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New Marine Signal.

The Canadian Minister of Marine, with Mr. Hugh A. Allan and Mr. Andrew A. Allen, have lately been in Boston examining and testing a new electrical signal system for preventing collisions. By this system two vessels approaching each other are warned of each other's approach, and a similar communication takes place between a vessel and a harbor which it is nearing. The device is said to work something after the fashion of a telephone. A light ship is equipped with a bell below the water line, and waves of sound travel through the water to the ship which is fitted with a receiver and thus she is informed of her approach to the harbor. By similar means two vessels are notified of each other's approach. The mechanism employed is the secret of the inventor. Hon. Mr. Prefontaine and the Messrs. Allen are said to have been favorably impressed with the invention, and the advisability of having it installed in the St. Lawrence will be considered. If the invention should fulfil expectations, it would greatly lessen the liability to accidents and would lower insurance rates. If the invention can also be made to do the work of the diurnal fog horn it would afford reason for gratitude to the dwellers in many sea port towns.

The Tent

The New York *Outlook* alludes to an experiment which has been tried for the last two years in New York with reference to the treatment of tuberculosis in tents, and which has been found of great value in its application to the insane who are suffering from the double scourge of insanity and consumption. "While rejoicing at the success that has been reached in dealing with the classes treated by the city of New York," say the *Outlook*, "one may agree with Dr. Pryor that it is even more important to have the best treatment for the young men and women of sound minds and honorable ambitions who are suffering from incipient tuberculosis. The hospital where this will be attempted on a small scale will be ready to begin with one hundred and fifty patients in another year perhaps. With 25,000 persons in the terrible grip of tuberculosis in the Manhattan Borough of New York alone, and 60,000 in the whole State, this seems a pitiable small hospital at first sight. But stress is to be laid on taking incipient cases, and if the results are what are now anticipated, the Ray Brook Institution will be but the forerunner of similar places, so that we may perhaps look forward to the good time prophesied when tuberculosis will be known only in the medical books of a past century."

An Important Concession.

It is stated on the authority of Sir Frederick Borden, Minister of Militia, that the Imperial Government has assented to the proposal that Canada may, if she so chooses, appoint a Canadian to take command of the militia of the Dominion. The Minister of Militia went to England a few weeks ago to discuss with the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for War the provisions of the bill to amend the Militia Act, which was introduced into the Canadian House of Commons at the recent session. As the law now stands, none but an officer of the Imperial Army can be appointed to the command of the Canadian militia. The view of the Government that this limitation might with advantage be removed is probably pretty generally endorsed by the people of the Dominion. It is felt that there would be no necessary loss in respect to efficiency, while there would be a gain on the score of smoothness of administration, if a Canadian officer, thoroughly in touch with the conditions and sentiments of the country, were in charge of the militia. The consent of the Imperial Government to this provision of the militia bill may accordingly be expected to give general satisfaction.

British Settlers for Canada.

According to reports, there is a prospect of Canada receiving a valuable class of immigrants next year from some of the rural districts of England. It is said that a large number of farmers will leave Yorkshire in April for Manitoba. Another Yorkshire party will follow shortly after, and others will leave Wiltshire, Lancashire and various Scottish centres for different parts of Canada. The parties

comprise, in addition to agriculturists, mechanics and artisans who are unable to find work in Britain or who are tempted by better wages in Canada. Most of the emigrants will go out under the auspices of the Canadian Government emigration officer. The emigration from Britain to Canada last year was 60,000 out of a total emigration from the country of 250,000. The *London Express* referring to the Yorkshire movement says: "They are the pick of our people; they will have the pangs of homesickness but their children will have the love of England mixed with bitter hatred of English history and politics."

A Railway

A strange and irremediable disaster is reported to have befallen a new Russian line of railroad known as the Orenburg-Tashkent Railway. This line, if completed would, it is said, materially shorten the distance and lessen the difficulties of transporting troops to the Afghan frontier and the Pamirs, and cut down the railway line between the heart of Russia and the Chinese frontier by 2,000 miles. According to reports which a *London Times* correspondent characterizes as apparently reliable, the northern half of this railway has been submerged by a newly formed lake. The lake is said to be thirty miles wide and fifty-six feet deep. Such an event, if it had occurred in ancient days, might probably be attributed to divine interposition with a view to checking the advance of a great and ambitious nation. The formation of the lake is said to be due to the overflow of the Syr Darta, or perhaps to one of those displacements common to Central Asian rivers, especially in the great depressions of the Ural-Caspian basin. It is also said that the road runs for 300 miles through a zone subject to inundations. The Russian Government was warned two years ago of the disaster which threatened on account of the formation of the country through which the projected road was to run. The *Nevsk Vremya* of St. Petersburg severely criticizes the ministry for not profiting by this advice and says the blunder has already caused a loss of 200,000,000 roubles.

Halifax School

The annual public meeting of the Halifax School for the Blind was held last week. The meeting was largely attended and, according to the reports of the Board of Managers, the Treasurer and the Superintendent, the school appears to be in a flourishing condition and is continuing with most praiseworthy success the excellent work which for many years it has been doing. The Directors' report speaks in the highest terms of the work of the Superintendent, Dr. C. F. Fraser, under whose supervision the school "has been brought to a state of efficiency unsurpassed by any other institution for the blind on this Continent or perhaps in the world." In reference to the new building the report says:

Our new school building which is so much required will be ready for occupancy early in the new year. It is a substantial brick structure one hundred and thirty feet in length by seventy-one in breadth, and contains four storeys, including the basement. The building is faced with pressed brick and trimmed with free-stone. It presents a handsome appearance, and is a fine addition to the property of the School. The support that has been given to us by the Legislature of Nova Scotia, and by the friends of the blind, in carrying out this work has been most timely, and has enabled us to make a great step forward in the education of the blind.

