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LONDON, MONDAY, JAN. 25.

THE DRAMA OF THE WIRELESS.

There is nothing in maritime history like the drama enacted before dawn on Saturday morning in the Atlantic Ocean, seventy miles off Nantucket Island.

In a dense fog, with only half a minute's warning, the Italian steamer Florida drove its steel bow into the side of the great White Star liner, the Republic, bound for the Mediterranean with 742 souls aboard.

Almost instantly from the mast of the Republic there shot through the darkness and the fog the invisible and mysterious current which carried the story of the calamity to the land, and to other ships plowing the Atlantic in all directions. Within a few minutes, five great ocean liners, the Baltic, the New York, the Furnessia, the Lucania and La Lorraine were speeding toward the wounded vessels.

The nearest of them was a hundred miles away when it caught the signal of distress from the air. All day and night the wireless kept whispering more and more of what was going on away out in the fog off Nantucket—fragments of news, shreds of fact, surmise, shrewd guesses—how the Florida buried its head in the starboard plates of the Republic; how the passengers scrambled aboard the Italian boat as best they could; how the Republic, terribly crushed, settled lower and lower in the water; how its captain and officers stayed on board; how the wireless operator glued himself to his key and sander, receiving and sending, sending and receiving, catching every tiny whisper of hope and encouragement that floated out of the fog; how the big liners raced up one by one, searching through the grey void for two troubled ships; and how finally the Baltic loomed alongside and took the passengers from the overloaded Florida. There is nothing in fiction, nothing in the literature of the sea, approaching this. The reality exceeds the scientific imaginings of a Jules Verne. Ten years ago such an achievement was undreamed of. Verily, we are living in a wonderful age.

BRITAIN'S UNEMPLOYED PROBLEM.

The royal commission, to which was submitted some time ago the problem of the unemployed in the United Kingdom, has completed its labors and rendered a report. The report goes into the question in all its bearings, and recommends as a partial solution that the Government undertake afforestation on a large scale—the planting of trees on ground now lying waste, which is not available for agriculture.

It is estimated that there are 9,000,000 acres which might be so treated—6,000,000 in Scotland, 2,500,000 in England and 500,000 in Ireland—which would eventually yield an income of \$37,000,000. Eighty years is the period named for the completion of the work, but it is claimed that after the fortieth year the forests would be self-supporting. To afforest 150,000 acres each year would, it is estimated, cost the country \$10,000,000, but the result would be to give temporary direct employment during the winter months to 15,000 men and indirect employment to nearly as many more.

Such a scheme would at best be only palliative. One of the chief causes of unemployment is the diversion of too many people from the cultivation of the soil to the manufacturing establishments of the cities and large towns, with the result that an undue large proportion of the population is adversely affected by every wave of industrial depression. Any solution to be permanent must provide for the revival of agriculture. Hundreds of thousands of acres of land are locked up in the parks of the aristocracy merely for the pleasure they afford their owners. Put under the plow these lands would afford employment and sustenance for scores of thousands of people, and would add greatly to the wealth of the country. Of course, the owners would resist any attempt to disturb them in the enjoyment of their hereditary possessions, but it would seem that until some means can be devised of compelling them to leave their holdings open to purchase by the people through the Government, as in Ireland, economic conditions in England and Scotland will show no lasting improvement.

JUSTICE CASSELS' REPORT.

The report of the royal commissioner, Mr. Justice Cassels, on the inquiry into the department of marine and fisheries, is a document that will be valuable in proportion to the degree in which Parliament acts upon it.

The most important feature is the recommendation that the patronage system be abolished in every branch of the public service. The system, he says, has been handed down from one administration to another since Confederation, but, in his opinion, it is absolutely wrong. "It apparently is based on the old maxim, 'To the victors belong the spoils,' utterly ignoring the fact that the money to be dispensed is money contributed by the people generally, and not the money of the political followers of the party at the time being in power."

