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THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH. ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1908

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THE THOUSAND MAN BY RALPH STOCK

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AFTER meeting an M.A. on a "round up," the son of an R.A. on a bridge crew, an Hon. (strictly incognito) sporting a crimson nose and elongated boots on the boards of the Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, not to mention numerous university men in salmon canneries, coal mines and places even less salubrious, I was not at all surprised at meeting a man like Drummond in a British Columbia lumber camp.

In the whirlpool of life a man is cast off from the outer, slower moving currents, where he had been accustomed to float serenely round and round on the surface, and finds himself irresistibly dragged toward the vortex, it is surprising the amount of selfish satisfaction he can derive from watching the struggles of others who had at one time enjoyed an equally exalted position, but who are now even nearer to being sucked beneath the surface than he is himself.

I am ashamed to say this is precisely what occurred to me when I first set eyes on Drummond.

To him could be applied without hesitation the much abused term "gentleman." He spoke like one, acted like one and looked like one, even when with sweat and dirt begrimed brow he yanked refractory logs from his groaning bush wagon to the mill skidways with a cant-hook and an occasional curse.

I wanted to ask, "How did you come to be here?" And probably the same question presented itself to Drummond with respect to myself, but neither of us asked it.

We each recognized in the other a kindred denizen of another world, the same world, but both feared to offend by probing for the reason of the other's banishment.

For two months we went about our daily task, took our ice cold evening dip (for which we were regarded as quite mad by the rest of the camp) and sat dangling our legs from a trestle bridge blessedly immune from mosquitoes, owing to the gleiter torrent that flowed beneath it, and sucked the pipe of contentment and companionship.

Each evening I contrived to turn over a new page of my friend's extraordinary personality, for extraordinary I found it to be.

He had next to no sense of humor and his face betrayed it. His very countenance expressed a natural gravity, the acceptance of life as a serious business. His conversation, though showing a keen observation of men and things, was never illumined by the faintest glimmer of levity. A joke to him was apparently a sad and sorry affair, and on the few occasions when I laughed one for his benefit he accorded me a solemn, undivided attention that went further to quash the misguided efforts than would any failure to "catch on." He saw them and seemed to pity.

Yet he was interesting. One instinctively felt that here was a man with a purpose, a man who had taken life in his two hands and wrestled with it; that there was something behind him that kept him wrestling still. What that something was proved an increasingly interesting subject of speculation to me for two months.

In appearance, Drummond was anything but impressive. Long, gaunt, with thin legs and gigantic feet, when walking his entire body seemed to move on sagging hinges. His head was semi-bald, but his chin and upper lip stood for deficiencies in that direction by raising a very creditable straw colored beard and mustache. Yet, as I said before, with all his peculiarities there was no mistaking him for anything other than a gentleman, and I still wondered vaguely and held my peace.

On a certain Saturday evening I received a letter re-addressed three times and generally crumpled with handling. I read the typewritten contents, gasped and took the nearest seat, which happened to be the grass at my feet. I haven't the letter now, but I still remember the words of it.

I sat there, who spoke to me or what I answered. I only know that when the full realization of what I had read came home to me, it brought me to my feet whooping like a red Indian.

I have a dim recollection of a ring of grizzled faces staring with stolid wonderment in my direction, a few gruff remarks, the drift of which centered around the main fact that "this dude was as crazy as a bedbug," and then I made a beeline for the trestle bridge.

There sat Drummond, a comprehensive briar dragging down one side of his mouth, his long thin legs culminating in their cumbersome feet dangling loosely to and fro like overweighed pendulums from the bridge coping, his face set in its usual expression of grave meditation as he gazed down the course of the torrent.

I laughed. I waved the letter above my head and advanced on him, executing a homopipe like any maniac. I laughed still louder when he glanced up at me in a mild bewilderment of inquiry without the faintest semblance of a smile. I sat at his side and slapped him on the back like a fool and laughed again at his discomfort.

"Bully," I began impressively, "I have just done my last day's work."

He regarded me fixedly for a few seconds.

"Where did you get it?" he demanded at last.

"What, the letter?" From the mail carrier, of course.

"No, the whiskey."

"Then I laughed again. Oh, the world was a very amusing place that evening.

"It's better than that," I blurted, like a schoolboy divulging his pet secret in precious earnestness. "It's that fat aunt I told you about, the one vegetating at Tokio. I thought she would outlast me by years, and I know she hates me like poison, yet she's gone the way of all flesh and softened at the last moment."

