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THE PROHIBITION CONVENTION.

In the next number of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, we shall publish the portraits of three of the most prominent champions of the Prohibition Movement in Canada,

HON. MALCOLM CAMERON, HON. SENATOR VIDAL,

and

MR. GEO. W. ROSS, M. P.

We shall also present some views of the different sittings of the Convention in this City, as well as of the gathering in Victoria Hall.

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS

Montreal, Saturday, Sept. 25th, 1875.

OUR CHROMO.

In reply to frequent inquiries from our friends, by letter and otherwise, concerning the Chromo which we promised them in the course of the summer, we have to say that the work is progressing satisfactorily and will be ready for delivery at the latest, by Christmas. To those who may wonder at this delay we shall remark that it is not a mere colored print that we are preparing for them, but a real Chromo, a genuine work of art which, in both design and execution, will be worthy of a rich frame and a conspicuous place on the walls of any drawing room. To complete such a picture requires time, care and considerable outlay. The picture has already been two months in hand and is being proceeded with as expeditiously as a due regard for excellence of finish will warrant. Our friends may rely upon a Presentation Plate such as has never been surpassed in Canada.

We shall take this occasion to urge all our subscribers who are yet in arrears to settle their accounts as speedily as possible, offering as a further and final inducement, that every one who does so and pays a year's subscription in advance will be entitled to our beautiful Chromo. The offer is a rare one. Let all take advantage of it.

AID TO MANITOBA.

We learn from a correspondent at Winnipeg that the Government of the Dominion has determined to come to the relief of the sufferers in the Province of Manitoba from the devastations of the grasshoppers, by making an advance of \$60,000 to buy flour and pork and seed grain. That money or rather these provisions are not to be given in the form of eleemosynary aid; but as an advance to be repaid. The money, of course, is not voted; and Parliament must be asked to sanction the appropriation. We do not, however, see any difficulty in this. The case is clearly one of urgent necessity, and calls for what is technically called an "unforeseen expenditure." A portion of the loan will be made to the Mennonites who came last year; and they, before the grasshopper disaster came to them, did cheerfully repay to the Government the advance made to them to enable them to come to Canada. We have not a doubt that they will as cheerfully follow the same precedent of prompt payment in this case of what may be termed the grasshopper advance. The Metis are perhaps not so much accustomed to pay-

ment of dues to the Government. But what, in a matter of this kind, the Mennonites do, they will find it necessary to follow. Be this however, as it may, the duty of the Dominion Government, which owns and has to dispose of, all the lands in Manitoba and the North West, is clear. It could not hesitate to make such advance; the alternative being the suffering and perhaps the starvation of a large number of people, and throwing back, perhaps for years, the prosperity of a Province which it has the greatest interest to foster.

This proceeding of the Dominion Government is no doubt a consequence of the recent visit of the Hon. Mr. LETELLIER, the Minister of Agriculture and also of Immigration. He is represented to have expressed himself in the highest terms as respects the natural capabilities of the country. He found that the richness of its resources exceeded his expectations. The drawback is the grasshoppers. But the visitation of this pest only comes periodically, with a lapse of years between each one—that is with any seriousness. And the people do entertain hopes that with the progress of settlement, it may be overcome. Be this, however, as it may, the position of Manitoba, as respects the grasshopper is not worse, but even better, than the neighbouring and flourishing State of Minnesota.

The precedents, or as one of our Montreal statesmen would word it, the "ante-cedents," of the party now in power, would lead them to decry such action as the Ministry has now taken; while those of the present Opposition must lead them to support it. We support it because we believe it to be right.

THE IRON SHIPS.

When poor Captain BENNETT of the *Vicksburg*, a brave and accomplished officer, after his ship had struck and been perforated by the floating ice, cried out in the hearing of his passengers: "You need not mind the boats. I will take you in safety into Newfoundland!"—he was relying upon those "water tight compartments" formed by "Bulkheads" in the hull of the ship, which when first announced created so great an *écrit*. And the interest the public gave to the question was not without reason, for the little initiated in mechanics soon perceived that the world had got hold of a good principle, and one thoroughly worth studying and working out in practice. But these very Bulkheads were the cause of the ruin of the *Vicksburg*—passengers and crew and poor Captain BENNETT. Had they been reliable, in American parlance, or trustworthy, if our English friends prefer the term, they would certainly on that occasion have saved the ship and all on board. The filling of the after compartment when the ice had crushed the side in would have been the whole difficulty. But, as it was, the compartments being faulty, the water began steadily to rise, according to the distinct testimony of a surviving member of the crew, who gives the actual soundings in one compartment after another, going forward of the ship, until the whole ship was filled to the sinking point and all was lost. Plain as this fact is, the Court of Assessors at Liverpool could not see it, although perfectly able to throw all the blame upon the dead seaman. The problem involved is simple. If you will only make your compartments impervious—which will of course include shutting the doors close—and so rigid, from the general good structure of the vessel, that they will not budge perceptibly, when the shock comes upon the ship, she will keep floating long enough at any rate to afford time for escape. The proposition may not be abstract enough for some tastes, but it is valuable, and one with which we have just now great concern. There should, we submit, be an official test before the ship starts on every voyage both of this rigidity and imperviousness. Of course, it would be better—far better—that the hull should not be pierced at all, even within a safe compartment. Let our shipbuilding friends

show what arrangements of iron and wood will do for us here.