It is gratifying to know that Justice Cassels finds nothing in the evidence to impugn the integrity of any cabinet minister, past or present. He points out that Mr. Brodeur has already taken action to remedy abuses, having eliminated the patronage list in his department—which the report describes as a long step in advance—and created an adequate system of purchasing supplies, thereby effecting a saving of about \$100,000 per year. The commissioner, however, severely rebukes a score of officials, high and low. He says the deputy minister of marine, Mr. Gourdeau, must be held accountable for failing to stop irregularities shown to have existed at Quebec, Halifax and St. John. He sternly censures the commissioner of lights, J. J. Fraser, for disobeying the minister's orders by continuing to purchase orders from a firm with which he had suspicious relations. Other officials are named who accepted sums of money, which plainly were bribes. The punishment of these men he leaves to the Government. "The chief remedy for the amelioration of the conditions I have sought to portray," adds Justice Cassels, "lies in an awakening of the public conscience. If the public generally could be brought to view with abhorrence graft and abuse of trust on the part of those administering the public moneys and property, the end of such abuses as have occurred in the past would be in sight." To which every good citizen will say, Amen.

Hats off to Marconi.

The smallpox hospital appears to have been as dangerous to patients as the smallpox.

The crew of the Republic behaved as became men whose forebears did "the Birkenhead drill."

Lord Cromer has become president of a men's league to oppose woman suffrage. He may find he has a harder job than re-making Egypt.

The end of Earl Gray's term as governor-general is approaching, and a motion to give him a second term would be carried unanimously in Canada.

The Conservative press has expressed great faith in Judge Cassels. Will it now accept his report and admit that the abuse of Mr. Brodeur was unjustified?

A meeting of suffragettes at Maldenhead, England, was stamped by a practical joker, who liberated half a dozen rats. In future any similar gathering may be broken up by the simple expedient of crying "Rats!"

The members of the civil service resident at Ottawa have been promised increases of salary. It is not so stated, but it is probable that the outside service will not be overlooked. There are departments in which there is no statutory increase, and in which men have been working for the same wages for years. The claims of the outside service are as urgent as those of the inside service, and the Government could not in fairness show favor to one alone. The reports of the civil service commission and of Justice Cassels are pleas for the better payment of public servants.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

[Woodstock Sentinel-Review.]
If we are going to have civil service reform let us have it in fact as well as in name. If it is argued that the Liberal party in its use of the patronage is but following the custom of both parties, the answer is that no party claiming to be a Reform party has a right to take refuge behind a bad custom, simply because it is a custom. The duty of a Reform party is to reform bad customs, not to perpetuate them.

IN DOUBT.

[Chicago Record-Herald.]
"Have you named the baby yet?"
"No. My wife's mother is undecided whether to name him in honor of her husband or her youngest son."

WHEN PROFIT CALLED.

[S. E. Kiser.]
"Where Duty calls me, I will go."
He proudly said, "and naught shall serve me from my course; if I may lead I shall be worthy; high or low, with dauntless soul I will proceed To give directions or to serve."

WORLD'S NAVAL COMPETITION.

[New York Sun.]
In the competition the longest purse and the best facilities for the rapid construction of big ships will win, provided the national defense requires them, and in the case of England there can be no doubt of that. This would be so, narrowing the argument to England and Germany, if

the competition began on exactly even terms. But as a matter of fact England already has a lead over Germany that is likely to be maintained for some time, if not increased. The Dreadnought has been in commission for a year or more, and her success cannot be challenged. The Bellerophon, of 13,000 tons, is under trial; the Terrible and Superb, of 10,000 tons, were launched on Aug. 24, 1907, and Nov. 7, 1907, respectively; the St. Vincent and Collingwood, of 10,500 tons, left the ways on Sept. 19, 1908, and Nov. 7, 1908, and the Vanguard and Foudroyant, also of 10,500 tons, are building. In warships of nearly five knots greater speed the Dreadnought class can attain 21 knots, and equipped with main batteries of eight 12-inch guns, England has the 17,500-ton armored cruisers Indomitable and Indefatigable in commission, and the Invincible, under trial, will soon join them.

UNJUSTLY SUSPECTED.

[Chicago News.]
Mrs. Newby—Fred, dear, I have done you a great injustice.
Mrs. Newby—In what way?
Mrs. Newby—Well, I suspected you without reason. I thought several of your friends that you go to the club with if you knew how to play poker, and every one of them thought a minute and said you didn't.

COME WEST, BLISS CARMAN.