It was a wonderful world, Billy. Invested in east iron securities it will bring me in about two hundred a year. A thousand dollars a year ought to let me see some thing beside the tall timber before I leave it to the next man, even if I can't find a hundred."

Drummond actually smiled faintly, but he was not amused. It was that same queer smile of compassion that accompanied the extending of a workman hand.

"I'm glad, very glad, old man," he congratulated me with unusual warmth. "I wish that you would get out of down the river's course. 'I wish that was enough to let me out of it,' he added meditatively.

"You surely wouldn't go on with it if you had that amount?" I demanded incredulously.

He turned on me the same slow, enigmatic smile that had begun to actually annoy me.

"My income is double that now," he said quietly, "but I don't stop work."

I gazed at him in amazement. "In Heaven's name, why?"

He replied a trifle wearily. "I hope you don't mind my saying this, but I'm almost sure you wouldn't."

"I don't mind," I said in spite of myself. I not understand! Who was Drummond, and never understood! Who could hope to understand anything without a sense of humor?"

"Very possibly not," I admitted rather. "Again that exasperating smile twisted his lips."

"Don't get mad," he said calmly; "there's no need to. I said that because I once told it all to another man—only man in the world I ever did tell it to."

"And he didn't understand?"

"He ought to have been so," I remarked indignantly.

"You haven't heard it yet. Perhaps you'll laugh too," he suggested. "Just do as you like; don't mind me. I'm going to tell you anyway." He gathered his long legs to his chin and stared down at the rushing water beneath us. "The reason that I work, work hard with my hands, is that I must occupy my day and get thoroughly physically tired and ready for sleep at the end. I want oblivion, and this is the only way I can get it. On I've tried the others. I was thought promising by the lights of the law at one time; at another I looked like accumulating a lot of money I didn't want in the real estate business, and this thing that I was trying to forget kept forcing its way between me and my work, wrestling with it and always proving victorious. I gave up in despair and rushed blindly into every form of sport, but it still followed me. I toured the world, and this was what finally brought me to a decision. Those lonely voyages offered least resistance to the thing I kept trying to forget. I determined that my only hope lay in a hard, routine day of manual labor, in which I should become a machine, a mechanical contrivance for the doing of

certain crude work—work that I could do day in, day out, and perhaps lose myself in the rhythm of doing it.

"I came here, and do exactly what you see me doing every day. I have my wagon loaded in the bush with logs, drive them to the mill skidways, roll them off and return to the bush. I find myself counting the trees that line the trail. Between the skidways at the mill and the skidways in the bush there are exactly 1,119 full grown trees lining the trail on the right side, and 73 less on the left. I make six trips in the day. My high horse takes 3,040 steps to the trip, as a rule, and the old horse, 2,400. So I manage to occupy my mind all day and lose it in tired sleep at night. I have been doing this now for three years, and by comparing my state of mind now with what I remember it to have been three years ago I feel I am making headway."

"This thing you are trying to forget?" I began, carried away by the interest this extraordinary recitation had aroused in me, then checked myself instantly, "but perhaps you'd rather not," I added hurriedly.

"I shall tell you all," he continued doggedly. "I was just coming to that—this is where the other man laughed." He opened his shirt at the throat, detached a small locket from a thin silver chain that encircled his neck and pressed some spring that opened it.

"That is what I'm trying to forget," he said, as he placed it in my hand.

I studied the face of a very ordinary looking girl of perhaps twenty. The hair was dark and parted in the middle, with severe simplicity; the features undeniably handsome, in a coarse, unrefined style that suggested the Jewess. The eyes were, of course, expressionless, the picture being a photograph. I studied it carefully for a few moments, and then returned it.

"You see," he said, attaching the locket to a deliberate monotone, "we were engaged to be married. I came out here to buy fruit land and build the home, and I changed her mind, that's all."

After a brief pause he looked up at me, almost appealingly. "You're not laughing, are you?"

I was not. It annoyed me to such an extent that I resolved to speak.

"I see you don't laugh," I agreed; "but tell me, you never had much to do with women?"

"I was the only woman I ever really knew or cared to know."

"You have never seen her since—not for five years altogether?"

"And because she threw you over you came here and buried yourself. You thought this the best way to forget?"