The water in which the vessel floats is already, to some extent, the test of the state of the outer hull, but the Bulkheads which are provided for emergency, do not get their proof of efficiency until the emergency is actually upon the ship—a most defective state of things—and one which our readers should calmly take into their consideration. The fact is evident that we want no more steamers with "egg-shell sides"—without attempting classification which we have not now the means of making, for this great Atlantic service,—that, indeed, we require quite other ships than those, whether brought from the Clyde or Tyne, or manufactured, with the exception of the engines, by our own people, so as to secure actually certified improvements.

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AND APPLIED SCIENCE.

Sir JOHN HAWKSHAW, at the Bristol meeting of this now venerable association, had a long and interesting tale to tell of the history, the progress and the triumphs of Engineering Skill in the old Mother Land. No doubt his hearers were warmed into much enthusiasm by the eminence of the speaker as the companion of the two Stephenson and Brunel, and other heroes of British invention and achievement. It is certainly a wonderful page of the general history, and not the less wonderful because altogether different from, and in some respects even exclusive of, the special merits of Greek and Roman civilization, which, however confused on the subject of the Godhead, never, in theory, made man and his best attributes give place to any branch of creative effort. But a benevolent tone was not absent from Sir JOHN's discourse. He was conscious that all these grand discoveries and inventions are in a general way subordinate to the advancement of human happiness, and the peace and prosperity of nations. War, he said, must be made subservient to progress, while not assuming in itself that war is in itself desirable, or to be otherwise than avoided where it can be done without. Of course, his address would have been nothing without statistics. Knowledge that comes by numbers is accumulated with a praiseworthy earnestness in the Mother Country. So English audiences will love to be told what a great number of miles they can travel and carry their families, without being destroyed in an accident. But essential knowledge is gained in other forms, and our brothers and friends across the Atlantic are perhaps less conscious of a real and valuable social principle which may be stated as that, as long as a single life can be preserved by the ingenuity of contrivance in the service of humanity, it is not beneath us to set that contrivance to work for the purpose of saving it. A few thousands of lives only are destroyed or injured in every year. If we could turn those thousands into hundreds, or tens, or units, by faithful study of the conditions, and practical enforcement of the true processes in our Railway organizations, should we not be right in doing so? And is not the cause of the public safety still more imperative, when some of those processes are both obvious and urgent? The Civil Law has surrounded the life of the citizen with all its safeguards. Negligence to pursue the right course to protect that life, if wilful, is justly visited with severe penalties. Never, till Transit companies absorbed a certain legislative power over modern countries were averages pleaded in excuse for carelessness of the individual life, except in the warlike movements of States—and Governments were always considered bound in honour to maintain the health and well-being of their soldiers, so far as was permitted. But Companies have assumed a new prerogative, and new motives of action. The precious human life, with all its claims and affections has often, in their rash and heedless systems, and anxiety for material results, been squandered like water. It would be difficult to see

to what useful conclusions optimist statements of the sort recited by Sir JOHN HAWKSHAW are intended to lead, or what right emotions are to be promoted by them. Perhaps these might be paraphrased by the forms: "We are a great people, living in the advanced age of the world, the tone of whose civilization we have a large share in giving the key to; and some of us are very clever and persistent persons. We have gone a long way ahead of most other nations in things that are useful and magnificent, and it is exceedingly difficult to see where we shall stop. It is a fast age that we find ourselves living in, and all things considered, there are few faster people than the progressive community we form a part of, &c., &c."

That, we have no doubt, is a most suitable tone for the annual gatherings of the British Association of Science, which deals, we believe, with moral as well as physical considerations; and to begin at the beginning of things, and to show how thoroughly physics are dependent on morals—if the converse proposition be equally true—the question might have been proposed in one of the quietest sections of that intelligent gathering, not as excluding human safety as affected by Railways and Manufactures, but certainly as deserving close attention:—"How is it that the construction of vessels propelled by steam, and serving to carry on the daily commerce of the world, does not come more frequently to be discussed in scientific caucuses, and in the press and in popular gatherings? And why have not the people afforded them the same means of comprehending the build of ships of commerce, as of ships of war?" We cannot but think this enquiry, followed as it should be still more practical studies, would be fully as productive of valuable social fruits as the most pictorial and exhaustive *résumé* of the achievements of this surprising age, unrestful, as it is, or believes itself to be, till everything has been regulated after the most intelligent as well as the most humane theories.

The concluding sentence of the paragraph on the Bridge over the Richelieu at Belœil in our last number, should have read "whatever the height of the Bridge, there is no need of a Drawbridge, with none but Barge traffic on the river. The Barges could droop their masts, as they have to do on the Thames at London." An important principle in the adjustment of streams of traffic would thus have been affirmed, for there is no more time and labour consumed in letting down the mast of the barge a few feet and raising it again by the windlass, than in moving and replacing a drawbridge, and by the former method the public security would not be endangered, nor a vast passenger and goods traffic hindered, as it is constantly by the existing plan. As our readers know, we have terrible records in more than one Province of the Dominion, to impress our minds with the need of a change. The breaking of a pin should not be allowed to hazard a hundred lives, as it can do now, if a judicious and simple regulation can prevent it. The question has an intimate bearing upon the safety and happiness of the whole travelling community, thus concerning our friends in Europe as fully as it does ourselves in Canada.

If it be said that this would be transferring the labour from the railway company to the crew of the barge, there is nothing in the objection, for the labour being on the average no greater than before, could be performed by the company's workmen if insisted upon.

The following is the creed put forth by the recent conference in Bonn, at which eight Old Catholics, twenty-one Catholics, twenty Anglicans, and about fifty Christians of other denominations took part:

In regard to the Holy Ghost, we accept the doctrine of John of Damascus as, in