[John Arbuthnot, in January Canada.]
Bliss Carman, you better come west; You say you're tired of the things you do, The streets you walk, and the songs you sing, And your soul's in need of a dry shampoo.

You've said that you ache for elbow room; For a look at the stars at least; You've said you're tired of the poppycock, And the pink tea affair of the east.

Come out where the plains go rolling west, From the lakes to the Rockies' peaks, Where the soul of the west land sings at dusk, And the voice of the prairie speaks.

Come out where there's song to be sung again, Where Youth and Today rejoice; You need the wine of the West in you—And the West, it needs a voice.

LIFE'S TENACITY.

[Buffalo Express.]
The extraordinary tenacity of human life never received more remarkable illustration than at Messina. A living man has been taken from the ruins 22 days after the earthquake occurred.

A GOOD GUESS.

[Puck.]
Teacher—What is the meaning of "eloquent," Harold?
Pupil—It's the way people are put to death in some states.

AN UBIQUITOUS TEAM.

[Toronto Star.]
Negotiations between Winnipeg and Dan Mann are off. Negotiations between Toronto and William Mackenzie, long first. Wherever you look this wonderful brace of men appears to be just round the corner.

AN AMERICAN AT GIBRALTAR.

[George Edward Woodberry.]
England, I stand on thy imperial ground, Not all a stranger; as thy bugles blow I feel within my blood old battles flow. The blood whose ancient fountains in these are found.

Still surging back against the Christian bound Wide Islam presses; well its people know Thy heights that watch them wandering below. I think that Licknow heard their gathering sound. I turn, and meet the cruel turbaned faces.

England, 'tis sweet to be so much thy son. I feel the conqueror in my blood and race; Last night Trafalgar awed me, and today Gibraltar awakened. Hark! they evening gun. Startles the desert over Africa!

Thou art the rock of empire, set mid-seas Between the East and West, that God has built; Advance thy Roman borders where thou wilt. While run thy armies true with His decree; Law, justice, liberty—great gifts are these.

Watch that they spread where English blood is spilt. Last, mixed and sullied with his country's guilt. The soldier's life stream flows, and Heaven displeased! Two swords there are—one naked, apt to smite.

Thy blade of war; and, battle-stories old, Rejoices in the sheath, and hides from light. American I am, would wars were done! Now westward, look, my country bids good-night— Peace to the world from ports without a gun!

COLBORNE CHOIR'S VISIT TO STRATFORD.

Members Had a Splendid Time on Friday Evening Last.

A unique excursion, composed of the Colborne Street choir, board, and friends, to the number of 33, took a special to Stratford, Friday evening, Jan. 22, to attend the closing campaign of the McCombe brothers, Irish evangelists.

Arriving at 6:30 p.m., they went direct to the Central Methodist Church, where a congregation of a thousand were already gathered. The Colborne Street choir of sixty voices, under the leadership of Mr. Geiger, assisted by Miss Jean Robb, Miss F. Eggleston, violinist, and Mr. Chris. Pink, entertained the audience for two hours, after which time the audience dispersed, and another congregation of 1,000, which were in waiting, quickly filled the church.

The programme was repeated, at the close of which the choir and Ladies' Aid of Stratford entertained the guests to a most sumptuous banquet. After a lengthy toast list and the singing of the "National Anthem," the London friends proceeded to the depot, where a special train was in waiting, arriving in London at 1:30 a.m., after a most pleasant and enjoyable evening.

There was considerable excitement at a fire at Southend the other morning. A large grocery shop in West Street, in the occupation of Mr. Geo. Hilton, was discovered to be on fire, and before the inmates could be aroused communication with the upper part of the house was cut off. Mr. Hilton saved his wife and family by ripping up blankets and making a line whereby they escaped from the bedroom windows.

FLOOD IN RIVER SWEEPS AWAY ICE

Sunday's Weather Was Unseasonable, But Nevertheless Very Welcome.

'Tis a long time since Londoners had the privilege of enjoying mild spring weather in January, but such was the case yesterday.

It was an ideal spring day, the thermometer at the local observatory registering as high as 60.5, which is phenomenal for this time of the year.

Despite the fact that the streets were literally covered with mud, many were out walking to take advantage of the warm sunshine and the spring atmosphere.

