

## THE PHILOSOPHER.

the nation ought to be grateful. It can certainly not be regarded as a thing conducive to the self-respect of the honorable gentlemen in Parliament. There is another rather more serious institution of somewhat the same kind, which, let us hope, will before long be relegated into oblivion, in the wake of the Parliamentary trunk. This is the mileage allowance, which persists in spite of the fact that the railway companies are compelled, by legislation passed a few years ago, to carry the legislators of both Houses to and from Ottawa free. It may, perhaps, be argued that there is to be advanced in justification of it, the fact that the member of Parliament who goes to Ottawa from, say, Vancouver is entitled to more remuneration than the member whose home and business are in Ottawa or in Montreal, or Toronto. But there can be no justification of it in its present form. It is a thing as unjustifiable as the Parliamentary trunk.

## THE CANADIAN COINAGE.

An Indianapolis newspaper has made the "surprising and significant" discovery that the only gold coinage in Canada is that of the United States, and also that gold from the Yukon and other Canadian gold-producing regions can only be disposed of by sending it to the United States mints. As a matter of fact, the British sovereign, according to the Currency Act, is the standard of value in the Canadian currency system, although as a matter of convenience the gold of the United States passes current in this country as legal tender, Canada and the United States having the decimal system of dollars and cents in common, to which system the British pounds, shillings and pence are not readily adjustable in everyday use. The sovereign, though it is the standard of value in our system, is practically not in circulation in this country at all. The Indianapolis newspaper is incorrect in stating that Canadian gold has to be sent to the United States mints to be coined. Anyone can take gold in any quantity to the Canadian mint and have it coined, at a merely nominal cost, into British sovereigns, identical with the British mould except for the small "C," which indicates the coins as of Canadian minting. In a short time Canadian gold pieces will be turned out from the Canadian mint, and as soon as these are available for all Canada, they will naturally supersede the United States gold coins.

## SCOTCH MARRIAGE LAW.

The report, which was widely circulated in the newspapers, that Abbotsford, the famous residence of Sir Walter Scott, had been bought by Frank J. Gould, of New York, has turned out to be untrue. The truth is that Mr. Gould has leased Abbotsford, which he is now occupying with his newly-married bride, who is his second wife, his first adventure in matrimony having ended in divorce. He and the present Mrs. Gould took advantage of a peculiar feature of the form of marriage of Scotland, which has for more than a century furnished material for the satirist in literature and for the playwright seeking striking surprises for his plot. For example, Sir W. S. Gilbert—he of the famous partnership with Sir Arthur Sullivan in the production of tuncful and witty operas—makes the whole story of his play "Engaged" hinge upon the complications resulting from a marriage that took place on the border between England and Scotland. Nor have the satirists and comedy writers stretched the interpretation of the old Scottish marriage law at all. Here is the synopsis of it in the Encyclopedia Britannica: "A marriage may be constituted by declarations made by the man and the woman that they 'presently do take each other for husband and wife.' These declarations 'may be emitted on any day, at any time, and without the presence of witnesses,' and either by writing, or orally, or by signs, and in any form which is clearly expressive of intention. Such a marriage is as effectual to all intents and purposes as a public marriage. The children of it would be legitimate, and the parties to it would have all the rights in the property of each other given by the law of Scotland to husband and wife." It appears that at the Gould marriage, under a relatively modern procedure, the sheriff and two other witnesses were present.

## THE APPEAL TO CAESAR.

Could anything illustrate with more striking picturesqueness and force the contrast between the conditions of life on this continent and the conditions in regions of the continent of Europe from which many immigrants come to this country, than the account given by the Vienna correspondent of the London Times, of an incident which happened while the Austrian Emperor was returning one morning recently from Schonbrunn to his palace in Vienna? Six peasants, dressed in Slav costume, were awaiting him, kneeling in the roadway, and holding up their

hands to him in supplication. When the Emperor's carriage approached one of them endeavored to throw a petition into it. The men were arrested. They proved to be the representatives of some 50,000 peasants living on the frontier of Croatia, descended from the military colonists who were settled there long ago to form a barrier against Servian raids. When, some forty years ago, that borderland was united with Croatia, the inhabitants were promised the ownership of the soil they had occupied on a sort of feudal tenure, on the payment of a number of instalments of purchase money. The payments were completed by the peasants many years ago, but the big landlords and the local authorities retained the ownership of the land, and the peasants had recourse to law. In 1908, the highest Hungarian court decided in the peasants' favor, but the peasants had been unable to get the administrative authorities to carry out the judgment. Hence their resort to the primitive method of sending representatives to waylay the Emperor near his chief palace in the capital of the empire, attended by a glittering mounted escort. Is it possible for a person born on this continent to realize what it means to a peasant who has grown up under such a system on the continent of Europe, to find himself on a homestead of his own here in Western Canada? And do not the thoughts suggested by this question prompt reflections in regard to the serious problems presented to the mind of every thoughtful Canadian citizen in connection with the assimilation of the foreign-born settlers and the development of the Canadian citizenship of the years to come?

