-President Roosevelt.

"The slaughter of lions in East Africa," Mr. Longworth declared, "is a menace to the settler, for it is to the lion he looks for the destruction of two of his worst enemies, the antelope and the zebra, which roam in herds over his crops and do incalculable damage."

"The average lion requires at least two head of zebra or buck a week to live as a self-respecting lion ought to live. During the present season alone, however, the game ranger reports that 346 lions have been shot in the vicinity of Nairobi, which naturally means an enormous increase in the numbers of antelope and zebra."

"Various suggestions have been put forward for checking this. Next year's game laws, for instance, are almost certain to demand that anyone desiring to shoot a lion shall first produce twenty zebra tails."

"Ex-President Roosevelt has been very fortunate in the big game he has encountered in Uganda. In addition to the usual animals he has seen a herd of seventeen giraffes—a very rare sight."

"He told me on board ship that if he killed a single lion on his entire tour he would count himself well paid for his journey. He succeeded in bagging three in the first five days of real hunting. He was as enthusiastic over the bag as a boy, and insisted on shaking hands with everybody he met, regardless of color."

A BABY GENERAL.

Hsuan Tung, China's five-year-old Emperor, has assumed supreme command of the Empire's army and navy, thus becoming the world's youngest military chieftain. The edict announcing the appointment recites that this step follows the practice of all Governments, which invest their rulers with the supreme command of the military forces.

ATROCIOUS.

The Husband—"Well, say what you will, my dear, you'll find worse than me in the world."
The Wife—"Oh, Tom, how can you be so bitter?"

BRITAIN'S BIG INCOME

JOHN BULL'S NATIONAL BALANCE SHEET.

How Two Hundred Million Pounds are Spent—Colossal Figures.

Even an American multi-millionaire might be staggered by an attempt to grasp the colossal figures disclosed by John Bull's national balance-sheet, issued as a Blue-book recently.

In the financial year ended March 31st last, the Exchequer receipts totaled £205,137,275 19s. 10d., the great bulk of this money being derived from customs, excise, estate duties, land-tax, post office, and property and income-tax.

Money raised by creation of additional debt accounted for a further £2,636,155, and amounts temporarily borrowed came to £8,500,000. Where the money went is even more interesting. Twenty-eight millions were absorbed by the National Debt services, £470,000 went to the Civil List, £271,790 in annuities and pensions, £77,736 in salaries and allowances, £518,292 to Courts of Justice, and £331,288 to miscellaneous services.

The Civil List £470,000 includes the following items.

Their Majesties' Privy Purse	£110,000
Salaries of his Majesty's Household and retired allowances	125,800
Expenses of his Majesty's Household	193,000
Royal bounty, alms, and special services	13,200
ROYAL FAMILY ANNUITIES.	
Annuities to the Royal Family include:	
The Prince of Wales	£20,000
Princess of Wales	10,000
Princess Christian	6,000
Princess Louise (Duchess of Argyll)	6,000
Duke of Connaught	25,000
Duchess of Edinburgh	6,000
Duchess of Albany	6,000
Princess Henry of Battenburg	6,000
Trustees for his Majesty's daughters	18,000

For political and civil services Viscount Cross and Lord George Hamilton each draw £2,000 a year pension; Mr. Henry Chaplin, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and Mr. Gerald Balfour, £1,200 each. Two late Speakers of the House of Commons, Viscounts Depl and Gully, are down for £4,000 a year each, while the pensions for judicial services in England alone reach a total of £45,789.

CROWN'S ITEMS.

Here are some curious items under the heading of miscellaneous revenue:

Amount received from Venezuelan Government in respect of claim of British subject who cannot be found	£609 0 0
Conscience money remitted to Chancellor of the Exchequer	717 0 0
Unclaimed balance of bankrupt's estate at Smyrna	7 12 6
Commission on sale of photographs (National Portrait Gallery)	17 4 0
The gross receipts of the postal service were £19,904,501, of the telegraph service £3,602,532, and of the telephone service £1,523,622.	

"MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY."

Convict Deported From England Sent Back From States.

George Howard, a negro, 43 years old, was deported to Liverpool recently on the White Star liner Arabic, sailing from New York. During his stay at Ellis Island he was dubbed "the human shuttle of the high seas." Unless the United States and Great Britain come to an agreement on Howard's case he is likely to become another "man without a country."