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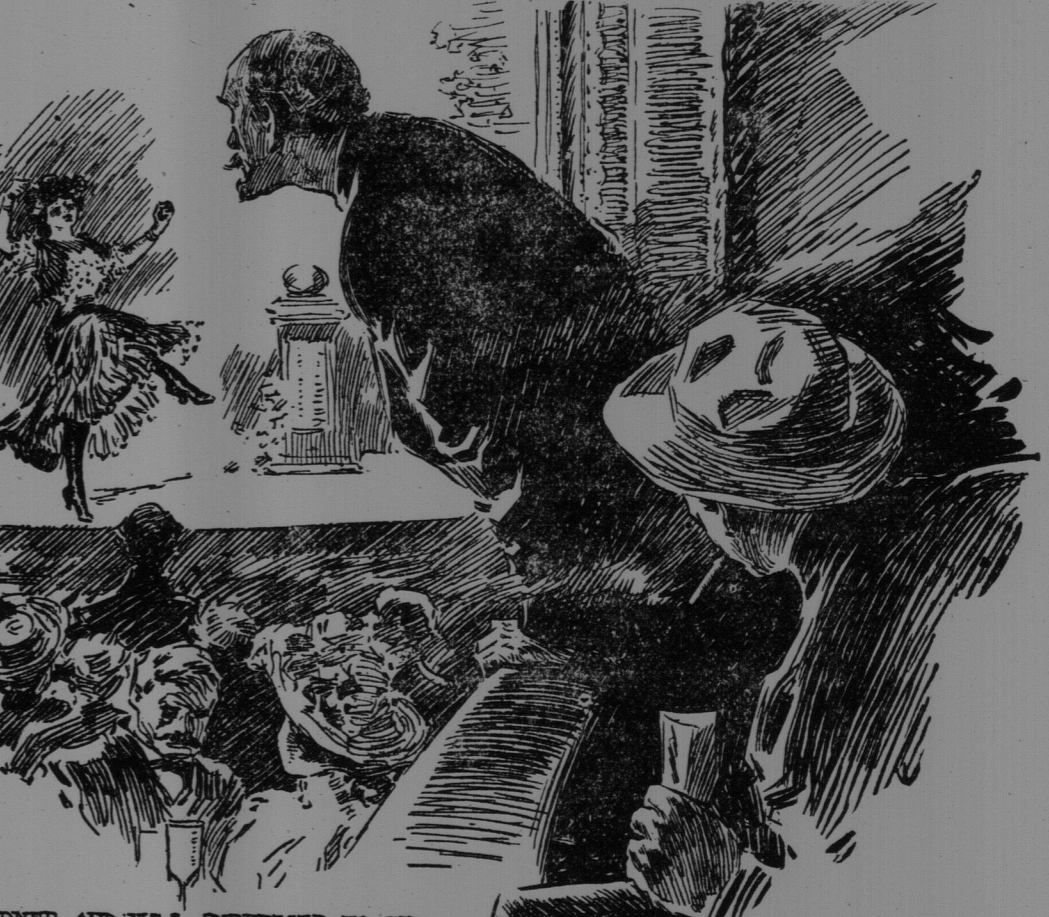
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I TURNED AND WAS SURPRISED TO SEE DRUMMOND ON HIS FEET LEANING OUT OVER THE AUDITORIUM.

"Look here, Drummond," I said fiercely, "you're going to try an experiment; you're coming home with me now! We're going to buy a fruit farm down in Wales, by the sea, where we can work when we feel like it and play when we feel like it. We'll have a bachelor establishment—liberty hall, a few decent fellows, whiskey and pipes, polo, tennis. We'll spend the winter's laughter (he'd bound to have several) by way of variation, and we'll just chalk up how many days it takes for you to drown this idiotic dream of yours."

Drummond shook his head slowly but deliberately.

"I've tried all that," he said.

I scrambled to my feet. "Then go to the devil!" I roared disgustedly.

"I've tried that, too," he admitted with a flicker of a smile. "It doesn't agree with me a bit."

I laughed. I literally had to.

"I know you'd agree in the end," he added resignedly, and I strode savagely into camp.

It was Drummond's own suggestion that he should see me off, and I welcomed it as the first sign of awakening interest in things practical, as well as a proof that he bore me no ill will for my clumsy arguments.

The town was a new world to him. He stood on the curb, running a long brown finger round the inside of his unbuttoned shirt collar, alternately buttoning and unbuttoning the jacket of his new tweed suit and tugging spasmodically at his Paisley tie.

A limousine to relieve a sprain or an argument to carry weight are equally important in the eyes of a man like Drummond. "Look what you're missing, Billy," I pointed out at every opportunity from the moment we consumed the first egg flip to when we emerged from the waters of English Bay and lay on the hot sand blinking like a couple of owls strayed from their cranny in the light of day. I saw he disliked it, but preserved unbecomingly.

