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Topics of the Day

MONTREAL was seriously disturbed last week by a minor event. An inspector of the S.P.C.A., in the course of his work on behalf of the dumb animals of that city, brought a carter before Recorder Dupins. It was proved that this man struck his horse twenty-five times in succession. The Recorder decided that as he had not drawn blood he could not be punished. His Honour had dismissed a similar case the day before, when a man had beaten his team with a steel rod. These two decisions made Montreal's thinking people rather wrathful.

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Sir Wilfrid Laurier is almost home, and when he arrives he will receive a hearty welcome. The Premier has done well abroad, though he has not satisfied the Navy League and though he has connected himself with a will-o'-the-wisp called the "All-Red Line." Even those who intend to vote against him and his candidates at the next general elections, will not regret having him back at Ottawa with the reins of government in his hands. He is premier of the country and still intellectually chief of the country's present set of governors. He will find affairs at Ottawa in a somewhat backward state.

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The pilgrimages of Ste. Anne de Beaupre are even heavier than ever. Special trains are quite numerous and the business is very profitable to the railways.

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The general tourist business of the country will not show much expansion this year. The cool weather, the stress of business, the tightness of money and a depressed stock market are among the causes. The Thousand Islands are not nearly so well populated this year, on either side of the line. The Canadian side seriously lacks two or three large hotels. The Lower St. Lawrence traffic is fairly heavy, but the R. & O. report that few Canadians are using their fleet of steamers. The hotels along the Lakes and Georgian Bay are reported well filled.

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Toronto and Montreal are awakening to the fact that the lack of water meters is costing each municipality a large sum annually. In a Toronto factory a notice was posted the other day:

"Be careful of the water
As we pay by meter."

Human nature being what it is, what other reason could there be? Are we honest and fair when there is no compulsion?

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Last week about \$1,000,000 worth of contracts for locomotives and rolling stock for the Intercolonial Railway was passed by the Ottawa authorities. Like the western roads, the government line feels the scarcity of cars as a most awkward lack and it is stated that the difficulty now in the way of a good supply is that all of the works are too busy to fill a rush order.

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The Western Miners' Federation has taken possession

of Cobalt and a strike is on. Poor Cobalt! It is having a sultry July.

Though the present government in Ontario came into power on the 25th of January, 1905, it was not till the 30th of May following that Hon. Frank Cochrane was appointed Minister of Lands and Mines. The delay was due to a rearrangement of some of the departments of the service, and later on, the forests were included within the Minister's jurisdiction.

Mr. Cochrane's rise above the horizon was somewhat meteoric. Before his selection as Cabinet timber he had never been in parliament, and was known as a successful hardware merchant at Sudbury. He must have been a good Conservative, however, as his appointment was severely criticised by the "Globe." His fellow citizens in East Nipissing, of both parties, thought enough of him nevertheless to return him to the House by acclamation, so that he must have enjoyed their confidence even if they did not all see eye to eye with him in political affairs.

Since entering upon his duties, Mr. Cochrane has become known as a hard worker and careful administrator, who pays more than ordinary personal attention to the details of his department. He is prompt to act, and follows pretty rigidly what he conceives to be his proper course at any time, which explains why he is sometimes bitterly assailed by those who do not agree with him.

As Minister of Mines he took the somewhat unusual course of summoning a convention of delegates from the mining districts of Ontario which met in Toronto in December, 1905. This convention was followed by a general revision of the mining laws during the session of 1906.

The Minister has been much criticised on account of what is known as the "water power policy" of the government. Under this policy which became effective last year, water powers are no longer given away or sold, but are leased upon conditions of development within a given time and certain other restrictions.

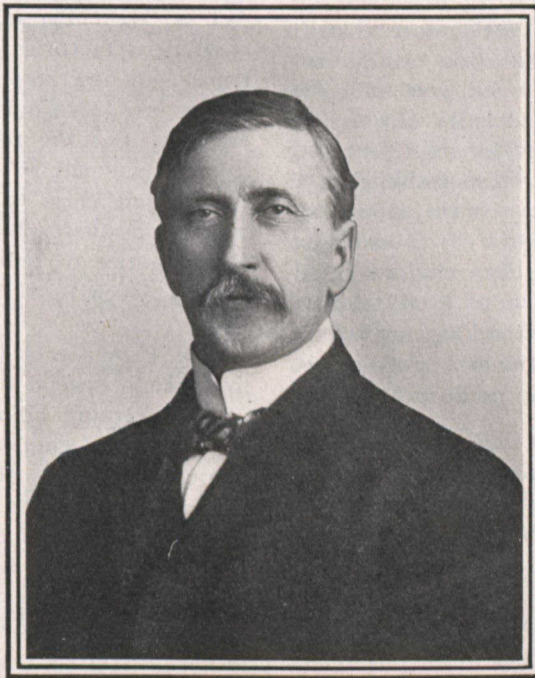
Lately, Mr. Cochrane has been in the Rainy River district, investigating what has been termed the "secession" movement. The miners' strike in Cobalt will also keep him from finding July a holiday month.

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Last week was a disappointing week in sporting circles. Mr. Lyon and Mr. Martin were beaten in the golf tournament at Cleveland and the Canadian rifle shots failed to land either the McKinnon or Kolapore Cups. Perhaps Canada will have better luck when the yacht races arrive.

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Hamilton and Toronto sympathise with each other for the first time in many years. The Privy Council gave a judgment against the city of Toronto and in favour of the Street Railway Co., while the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board has given a judgment against the City of Hamilton and in favour of the Street Railway Co. The municipal authorities in each town are now able to shed tears in unison. Of course, Col. Gibson and Mr. Hawkins are smiling.



Hon. F. C. Cochrane,
Minister of Lands, Forest and Mines for Ontario.