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The Wanstead Disaster.

There appears to have been an unusual number of serious accidents on Canadian railroads of late, and the terrible disaster at Wanstead, Ont., the night after Christmas, which resulted in the death of some thirty persons and the more or less serious injury, of more than forty others, affords an illustration of the tremendous importance of a train despatchers and station agents keeping cool heads, and the terrible consequences that are likely to result from a mistake in the giving or receiving of an order. In this instance there appears to be a dispute as to whether the blunder was on the part of the sender or the receiver of a despatch, but what is sadly evident is that somebody blundered, with the result that an express train, running 40 or 50 miles an hour, was brought in collision with a freight train at Wanstead. Who really blundered and what should be the penalty for such blundering will no doubt be made matters of rigid investigation, but that will not give back life to the dead, nor make good their losses to the living. It seems to be a not unreasonable conclusion that too large an element of risk is connected with the despatching of trains, and that due regard for the public safety demands some system by which the lives of passengers shall not depend to so great an extent on the absolute correctness of the giving and receiving of orders when mistakes from our cause or another may so easily occur.

The Andidjan Earthquake.

The recent earthquake at Andidjan in the Province of Fergana in Asiatic Russia, is learned by later accounts to have been a most terrible catastrophe and attended with great loss of life. The victims of the earthquake are said to number 4,800, of whom 1600 were killed in the town of Andidjan and the remainder in the surrounding country. About one thousand square miles were affected. The centre of the disturbance was four miles south of Andidjan, where there was a cleft in the ground, whence sand, water and mud were issuing. The first shock lasted three seconds. It was repeated after half an hour, when buildings began tumbling, walls were flung down and roofs collapsed, burying every one within, and groans and shrieks filled the air. The shocks were continued uninterruptedly for fifteen minutes, and were accompanied by terrifying rumblings, torrential rain and a hurricane. People in the streets were hurled to the ground repeatedly. No refuge whatever was available. The aged, the children and the sick were equally exposed, while the heart-rending appeals of friends and relatives buried in the debris magnified the horror of the situation.

King Edward Proclaimed Emperor of India.

The celebration of the Coronation, with the proclamation of King Edward as Emperor of India at Delhi, India, is an event of the greatest importance in the view of the people of India and is attended with immense pomp and magnificence. The ceremonies opened with the entrance in State of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, the Duke of Connaught, who is the King's brother, and seventy or more subject Princes of India and their retainers riding elephants richly caparisoned. The Oriental mind is especially impressed by the magnificent, and no pains or expense seem to have been spared in order to make the pageantry connected with the Imperial Court, or Durbar, as gorgeous and impressive as possible. The magnificence is said far to exceed that of the pageants conducted by Lord Lytton when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. On New Year's day, a despatch from Delhi says:

Tens of thousands of people from the city of Delhi and from villages far and near began gathering at day-break this morning on the great plain outside the city. There they waited patiently for the supreme announcement of the Durbar that King Edward was Emperor of India. Soon the plain was filled with crowding masses of people and the brightly colored clothing of the vast throng covered the space with gorgeous hues. The crowd on the plain was composed largely of the common people, but among it could be seen the retainers of the function. The attention of all was fixed upon the white amphitheatre in the centre of the plain where the announcement was to be made. The amphitheatre was adorned with gilded cupolas and surrounded by batteries, squadrons and battalions of the Indian army. Beyond the amphitheatre in the distance could be seen numbers of elephants, camels and horses. So vast was the multitude that the troops appeared as mere splashes of color.

The spectacle within the arena was most striking and gorgeous. The Pathan chiefs and Sirdars were resplendent in brilliant regiment. Soldiers, civilians and visitors from far distances were included among those in the amphitheatre. On the entrance of the veterans of the Indian mutiny there was tremendous applause, and as the arrivals marched to their places the bands played national airs. The carriage of the Duke of Connaught, who represented King Edward, was escorted by a detachment of cavalry. As the Duke and Duchess were driven around the arena the assemblage gave them an enthusiastic welcome. Then the approach of the Viceroy was heralded. Preceded by numbers of his bodyguard, clad in white, blue and gold, and under the command of Major Grimson, Lord Curzon appeared at the entrance of the arena in his carriage. The postillions wore uniforms of scarlet and gold and the carriage was drawn by four bay horses. The Viceroy was escorted by Sir Pertab Singh. Alighting from his carriage, Lord Curzon mounted the dais to the throne, which was decorated with golden lions and around which were placed massive silver footstools. The throne itself was surrounded by a canopy of white and gold. When the Viceroy reached the throne the national anthem was played and a salute was fired. The spectators had resumed their seats again and there was a flourish of trumpets from the heralds. Major Maxwell, at the command of the Viceroy, read the proclamation opening the Durbar. The Royal standard was then raised on high and the royal salute was fired. The massed bands marched by playing. Bonfires were started outside, and it was announced that King Edward was Emperor of India. There was another flourish of trumpets and Lord Curzon arose and stood for a moment impassive. Then, in impressive tones, he delivered a speech and read the message from King Edward. He said also that it had been decided not to exact interest for three years on all loans guaranteed by the government of India to the native states in connection with the recent famine. The Viceroy announced also the abolition of the Indian staff corps, which has long been an army sinecure.