Shed Overcoats. Many of the sterner sex went without overcoats, and indeed, at noon this article of raiment was an embarrassment. Some of the more cautious, refrained from taking this risk, and arrived home after morning service in a state of perspiration.

River Breaks Up. The ice in the river has almost entirely disappeared, and the water rose to a height of 4 feet.

There was a barn struck by lightning at Stratford yesterday, which is extraordinary for January.

Local Weather. The registrations this morning at the local observatory were somewhat low. At 8 o'clock it was 33.5 above, while the night was 22.5.

The rise in the river at Springbank today is just three feet, a decrease of one foot compared with yesterday.



Hilda Spong Tonight. Miss Hilda Spong, the accomplished English actress, will present H. R. Durand's play, "A Man and His Mate," at the Grand Opera House this evening.

"A Man and His Mate" abounds in such powerful situations that she is called upon to give a great deal of emotion. Given a woman of refinement and culture, who feels the call of her mate, a man supposed to be a horse thief and a morose fiend, and see her rise to a point of his reclamation, and you have a story that appeals to an audience.

Marchesi Concert Tomorrow. Mr. Cyril Dwight-Edwards, who brings Madame Blanche Marchesi to the Grand Opera House for a song recital, has arranged the following programme:

PART I.
(a) Etude.....F. Chopin
(b) Berceuse.....F. Chopin
(c) En Feme de Valse.....G. Saint-Saens
Brahm Van Den Berg.

(a) Air de Lea.....Claude Debussy
(b) The Nightingale.....Alabieff
Madame Marchesi.

PART II.
(a) When Thou Art With Me.....J. S. Bach
(b) Violette.....A. Scarlatti
(c) Have You Seen My White Lily Grow? (629).....Anonymous
(d) Nymphs and Shepherds.....H. Purcell
(e) The Lass with the Delicate Air.....Dr. Arne
Madame Marchesi.

PART III.
(a) Romance.....R. Schumann
(b) The Waves.....M. Moszkowski
(c) A Midsummer Night's Dream (paraphrase).....Liszt
Brahm Van Den Berg.

PART IV.
(a) Young Distraction.....Henschel
(b) Prentiss Noveau.....Vidal
(c) Prologue (Pavane).....Leon Cavallo
Mr. Cyril Dwight-Edwards.

PART V.
(a) Why So Pale are the Roses?.....L. Schumann
(b) Fant and Fainter is My Slumber.....Brahms
(c) Soft-Footed Snow.....Sigurd Lie
(d) Nobody Saw It.....Carl Lova
(e) The Elf King.....Schubert
Madame Marchesi.

(a) Bird Song.....Lia Lehmann
(b) The Wood Pigeon, the Yellowhammer, the Robin, the Cuckoo.....Bemberg
(c) L'Ete.....Clamade
Madame Blanche Marchesi.

San Toy Pleased. San Toy, which was repeated at the Grand Saturday, matinee and evening, by the Imperial Opera Company, was greatly enjoyed by the large audiences that turned out to witness the performance.

The catchy music of this tuneful opera, together with the work of the capable principals, makes its usual hit with Londoners.

TWO CLASSES OF CHRISTIANS

Sermon by Rev. Walter Moffatt in Chalmers Church on Sunday.

At Chalmers Church yesterday morning Rev. Walter Moffatt took as his subject "Going Forward."

"There are two classes of Christians in life," he said, "those who are merely satisfied with becoming Christians and those who are not only Christians, but aspire to the highest ideals. Perfection is the ideal all should aim at, but it cannot be attained in this life but in the maturity of the hereafter." If a man is to grow in grace he must know God's truth and when he grows in knowledge he grows in character.

CHANCELLOR'S CRISIS

Von Buelow's Tax Proposal Not Liked By Reichstag.

Berlin, Jan. 24.—A new chancellor crisis is threatened. If it has not already begun, owing to the dissatisfaction among the Government supporters over the taxation proposals to make the budget deficit.

Chancellor Von Buelow, addressing the Prussian Diet Tuesday, insisted upon the necessity for increasing the legacy duties. This immediately aroused the opposition of the so-called patriotic parties, which form the "block" upon which the administration relies.

