

tion of law. Settlers are pouring in—some of them from Europe, others from the older parts of Canada. The Pacific Railway project has begun to take a practical shape. Great progress has been made in the preliminary surveys, and works of construction have been begun at the point we have ourselves indicated as desirable, viz., from the centre of Red River; the line thence southward to the American frontier, is to be first constructed. This, when finished, will furnish the readiest access to the territory, and though a portion of it is through a foreign country, that is a small matter in those times of constant and friendly intercourse. If the country is peopled it will matter very little how the people got there. But the railway will be pushed east as well as south, and before long we may expect to see a good route by Lake Superior entirely through our own territory. Steamboats now ply on its waters to within four hundred miles of the Red River, and when this portion of the railway is completed the journey in summer will be as easy as it will be romantic and pleasant. The eastern portion of the route, and especially that bordering on the North Shore of Lake Superior and Lake Huron, must be left to a future day. But the road must be pushed westward to open up the great prairie regions of the North-West, and make a communication as soon as possible with British Columbia. When this route is established it is difficult to imagine what the future of Canada may become.

The legislative business of all our Parliaments has been pushed quietly on during the last year. Constitutional questions having been settled; the great point now is to have wise and economical administration. The Ontario Legislature is largely composed of practical men who have just closed a useful period of legislation and been dissolved. The affairs of that Province still continue to be generally in a flourishing condition. The revenue is in advance of the expenditure. A large number of immigrants have settled in the Province during the year; some of them, however, it should be said, not being of the right kind,—and these, instead of being a gain, are a loss. It is said that the number

of tramps and loafers is increasing largely in the Western districts of the country. This, if the case, is a very serious business indeed. It may partly be accounted for by the large number of men who have been thrown out of employment since the panic in the United States. But some of them are, doubtless, immigrants who have been assisted to come out. There is always a danger in giving such assistance, for there are thousands in all the large towns of England who have been shiftless and idle for years, and, having contracted habits of roving and restlessness, are glad enough of the chance of coming out to a new country. They would never come if they had to find the money themselves. But assisted passages and bonuses help them over the difficulty, and so we have them here, not at all improved by the passage across the ocean. All their old shiftless ways cling to them; they cannot adapt themselves to new circumstances; they are still idle, and they sink down in the winter season into a sort of semi-pauperism. Our Emigration Agents in England, whether for the Dominion or for the separate Provinces, need to be specially on their guard against sending us such incongruous material as this.

The Legislature of Quebec has been disturbed by the scandal arising out of a discreditable land transaction of one of its members. This is now being enquired into, but the public has long made up its mind as to the real bearings of the case. Such things cannot be endured in these days, and the Ministry implicated in them must pay the penalty of wrong doing.

It is a question whether some reform of the criminal law is not needed in view of the extraordinary development of crime in these times. Never were criminals so daring, and never did they fly at such high game. In the little town of Paris, Ontario, a gang broke into the residence of a bank manager, gagged and bound him, and took the keys of the safe. Only by the accident of leaving one of the children untouched were their plans frustrated. Shortly afterwards the express van of a Great Western train was entered, the men in charge bound, and all the money and securities stolen. The plunder amounted to about \$40,000.