"And now," said I, when a little later we left a down town restaurant, "we'll go to the Prince of Wales street, and persuade ourselves it's the Empire, Leicester square." Drummond followed like a lamb.

As we entered the theatre a fat blonde with a rascally wig and a rascally expression inquired of an unappreciative audience "how they'd like to spoon with her." We took a little black hole reeking of tobacco and beer and called it a theatre.

I watched Drummond closely, and nothing but an undisturbed boredom was discernible in his expression. His pale blue eyes wandered round the galleries, where passed the endless procession of painted youths and maidens, down into the cloud of tobacco smoke, down into the well of the auditorium, whence rose a

continuous din of laughter, chatter, popping corks and more smoke.

"It's all rather boating, isn't it?" he murmured reflectively.

Our door was flung open by a very grave of a young girl in a gray kimono jacket, short skirts and a pair of very small, very shiny shoes that were evidently hurting her horribly, who playfully suggested that we either buy her or make room for some one who would.

I bought beer, while the visitor explained that as she received forty per cent commission on every dollar bottle of beer she could persuade people to buy we needn't hesitate in furthering a good cause.

When the pacified intruder had hobbled from the box I turned and was surprised to see Drummond on his feet leaning out over the auditorium. I pulled at his jacket, but he never moved. "Bully," I called, "wake up; we've got to drink this." He never answered. I studied his profile; it was hard and set; curious drawn lines hovered about the mouth, which hung partially open.

I glanced over his shoulder and on the stage saw a short, dark girl, dressed in orthodox Spanish dancing costume whirling gracefully round to the accompaniment of her own castanets and a dreamy, haunting air played by the orchestra.

The second I looked on her face I knew I had seen it before, yet for a full minute my mind refused to supply the connection. Then in a flash it came to me, full, strong, incontrovertible. The hair was longer parted in the middle, but filled in with glittering coils and tied with vivid red ribbons. That was the difference, all most the only difference, except for coloring, between the face on that stage and the face in the locket Drummond had shown me on the trestle bridge.

I returned quietly to my seat and tried to think clearly, then pressed the bell to "ask the lady now on to come to this box when she's through."

The pale youth with the expressionless mask instead of a face vanished with an understanding nod.

Presently the turn was over, an illustrated song followed, and in the gloom of the corner I watched Drummond's profile against the white sheet that occupied the stage. He took his seat slowly and sat as motionless as a stone, gazing at the opposite wall of the box.

I conjured up the picture that was burning into the man's brain, consuming and casting out one after the other the ideals that had held him prisoner so long. "Ezema! Smallpox!" What were either compared to this? I almost laughed at the irony of it. My arguments, though wild, had unexpectedly been proven to the hilt; but "wait!" I told myself; "just wait!" As yet he had only seen her at a distance, set off by the flare of the footlights. For the "cure" to be complete, just wait until—The door of the

box opened quietly and shut with a gentle click. The faint rustle of skirts and an overpowering odor of eau de Cologne pervaded the air. She drew a third chair toward the front of the box.

"Well, you're a dry looking crowd," she observed in a strident falsetto, with an indicative glance toward the beer and the empty glasses. Then she caught sight of Drummond. "What's the matter, dearie?" she demanded playfully. "Home sick?"

Drummond turned, and I shall never quite forget the expression that passed over that woman's face. The blood ebbed from it entirely, leaving the paint in crude, ghastly blotches on lips and cheeks. The pencilled eyebrows and lids, even the eyeliner, stared out in bold relief against the colorless marble of her face.

They gazed at each other in silence for what seemed an age, then the man moistened his lips.

"Where is he?" he demanded in a voice low, even and unusually distinct.

The question seemed to break the spell. The woman's head bent slowly forward, her hands went to her face. For a second she rallied and I saw a hard mechanical travesty of a smile as her features—then she collapsed utterly.

I left them.

Outside, underneath the stairs, I lit a fragrant cigarette and began to smoke. "Fate sometimes plays a rough game," I mused toward my hotel, "but lord, how thorough!"

III.

I waited up for him on the deserted piazza with a pipe and my thoughts. I saw the glow of his cigar approaching up the driveway long before his tall, gaunt form was discernible, and I remember wondering vaguely what I ought to say.

"I'm sorry you were dragged into this," he apologized, crossing one long knee over the other. "You recognize her, of course?"