A REVIEW OF BUILDING IN CANADA DURING 1908 FIGURES FOR LONDON AND THE DIFFERENT CITIES

Canadian Publication Makes Comparisons Which Are of Much Interest to Londoners—Review on the Whole Is Very Satisfactory to Canadians in General—Phenomenal Growth in Some Districts Is Noted.

A review of the building operations for both the month of December and the year 1908 shows a much more wholesome and satisfactory condition throughout Canada than even the most sanguine had anticipated. Comparative figures as supplied "Construction" from fifteen representative cities, and which can be accepted as a reliable basis for estimating the amount of work carried on in various sections of the Dominion, while placing the loss for the year at 14.03 per cent, records a substantial gain in ten cities submitting comparative figures for December, over the corresponding month of 1907.

In view of the unprecedented activity of the preceding year, and considering the uncertain prospects early in the season, when, owing to the depressed condition of the money market, much proposed work was either abandoned or laid over, these figures speak volumes for the building progress of Canada, and had Kingston and London supplied figures for 1907, to permit of ascertaining their relative gains, the loss per cent on the year, as given, would have been materially reduced, as both of these places prospered to an unusual degree in the past twelve months.

STRAITFORD. The largest decrease noted for the year's work is in the case of Stratford, where the falling off amounted to 78.71 per cent, and the next largest decrease that of Brantford, which is given as 38.35 per cent. Toronto, while suffering a decrease of 12.39 per cent, the smallest loss recorded, still bears the palm for the greatest volume of business, having issued permits for new buildings for \$12,447,467, as against \$24,225,800, for the year 1907.

On the other hand, the phenomenal growth of Fort William is strikingly reflected in a gain of 95.09 per cent, which places this city at the head of the list for increased building operations during the year. Not only has this city virtually doubled her total, but the amount of work in prospect at the present time indicates that 1909 will see another record-breaking total.

Halifax has also finished the year with a substantial total, having an increase of 25.80 per cent, to her credit, while the only other two cities reporting, which have exceeded their figures for 1907, are Edmonton and Vancouver, the gain in each case being 11.82 per cent, and 5.83 per cent, respectively.

Montreal, despite the favorable condition prevalent during the latter part of the summer and throughout the fall, was unable to overcome the slump experienced earlier in the season, and records a loss on the year of 29.71 per cent, while Victoria fell short of equalling the preceding year's figures by only 12.66 per cent.

It is, however, in a recapitulation of statistics for the month of December that we find the most gratifying results as regards the present building situation throughout the country, and more especially so in view of the fact that they not only indicated that business confidence in general has been fully restored, but because they point out in an unmistakable manner the vast amount of work that is being carried on in the very midst of winter, when everything in the building line is supposed to be at its lowest ebb.

ONLY TWO SUFFER LOSSES. Of the ten cities supplying comparative figures, only two suffer losses, Regina and Vancouver, the decreases in each case being 50.67 and 60.28 per cent respectively. Vancouver, however, it will be noted, is ahead on the year's work, and the figures in general show the west to be in a most flourishing condition, several of the places having more than doubled and trebled the amount of work done in the same period of 1907.

Calgary's phenomenal gain of 515.61 per cent places her in the premier position, with Victoria a close second, with an increase of 482.81 per cent in her favor. Winnipeg also registers a handsome advance of 140.25 per cent, while Edmonton and Fort William are ahead of the month of December, 1907, by 11.55 per cent, and 5.92 per cent in the order named.

In the eastern portion of Canada, Halifax still continues to add to the monthly increases made throughout the summer and fall, by recording a gain of 132.98 per cent, while the increase shown by Montreal's figures, that of 141.37 per cent, make plain that the building condition in the Canadian metropolises is not only satisfactory, but most encouraging.

TORONTO. Toronto also shows a healthy increase of 16.47 per cent for the month, and there is every assurance that operations in the building line in that city, during the coming year, will be carried on most actively. The monthly and yearly report of St. John, N. B., which was received too late to be inserted in the following table, while showing a decrease of 41.21 per cent for the year, and a loss for December of 88.46 per cent, states the outlook as being "fair."

