

The West

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 1909.

Peat As Fuel.

Dr. Haanel of the department of mines has instituted a plan of national importance. He hopes to experiment with peat as fuel, and so treat it that it will not only be as good as, but better than coal. It will also be much cheaper. An experimental station is now in course of erection at Ottawa, and when it is ready the first peat will be brought from an excellent bog which is situated near Alfred, Ont.

The difficulty regarding coal is that it is exhaustible. The end of the supply is within measurable distance. However, with peat the situation is different. It grows, and it is believed that there are enough peat bogs in Canada to provide a practically inexhaustible supply for an immense population.

The experiments are not new, of course. We are now following upon the heels of Norway and Sweden, but the prospect is that, like Scandinavia we shall be placed in possession of a cheap and thoroughly adequate domestic and manufacturing fuel.

The End of War.

Sir John Hiram, the American born and British titled inventor, foresees the almost immediate end of war because of the flying machine, says the Ottawa Citizen.

With flying machines, which he declares within a year will be carrying the mails, will be cheaper to construct than motor cars, which will fly eighty miles an hour, and remain in the air three hours at a time—with such ships of the atmosphere able to carry half a ton, the inventor baronet declares every nation no matter how powerful, will always be open to attack.

Under cover of darkness and clouds an enemy will be able to destroy a city no matter how well fortified. For no resistance will avail against an attack from the air unless the whole city be driven underground or populations betake themselves to cave dwellings once more. Of course, argues Sir Hiram, while the enemy is destroying your city you can destroy his. But such mutual destruction will accomplish nothing, save destruction, and that on such a scale as of necessity to preclude war. The nations will simply be compelled to make agreements among themselves to on no account resort to war, and the guaranty that each nation will keep the peace will be the fact that to make war will be to commit economic suicide.

Sir Hiram may be a dreamer of dreams, but commonly his dreams have resulted very practically to the enrichment of himself and the improvement of artillery. Consequently his prophesy of the extinction of war which is not the philanthropic vision of probabilities by a mechanical scientist, carries some credibility.

War, to be sure, would not perish from the earth everywhere at once. It would first fall into desuetude only between those nations of foremost scientific knowledge and mechanical skill. Flying machines would, considering Sir Hiram's theory as tenable, preclude war in the first instance between Great Britain and Germany, or the latter and France, but flying machines would probably facilitate the conquests of barbarous people or backward nations by the great colonial powers even as rapid firing guns and all other military inventions have done.

Whether Sir Hiram's prophesy overleaps the mark or not, it is certain

that the world is on the verge of immense changes that will effect civilization in greater measures than any changes have effected it in the past. Although science is scarcely three hundred years old, and applied science as we know it scarcely one hundred, we are become so familiar with its workings that we think of it as fully developed, whereas the truth is that science, both pure and applied, has but commenced to do things.

Press Comment.

(Mail and Empire)

Not until 1916 will the bridge at Quebec be completed, and until that year comes the Grand Trunk Pacific will remain incomplete. The railway under the policy of Mr. Hays was to have been finished in 1908. The intervention of the Laurier government has put the work back eight years, besides adding something like \$200,000,000 to the cost.

(Victoria Colonist)

Mr. Arthur O'Connor, of we do not know where, says that if when you are knocked down by a motor, you raise yourself on your arms and legs, as a man does when he sustains heavy weights on his chest, the machine will pass over you without doing any harm. We suggest that Mr. Arthur O'Connor that he should print the rules to be followed in this case, so that we may all have them in our pockets for reference when we are knocked down. Any considerable chauffeur would stop the machine long enough to permit us to read the instructions before running over us. If he should not do so, he would certainly be open to the suspicion of being no gentleman.

(Toronto Weekly Sun.)

Cable reports tell us that the Imperial Defence Conference, now in session in London, will recommend that the same system of training to which the British Regular army is subjected to be applied to the Canadian, South African and Australian forces as well. The object behind this proposal is frankly stated: it is that the British and colonial forces may be prepared to act together as one body in any future war, no matter whether the scene of that war be in Europe, in Asia or in Africa. It is further intimated by the reports in question that it is hoped to so increase the British and colonial land forces that these will equal the land forces of Germany.

Hazell's Annual tells us that the German army, on a peace footing, numbers a little over half a million men. In order to maintain this force and the reserves behind it, every German fit to bear arms is required to belong to the regular army for seven years; in the five following years he is compelled to serve in the first reserves; from that on he remains in the second reserves until his thirtieth year. Since the population of Germany is practically the same as that of the United Kingdom, with the colonies added, it is evident, if we are to equal Germany in land forces, we must follow the German system in creating such forces.

So far the discussion of this momentous question has been limited to delegates to imperial press and defence conferences. Neither of these bodies have power to commit this country to any such scheme as is proposed. Before this can be done the whole question must be fully discussed by parliament and, to the end that parliament may decide wisely, it must be discussed by the people as well.