Howard served a sentence in a British prison for burglary, and on being released, several weeks ago, declared that he was an American citizen. Under the laws of Great Britain he was therefore subject to deportation. He was sent by the British Government on the Arabic, and on arrival at New York was taken to Ellis Island.

Howard told the officials at the island that he was born in the States, and had spent the first 20 years of his life here, but he was unable to back up his assertion with documentary or other proof. He was ordered deported, and, as the case stands, he is likely to be returned again to the States on the Arabic. Howard's case, it is said, is without parallel in the history of immigration.

OF COURSE IT WAS.

"So you were deeply touched by the poem young Mr. Guffson wrote to you?" said Maude.
"Yes," said Myrmie.
"But it was not a good poem."
"I don't care. It was just as much trouble for him to write it as if he had been Shakespeare."

AMONG TROPICAL TREES

THE BANANA TREE BEARS FRUIT TO DIE.

Cut When Green and Hung Up to Ripen—Fruit Seed of Single Flower.

Tropical trees and plants, with their luxuriant growth and brilliant flowers, are very interesting. In Hawaii there is not the hoarding or niggardliness of slow growth. Nature does everything with a lavish hand. Small annuals in colder climes do not seem remarkable when they have their full growth, but to perfect their flower and seed, but in the larger growth of the tropics this does seem a remarkable feature.

LIVES TILL PRODUCTION.

During my stay on the windward side of the island of Oahu I have been studying a banana tree, says a correspondent. In growth and habit it is exceedingly interesting. Very truly does it live but to produce its fruit, for, though a stem attains a height of from 12 to 18 feet, as soon as one bunch of bananas ripens it is "pan" in Hawaiian parlance, "finished" in English. It is cut down and another tiny shoot starts from the ground to pursue the same course.

BANANA A SINGLE FLOWER.

Each banana represents a single flower, and we eat the fleshy seed-pod or ovary, something as in the apple, only that the seeds have no covering as in that fruit. The large cluster of flowers is enclosed in leaflike coverings, which roll back and fall off, one by one, as a hand of the flowers is ready to open. By a hand one means two rows of flowers going half around the stem. I have often wondered what was meant in the oriental stores by a "hand" of bananas. Now I understand by looking at the empty stem from which we have just finished eating the delicious fruit. As soon as the fruit first begins to turn, the stem is cut and hung up to ripen. Bananas hanging in the porch, to be used at will, are a very good substitute for the apple of colder climes.

CUT WHILE GREEN.

But to return to the flowers. The first hand of flowers turns very soon into tiny green bananas, and then the next leaflike bract rolls back and falls off, and a hand of flowers comes to light, till, one after another, these hands have made a large bunch of bananas. In those that I have examined, the last flowers have not come to perfection, and there is often seen hanging a folded bunch at the extreme end of the covering.

HEROIC PHYSICIANS.

Doctors Who Die For Their Patients.

Another name has just been added to the list of doctors who have died for their patients.

Angus Wilson, the house surgeon at the London Hospital, in trying to save the life of a poor woman who had attempted to commit suicide while suffering from a temporary fit of insanity, was so severely bitten by her on the hand that he contracted blood poisoning, with fatal results.

Similar tragedies happen not infrequently, and always evoke from the public a thrill of pity. One of the saddest cases of the kind is perhaps that which is commemorated by a tablet in the "Postman's Park," City of London.

On October 11th, 1884, a little child of four was brought to the Royal Free Hospital suffering from diphtheria. As the only hope of saving its life, the operation known as tracheotomy was resorted to. This consists in making an incision in the lower part of the throat, through which air is enabled to pass to the lungs.

The operation was successful in itself, but in order to establish respiration, which had been partially suspended, it became necessary that somebody suck at the tube which had been passed into the windpipe. This dangerous duty was undertaken by Dr. Samuel Raby, senior resident medical officer at the institution, with the result that he himself contracted the terrible complaint, and died soon afterwards.

For sustained heroism of this kind, however, continued over a long course of years, the palm must be awarded to Dr. De Venster, better known as Father Damien. Although he went to Molokai—which is the leper colony of the Sandwich Islands—as a medical missionary, his real work lay in doctoring the unfortunates he found there, a duty for which he was fully qualified both by training and practice.