"My dear fellow, don't mention it," I blurted hurriedly. "I was glad—I mean I only hope you won't take it too much to heart; that you'll see the wisdom of coming home now."

Drummond crossed his legs.

"No; I've decided to settle out here if I succeed."

"Success?" I queried, mystified. "I don't quite follow."

"In persuading her to become my wife. He deserted her during the first year of the war, and she's been waiting for him ever since. I cleared my throat to speak, but that was as far as I allowed myself to go. The seduction had certainly turned his head, and he was the use of arguing with a fanatic bent on self-destruction?"

Suddenly I became aware that he was regarding me with his old enigmatic smile.

"You don't understand," he said with a sort of grave compassion. "Of course you don't. You're crossing one long knee over the other and ninety-nine. Let's turn in now. Shall we?"



WHAT'S THE MATTER, DEARIE? SHE DEMANDED PLAYFULLY, 'HOME SICK?'

NEGRO EXHORTER GIVES AGE AS 138

The Rev. Mason Brooks, in Jersey Sermon, Asserts He Once Held General Washington's Horse.

New York, Aug. 24.—In a sermon delivered yesterday at Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church, in Somerville (N. J.), the Rev. Mason Brooks, a negro clergyman, said that he is 138 years of age, and that he remembers having held General George Washington's horse on the road between Somerville and Boston.

The clergyman said he was born in Cuba in 1770, and was brought to Somerset county, N. J., when a child. He said that he was ten years old when he held General Washington's horse. He illustrated this part of his narrative by walking out along the road toward Raritan and locating the exact spot at which he said he had held the horse. The spot is near an old tree in front of the Cornell place. The tree has been a landmark time out of mind.

IN MEMORY OF SAILORS

The annual decoration of the seamen's graves in Kemar lot in Fernhill was carried out yesterday by members of the Seamen's Institute. An abundance of beautiful flowers donated by friends were taken to the cemetery in a barouche. A memorial service was conducted by Rev. L. A. McLean, who spoke of the love of their fellow men which prompted those who had gathered flowers, that the last earthly resting place of the sailors might be made beautiful.

MOORE'S MILLS MAN BADLY INJURED

St. Stephen, N. B., Aug. 24 (Special).—A likely fatal accident occurred at Moore's Mills today. Arthur White, who was working on a building at that place fell from a staging to the ground, a distance of about twenty feet into a ditch. One of the loose staging planks fell, striking him on the forehead, rendering him unconscious for some hours. His recovery is still in doubt.

MOOSE INVADERS HAMPTON

Hampton, N. B., Aug. 24.—Two moose made a visit to Hampton this morning, one, a fine bull, was of immense proportions, but both appeared to be in rather poor condition. They had swum across the river from the Raritan side and leisurely walked about, apparently looking for suitable feeding grounds which they for the purpose of the Washington Camp Ground Association at Round Brook, on July 4 last, he was present and walked up the mountain-side, unassisted. He says he knows he is older than the celebrated Noah Naby, who died in the poorhouse in Middlesex county (N. J.), a few years ago, at the supposed age of 129 years.

GREAT BRITAIN'S NAVAL PROGRESS

Two Dreadnoughts Soon to Be Launched—Two Others Planned.

London, Aug. 23.—Before the close of the present year two more battleships of the Dreadnought class, but including improvements adopted after exhaustive experiments with the first of these vessels, are to be launched for the British navy, and work on still another one is to be commenced. The St. Vincent, which was laid down at Portsmouth in December last, is to take the water on Sept. 10, and the Collingwood's ship at Devonport, on Nov. 7. Both the Collingwood and St. Vincent are to be ready for commission early in 1910.

The Vanguard, the next ship of this type, is to be commenced shortly by a private firm of shipbuilders. The ship which the St. Vincent vacates at Portsmouth is to be prepared for the laying down of another Dreadnought in January, and the Collingwood's ship at Devonport will take the keel place of an armored cruiser, which is to embody improvements in the Invincible class. One of these improvements relates to the turbines, and is a discovery made on the Dreadnought, whereby that vessel's speed was accelerated. Great Britain will therefore very soon have four Dreadnoughts in commission, two completing, and two building. The progress made in the provision of this most formidable of fleets is shown in the following table:

Launched	Months
Dreadnought	Oct., '05, Feb., '06
Bellerophon	Dec., '05, July, '07
Teneriffe	Jan., '07, Aug., '07
Superb	Feb., '07, Nov., '07
St. Vincent	Dec., '07, Sept., '08
Vanguard	Feb., '08, Nov., '08
Another	Jan., '09

TWO CHILDREN BATHERS DROWNED

Clinton, Mass., Aug. 25.—Two young children were drowned here today under somewhat unusual circumstances. George Parker, aged 12 years, son of Jeremiah Parker, was playing in the water, and bathing in Fuller's Pond and drowned in but two feet of water. Although some of his boy companions were close by, they were unable to pull their victim in time and although a physician worked over the body for some time, his efforts at resuscitation were unsuccessful.