## A TARIFF LESSON FROM RUSSIA.

In the development of a policy of tariff protection, Russia has encountered the inevitable conflict between the interests of the protected and those of the people at whose expense that protection is provided. The contending forces have made an issue of the duties on agricultural implements, the manufacturers wanting the tariff maintained at a high rate, and the farming interests—which, in Russia, are concentrated by reason of the existence of a wealthy class of owners of great areas of land—opposing that demand. The old delusion about the foreigner paying the duty, which has lived longer and shown more vitality in its old age in the United States than anywhere else, has not been brought into the controversy. It is perfectly plain and manifest to the landed interests that no duty on agricultural implements would be paid by anyone under the proposals of the manufacturers—that is, no duty, as such. The chief taxation would be paid, not into the Government's treasury, but into the pockets of the manufacturers, whose idea is, of course, to take advantage of the prohibitive duty by keeping their prices up to the limit made possible by the tariff, the purchasers not paying duty on imported implements, for there would be no implements imported, but paying "protection" to the Russian manufacturers. Of course, there has figured in the controversy the familiar old story about the increased profits enabling the manufacturers to pay more wages to their employees, and enabling them also to go into business on a larger scale, thus creating a home market for the farmers' produce. This well-worn protectionist version of the myth of the inhabitants of the South Sea islands who all made comfortable livings by taking in one another's washing, does not appeal to the landed interests in Russia. In no other country in the world, probably, does the simplicity of the social organization make the hollowness of that favorite argument of the protectionists more obvious. It is quite apparent to the land owners in Russia that the increased price means the lessening of the capacity of the farmers to buy, which means the lessening of the demand for workmen to manufacture implements from increasing, as it must, under a system more equitable all round. This feature of a protective system is often obscured by complex industrial conditions. Where there are idle men seeking employment it often gives the advocates of protectionism ground for the plausible assumption that difficulties imposed by high tariff legislation upon the satisfaction of wants will not only make work, but makes wages to pay for it. It is argued that goods can be excluded from the country and various industries put to loss and inconvenience—more particularly, of course, the agricultural industry, upon whose back in every land that has a high tariff, is loaded the main share of the burden—without lessening the demand for labor. Where, as in Russia, the simple organization of industry and commerce prevents the growth of confusing theories, the fallacies of this phase of protectionist logic are detected. And where the agricultural interests are organized and alive to their rights, the fight will go on vigorously against the imposition of burdens and restrictions on agriculture, the basic industry, for the unjust benefit and advantage of other interests.

## THE INCREASED COSTLINESS OF FURS.

The price of furs has advanced extraordinarily in recent years. A good silver fox skin now brings from £150 to £200 in London. The result of the increasing demand for furs, and the steadily decreasing supply, is seen in the ingenuity with which furriers utilize the skins of the muskrat and the skunk to imitate more expensive furs. A writer in the Canadian Gazette, of London, notes the large quantities of furs which the Hudson's Bay Company exports, and enumerates, among the rest, "the muskrat, very cleverly sheared to half the length of the fur, and then dyed to the color of sealskin." In this form it is very much used for long coats, which have the appearance of sealskin, and are half the weight. The skin of the skunk is "used in its natural dark brown color for stoles, muffins and trimmings." The writer omits to state that it is always sold under another name, but does make note of the art of "making artificial silver fox by inserting white badger hairs into the fur of the red fox dyed smoky brown." The buyer of some furs nowadays may not unreasonably be assailed by the thought that he is purchasing his own lamented tabby cat made over into something else.

## HOLDING LIFE CHEAP.

Dr. Andrew D. White, formerly President of Cornell University, and later United States Ambassador at Berlin, says: "It is safer in the United States to kill a man than to kill a deer out of season." There is a close season for deer, but none for men. There are many causes for the cheapness with which life is regarded in parts of the United States, and we have need to be careful that some of them do not produce similar results in Canada. One cause lies in the fact that in a country that is being filled up with immigrants of diverse nationalities, there is not always to be found that sense of responsibility felt by each and every person for every other person that is felt in old and settled communities. Another cause is the sensational treatment of crime and criminals by newspapers, surrounding murder with a sort of romance. It is one of the things that we have just reason to be proud of in Canada, that under our law and the procedure of our courts, crime meets with just punishment more certainly and speedily than in the United States; and that fact, in itself has done much to prevent the sensational exploitation of murderers by Canadian newspapers. Another cause of the frequency of murders in the United States is the practice of going armed. It is necessary in this country, as it is in the United States, that more effective steps be taken to prevent the carrying of revolvers. Murderous weapons are altogether too easily procurable. Their sale should be surrounded by at least some of the safeguards which are considered necessary in the case of deadly poisons.

## EXIT THE PARLIAMENTARY TRUNK.

Who can say that the spirit of progress does not make itself felt at Ottawa? The Parliamentary Trunk is to be abolished. And surely it is high time it was abolished. Why should the people of Canada be taxed to provide the members of the House of Commons and of the Senate with trunks? The trunks, needless to say, have been leather trunks of the best sort procurable. The Parliamentary trunk has been an institution hedged around by thick accretions of antiquity (so far as antiquity can be spoken of in connection with this Canada of ours) and of authority and privilege. How rarely are men found in public life with the necessary courage and initiative to attack a moss-grown institution! The Parliamentary trunk has been one of the things that assist to make the Dominion legislator feel like a pensioner upon the public bounty. It has not been a payment for services rendered; it has been a compulsory payment, gouged of an ungrateful nation by legislators who feel that