The Superintendent reports that 21 persons have entered the school during the year and 18 have graduated. The present registered attendance is 124. Of these 71 are boys, 47 girls, and 6 adults. Of those in attendance 77 are from Nova Scotia, 28 from New Brunswick, 8 from P. E. Island and 11 from Newfoundland. Among those who have gone out from the school during the past year two young ladies have graduated in vocal music and another has received a certificate as a competent masseuse. Two gentlemen have received first class certificates as music teachers and as pianoforte tuners. Another has received a certificate as a music teacher and has been given an appointment in the school. Another has graduated from the literary department and another has graduated from the workshop as a brushmaker, and is successfully engaged in the business in his own town. The new building will greatly facilitate the work of the school and will give scope for the carrying into effect of many contemplated improvements in the literary, musical and industrial departments.

Premier Combes'

School Bill.

The French Premier, M. Combes, has introduced in the Chamber of Deputies a measure, the purpose of which is to abrogate the existing legislation permitting teaching in the schools by the authority of religious orders. The bill will apply to those orders which are now actually authorized by law to teach, as well as to others. It provides for the dissolution, accompanied by the sequestration of the property, of such congregations as exist solely for the purpose of teaching, and for the partial sequestration of the property of those congregations which, in addition to teaching, also conduct hospitals for the indigent. Five years are allowed for the carrying out of the proposed law, the adoption of which will entail the closing of 1,299 schools for boys, 2,195 school buildings where girls are taught and all the schools conducted by the Christian Brothers. The bill also provides for the enlargement of the public schools conducted by the State. It is estimated that the completion of the Premier's plans will cost the State \$5,000,000.

The Maritime

Winter Fair.

The Winter Fair held at Amherst last week appears, from all reports to have been the most successful of any yet held under the auspices of the association. While the exhibits of live stock were not more numerous than last year, the quality of the animals exhibited was distinctly superior. In addition to the stock exhibited, which included neat cattle, swine and sheep, there were this year exhibits of fruit and of honey. The exhibition of stock and other products is however understood to be a secondary object, the main purpose of the fair being educational. Addresses were given by a number of gentlemen qualified to speak with authority in respect to the conditions essential to successful stock raising and other addresses bearing more generally upon the interests of agriculture. During the progress of the fair and at stated hours, cattle on exhibition were lead into the ring to be judged, and the judges—experts in their lines—pointed out the good qualities of the prize-winning animals and described the characteristics which should be sought by the breeder in order to the highest success in stock raising. Besides these lectures from the living text, there were other addresses of a more formal character. On Tuesday evening there was a banquet, presided over by Mr. E. B. Elderkin, president of the association, and followed by a public meeting which was addressed by a number of gentlemen who spoke upon topics related to the objects of the fair. Among those who delivered addresses during the progress of the fair may be mentioned Prof. Anderson of Rugby, Ontario, one of the judges in the live stock department, Hon. John Bryden of Ontario, Dr. Mills of the Guelph agricultural College, J. H. Grisdale and A. P. Kethen of Ottawa, F. C. Hare, Prof. Andrews of Mount Allison College and Mr. W. A. McKinnon of the Fruit Division, Ottawa. Among the most interesting features of the fair were the lectures of Prof. Anderson in connection with the judging of cattle. All the addresses however were of an instructive character and the educational value of the fair as a whole cannot but have been very considerable. In agriculture, as in every other industry, success depends largely upon adoption and intelligent employment of the best methods, and in these days of keener competition this is especially true. For the farmer who brings to his calling industry and to his industry adds knowledge and an intelligent adaptation of the best available means to the desired end, there is, doubtless, a hopeful outlook in the Maritime Provinces.

Port Simpson.

Lord Dundonald, commanding General of the military forces in Canada, has lately visited Port Simpson with the two islands, Sitklan and Kanughnut, allotted to the United States by the Alaskan boundary commission, commanded the entrance to the port, so that it could be shut up at the will of the United States Government. Lord Dundonald's inspection is said to have convinced him that this report was not well founded, these low-lying islands being valueless for military purposes, since Wales Island, which is British, gives complete control of all parts of them.

Responding to the "Army and Navy" toast at a banquet at the Victoria Club, Vancouver, Lord Dundonald said that he found Bishop Ridley quite correct as to the commanding position of Wales Island, from whose fortress-like heights it would be possible to rain shot and shell on anything within an eight-mile radius, although the smoke of fish-curing plants would be more in evidence there in the future than the cloud of noisy guns. As for the neighboring islands given the United States by the Alaska boundary award, his Lordship added: "We need be under no apprehension that any guns ever likely to be made and used from these two islands will shut up Port Simpson, or prevent its use as a port, if it is desired so to use it. The only power that can shut up Port Simpson in time of war will be the power that commands Dixon entrance and all other sea approaches to it," indicating that in this regard the naval power of Britain may be fully relied upon.