Mamie McMahon, the ten year old daughter of Simon McMahon, was wading with some little girls along the Nashua River, when she was drowned. It is thought these deceived her as to the depth of the water for she waded out too far and was drowned before her companions could save her. Efforts to revive her failed.

HARVESTERS STRANDED AT MOOSEJAW

Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 24 (Special).—Following close in the wake of the harvesters, a series of the most daring burglaries have been pulled off in this city, and some of these are attributed to under-employable men. Saturday evening a man walked into a store on Portage avenue and at the point of a revolver compelled the woman cashier to hand over the receipts. He made a clean getaway afterwards. Fully a dozen or more private residences have been entered. In one case the lady of the house was beaten insensibly while in the act of telephoning the police.

At Moosejaw the condition of the harvesters is desperate. The city has been obliged to feed and house upwards of two hundred of them.

CORN CURED
In 24 HOURS
You can positively cure any corn, hard, soft or bleeding, by applying Putnam's Corn Extractor. It takes out the corn, without pain, and leaves the foot as soft as a baby's. It is composed of healing gums and balsams. Fifty years in use. Cure guaranteed. Sold by all druggists. 25c. bottles. Refuse substitutes.

PUTNAM'S PAINLESS CORN EXTRACTOR

THE UNEMPLOYED Another Country Where Both Capital and Labor Are Out of Work.

(Correspondence of The New York Post.) London, August 12.—Occasionally, one gets the impression here that America believes England to be still in the full flood of prosperity, and ready to call to lend a helping hand to impoverished America. It is a curious idea. This extract from a London newspaper will show just what reality there is in that belief.

"There is plenty of money," said a great banker today. The difficulty is to find avenues for its profitable employment. Commercial openings are closed. There is no trade done. Bankers do not want the money; they cannot employ it. It fills their strong rooms, and is of little more advantage to them than a bag of sovereigns on a desert island.

"The last report of the local Government Board, dated July 24, shows that there are 3,736 more paupers in London than at this time last year, and that the return per thousand of the population has risen from 24.1 to 24.7."

"In 268 trade unions, with a membership of over 650,000, the percentage of unemployed has risen within twelve months from 3.6 per cent. to the alarming figure of 8.2 per cent."

Possibly the American reader will reply that with all this unemployed capital, London must be in a position to exploit America again. But how about your own unemployed bank reserves and 1 per cent. money rate? Is it possible that "commercial opportunities are closed," just as in your market also? And if so, why should Europe take a hand?

OTTAWA CONSERVATIVES SELECT CANDIDATES

Ottawa, Aug. 25.—The Conservatives of the Capital held their convention tonight and nominated Thos. Birkett, ex-M.P., and Dr. Chabot, as the party candidates for the forthcoming election.

Mr. Birkett obtained the nomination on the first ballot. His opponents were Frank Cook, Ottawa representative of the Mail and Empire, and P. D. Ross, Editor of the Ottawa Evening Journal. Mr. Ross was an unsuccessful candidate for the last general election, and Mr. Birkett was the defeated Conservative candidate in the last federal contest.

COUNTY COURT

Georgiana Sneed Not Guilty of Setting Fire to House—No Bill in Davis Case.

In the county court Tuesday morning, Judge Forbes presiding, the grand jury found no bill in the case of John J. Davis, charged with perjury, but found a true bill against Frank N. Burns, charged with appropriating money while acting as Collier & Co. His Honor, Judge Forbes, in addressing Davis, arraigned him severely, and said he was very fortunate in the position he at present occupied, as nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to have sent him up for two years.

PAYMASTER AND TWO MEN KILLED BY TRAIN AT KENORA

Winnipeg, Man., Aug. 25 (Special).—While paying a gang at Eagle, 65 miles east of Kenora, Alex. Milton, chief clerk in the paymaster's office, was killed with two others who were standing with him on a side track. The men supposed that train No. 97 would take the main line, but instead, the train came down the siding and before the men could get clear, all three were killed.