In the King's message, which was then read by Lord Curzon, His Majesty said that the Prince and Princess of Wales would shortly visit India. He regretted his absence from the Durbar and sent his greetings to his Indian people. In conclusion King Edward said:

"I renew assurances of my regard for the liberties of the Indian people, of my respect for their dignities and rights, of my interest in their advancement, and of my devotion to their welfare. These are the supreme aims and objects of my rule, which, under the blessing of Almighty God, will lead to the increasing prosperity of my Indian Empire and to the greater happiness of its people."

As the Viceroy finished reading the King's words the assembled people broke into cheers for the King and Emperor. The cheering was taken up by the multitude outside the amphitheatre and was long sustained. There then followed the presentation of India princes to the Viceroy and the Duke of Connaught, and political officers paid homage to the sovereign. This ended the ceremony and the royal cortege then left the arena, followed by the delegates of the foreign powers and the Indian princes.

A St. John Industry.

A few days ago the writer had the privilege, with others, of being shown through the new building of Messrs. T. S. Simms and Company, erected during the past summer for the accommodation of their broom and brush-making business. This is one of St. John's most considerable manufacturing industries, and is also one of the most extensive factories of its kind in Canada, its products being in demand from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The new factory is centrally located on Union St. The lot on which it is built has a frontage of 185 feet. The building itself is 135 feet long on the street, with a rearward extension of about 100 feet. In its construction and appointments the factory is thoroughly up-to-date. The building is four stories high, including the basement,

and the large amount of space which is thus afforded appears not to be greater than is necessary for the increasing business of the Company. The building is constructed with a view to affording as great protection as possible against fire. It is built on what is called the slow-burning, mill-construction plan, the floors being five inches thick and laid on the girders without joists. Power for driving the machinery, and for the dynamo which furnishes electric light for the building, is supplied from a 100 h. p. boiler and a 75 h. p. engine. The building is equipped with "dust-collectors" which carry all shavings, sawdust etc., from the wood-working department in the basement direct to the furnace. A two-fold gain is thus effected, in the clearing of the air and the saving of labor. A tour of inspection of the building proved highly interesting. The business offices of the company in the south-west corner, on the ground floor, are handsomely finished and every way in keeping with the extent of the building and the business. The factory itself is furnished with every convenience, including spacious ware-rooms, reading and smoking rooms for the employes, light, airy and well warmed work rooms and all the different kinds of machinery required in a modern brush and broom factory. In this is some of the newest labor-saving machinery in brush-making, including a machine for making solid-back brushes, on which Mr. Simms' company holds the patent for Canada. About 135 hands are now employed in the factory, including both sexes, some of the most expert workers being women. We are glad to know that the business is yielding satisfactory returns to its promoters, and we wish Messrs. Simms and Company a prosperous New Year.

That Unlikely Story

It was noted in these columns a few weeks ago that the *National Review* of London had given publicity and credence to a report that, during the past summer, the German Emperor, while cruising in the Imperial Yacht in the North Sea, had invited himself on board an American yacht, and during the course of his visit had made remarks distinctly derogatory to the Government and the Sovereign of Great Britain. This seemed so unlikely a story that the most reasonable conclusion appeared to be that the *National Review* had been made the victim of a hoax. Moreover the *North German Gazette*, the semi official organ of the Berlin Foreign Office, ridiculed the story, characterizing it as an audacious invention. The *National Review*, however, in its January number, returns to the matter and reaffirms the correctness of its previous statement, saying: "Our readers may rest assured as to the absolute accuracy of the recital, which we only abstain from making more circumstantial because we have no desire to bring in the names of private individuals, which are, however, perfectly familiar in well-informed circles both in the United States and Great Britain. However wildly improbable the story may seem to the Anglo-Germanizing journalists of London, it happens to be substantially and literally true, though we have given an exceedingly moderate version of the actual incident. The denial of the *North German Gazette* is inspired either by ignorance or is a falsehood."

The latest returns from the Ontario liquor act referendum with East Nipissing to hear from, are: For the act, 199,077; against, 103,051; majority for the act, 96,026. The act required 212,723 votes to be enacted. The Dominion Alliance, on the strength of the vote having reached within some 14,000 of the necessary number, will, on Jan. 15 ask the Ontario government to introduce legislation closing all the bar rooms and to abolish the selling of liquor in club houses.