Of course he was perfectly well aware, when he undertook the task, that he could hardly hope to escape infection. Nor did he, dying of the complaint on April 10th, 1889.

"Will you be my wife?" he asked. "No," she replied. So he remained a bachelor, and lived happily ever after.

IN MERRY OLD ENGLAND

NEWS BY MAIL ABOUT JOHN BULL AND HIS PEOPLE.

Occurrences in the Land That Reigns Supreme in the Commercial World.

Price of coal has soared in London. In spite of stringent precautionary measures, spring fever is spreading in North and East Devon. In order to defend its shores against the sea, Lowestoft Town Council has had to borrow £70,000.

Desertions from the Navy of men serving afloat numbered 21 per cent. in 1902 and 16 per cent. in 1908.

During the progress of the Kingston Borough Regatta on the Thames, the body of a young girl suicide was recovered from the river.

Owing to an epidemic of measles in Wolverhampton the elementary schools, which have over 17,000 children on the registers, have been closed.

The Territorials numbered on July 1, 260,670, or 86.3 per cent. of a possible 302,047; 93,335 were under twenty, and 62,506 engaged for a year only.

The ceremony of publicly presenting the "pretty maid" for the year with a gift of money was carried out on the first day of St. Peter's Fair, at Holsworthy, Devonshire.

For the framing of the Government scheme of insurance against sickness Mr. Lloyd George has suggested that the friendly societies appoint a body with powers to discuss with him.

Called away for a moment after preparing a bath for her thirteen-months' old child, a woman at Bath, fastened the child in bed, but it wriggled out, fell into the bath, and was drowned.

A young woman named Laura Hill was murdered in her sleep at West Hartlepool by her husband, Christopher Hill, an insurance agent, whose body was afterwards found in the river.

Mrs. Martin, a first cousin of Grace Darling, has died at Bambergh, aged eighty-four. She was born in the same house as the Longstone heroine, and owned furniture which had belonged to her famous cousin.

A boy of twelve named Richard Hills, was commended at a Hackney inquest recently for diving into the Regent's canal and endeavoring to rescue another boy. He had previously saved a boy from drowning.

The plan of an immense abbey, with walls five feet thick and wonderful carvings at the base of the buttresses, has been unearthed at the village of Bradney, near Lincoln and it is hoped to discover the tomb of Ethelred, King of Mercia.

In an attempt to recover his hat, which had blown into the River Blackwater near Maldon, William Grace, of Hampstead, a patient at Mr. F. N. Charrington's temperance retreat, undressed, jumped into the river, and was drowned.

Burglars who visited a house at Gateshead during the family's absence, played cards, consumed two bottles of whisky, had a good supper, and shifted all the drawing room furniture into the kitchen before decamping with jewellery valued at £5.

A dog has as much right to be on the road as a motorist, said the judge at the Ripon County Court, in giving judgment against a motorist for killing a dog. "You should have pulled up," he added, "and given the dog the option of getting out of the way."

Frederick Burgess was committed for trial at Edgware recently on a charge of murdering a schoolgirl named Annie Lydia Fletcher on June 15. It was necessary for a strong escort to guard Burgess against attack by the crowd which gathered outside the court.

Damage to the extent of £700 was done at Nottingham recently by a lace hand named Searcy, who ran amuck through Derby-road, one of the chief business thoroughfares, armed with a heavy barbed wire instrument with which he broke fifty large plate glass windows. He was removed to the city asylum.

GREETING BY BULLET.

Discharge Revolvers in Air on Meeting or Parting.

A very pleasing custom of the Montenegris is that of discharging revolvers in the air at meeting or parting. A score or so of men will accompany a popular guest to the outskirts of the village, and as he rides off they speed him with a deafening fusillade. They will fire their revolvers, too, at the conclusion of a jollification, and are not then always very careful of the angle of discharge. In the accident ward of Montenegro's only hospital the majority of cases are men thus accidentally shot. There is also a certain dance where a ring is formed and a man and girl prance round, the former striving to leap as high as possible, emitting feathery shells and firing his revolver at every leap. When that was not enough he always took a front seat lying down.