Reports from the other cities, as regards future prospects, and which strongly preface a record-breaking year, are: Brantford, "Cannot say with any degree of assurance," Calgary, "Very promising," Edmonton, "Look for a very brisk season in the spring," Fort William, "Very bright and promising," Kingston, "Fair," London, "Very fine," Montreal, "Building operations are expected to open up very good in the spring," Regina, "Better than for year just passed," Vancouver, "Were never better; looking for an exceptionally good year," Winnipeg, "Bright."

	No. of Permits for December, 1908.	No. of Permits for December, 1907.	Total Cost of Buildings for December, 1908.	Total Cost of Buildings for December, 1907.	Permits for Year 1908.	Permits for Year 1907.	Total Cost of Buildings for Year 1908.	Total Cost of Buildings for Year 1907.	Percentage Increase or Decrease.
Brantford, Ont.	3	0	1,100	0	396	381	\$28,835	\$59,945	42.15
Brantford, Man.	1	0	1,100	0	137	254	291,364	704,290	58.25
Calgary, Alta.	10	0	1,100	0	42	60	\$28,835	1,745,229	51.47
Edmonton, Alta.	35	24	45,255	40,455	689	319	2,549,847	2,380,310	11.82
Fort William, Ont.	5	0	8,100	0	319	313	1,590,732	800,000	95.09
Halifax, N. S.	32	22	33,550	14,400	128	496	745,123	356,486	25.80
Kingston, Ont.	2	0	1,100	0	295	295	170,500	170,500	0
London, Ont.	21	0	41,570	0	242	181	801,170	0	0
Montreal, Que.	51	69	601,000	295,120	1,817	1,984	5,062,236	8,405,229	39.77
Regina, Sask.	7	17	1,485	0	489	539	636,048	1,754,345	56.15
Stratford, Ont.	1	0	1,100	0	77	118	126,545	641,485	78.71
Toronto, Ont.	14	82	707,000	657,015	16,47	1,778	12,447,467	14,476,300	12.50
Vancouver, B. C.	14	82	28,724	28,724	1,689	1,778	5,809,925	5,522,744	5.83
Victoria, B. C.	40	19	136,255	23,720	482.81	9	1,230,250	1,230,250	0
Winnipeg, Man.	31	41	89,000	37,690	1,546	1,239	5,906,000	5,369,550	12.83
Totals	407	295	\$2,015,922	\$1,719,874	15.04	8,650	\$28,075,293	\$44,408,449	14.03

the Reichstag and embracing the Conservatives, Agrarians, National Liberals and some other factions. The hottest antagonism thus far comes from the Conservatives and Agrarians, who are raising the deprecatory cry of class legislation. At an important meeting at Dantzig attended by prominent Conservatives, there was the plainest speaking against the chancellor, Herr Von Oldenburg, one of the leaders, was loudly applauded for declaring that threats of the ministerial benches were unavailing. Even a threat of resignation by the chancellor would not move them. The legacy duties would bear unfairly on the members of their party. They must insist that the country's burden be borne by the whole community proportionately to the ability of each.

On the proposal of the chairman it was resolved not to send the customary telegram of allegiance to the chancellor because his policy was contrary to Conservative principles.

ONE TELESCOPE FOR WHOLE SKY

Astronomers Start to South America to Map Heavens.

New York, Jan. 24.—Prof. Lewis Boss, director of the Dudley observatory, with a staff of five assistant astronomers, sailed from New York today on the steamer Verdi for the Argentine republic, where an observatory has been established by him at San Luis, in the interior, to observe the positions of the far southern stars not visible from high northern latitudes.

The project is supported by the Carnegie Institute of Washington and the present expedition is taking along the instruments of precision necessary for the equipment of the new observatory in the southern hemisphere.

The ultimate purpose of this undertaking, said Prof. Boss before sailing, "is to produce a catalogue of precisely determined positions and motions of about 25,000 of the principal stars, distributed over the entire sky from the northern to the southern pole. All the stars visible to unaided vision are included in this programme together with many others."

"This work, if completed, will be the first of its kind; but its really unique feature is the employment in observation of one and the same telescope, which is the transit circle of

the Dudley observatory, which has already been employed on this undertaking in Albany and is now on its way to San Luis to be similarly used there. Technical advantages of great importance must arise in the measurements made in this way."

HAPPENINGS IN BRITISH ISLES