It is now known what Imperial statesmen desire. That desire will form the paramount subject for discussion at the forthcoming sessions of parliament. Before parliament opens the entire subject should be considered by every provincial weekly, by county councils and church boards. This is not a party question but it is a great moral question, and one involving the whole future destiny of this country to an extent to which that destiny has never before been involved.

Hundred Men Needed.

Windthorst, Sask., Aug. 19.—Wheat cutting will be general in a few days. Some cutting is being done at present. Already there are signs of a labor famine in connection with the handling of the harvest in this district, where very good wages are offered. Over one hundred men are needed here at once.

The wheat will average about 20 bushels to the acre and will be of good quality.

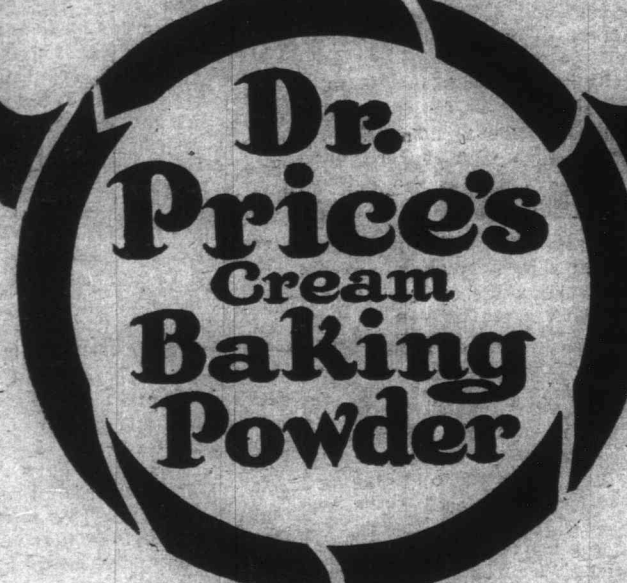
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WHAT COBDENISM WOULD BRING ABOUT

In the course of their campaign against the continuation of the policy of free trade in England, some of the leading protectionist journals have found it necessary to exhumate the political bones of Richard Cobden, the father of free trade. The proceeding cannot add to the esteem in which Cobden's memory is held, for according to general opinion, free trade is the only one of his doctrines that has survived. It is the only one that ever got itself into practice. Cobden's other ideas show him to have been a statesman of extremely limited vision. His predictions have been falsified, even in the short space of fifty years; and though there are thousands, perhaps millions, of people who are proud to refer to them as Cobdenites, it would be difficult to find a single member of any English speaking popular assembly who would dare publicly assent to Cobdenism as a whole. To do so would amount to political suicide. The London Express takes the view that it is well the public should know something of the political company kept by free trade, something about the political system of which it was destined to be a part.

With this end in view it quotes from Lord Morley's "Life of Cobden," and shows that besides free trade, Cobden advocated the following measures: The abandonment of India. The abandonment of Gibraltar. The abandonment of the colonies. Reduction of the navy. Abolition of a trained home army. Franchise limited to landholders. Opposition to trade unions. It is hardly a program to cheer for at the beginning of the twentieth century, and as a platform is a singular medley of old Toryism and mad radicalism. The fact that logical arguments in favor of each different proposition could be urged, and were urged, by Cobden does not make it any the more inviting to a practical politician of today. It is possible that if Cobden were alive, and obliged to admit that free trade had been either a failure, or, at best, only a partial success, he might take the ground that free trade was only a part of his prescription, and that to get the full benefit of the dose it should be mixed with the nostrums that are named above.

How mistaken Cobden was in his opinion of Canada all our readers will appreciate after the following quotations from a letter, in which he urged that the British forces should be withdrawn from every British colony: "Under the regime of free trade Canada is not a whit more ours than is the great republic—the United States. The same may be said of New Zealand, Australia, etc., and if we do not draw in our horns, this country, with all its wealth, energy and resources, will sink under the weight of its extended Empire."

At the time of the confederation of the Canadian provinces he wrote: "I fail to discover any immediate interest which the British public have in the matter."

"We are told of the 'loyalty' of the Canadians, but this is an ironical term to apply to people who neither pay our taxes, nor obey our laws, nor hold themselves liable to fight our battles, who would repudiate our right to the sovereignty over an acre of their territory, and who claim the right of imposing their own customs duties, even to the exclusion of our manufactures. We are two peoples to all intents and purposes, and it is a perilous delusion to both parties to attempt to keep up a sham connection and dependence which will snare us asunder if it ever should be put to the strain of stern reality."

DOUKHOBORS OFFENSIVE

Terrible Tale of Their Putting Corpse on the Prairie and Leaving It Uncovered—No Punishment Being Meted Out.

The following dispatch horrible in detail, is told by C. P. B. Dundas, a respected resident of Fort Pelly, Saskatchewan. It speaks for itself and no comment is necessary.

Fort Pelly, Sask., Aug.—I was not an eye witness to the following abnormal offence committed by Doukhobors living on the Swan River within a few miles of Benoit, Man. But the facts of the case were related to me by Joseph Henry, a farmer of this district who can vouch for the account.

The same gentleman on Sunday morning, July 15, while out driving a few miles from his home, ordinarily very quiet horses, suddenly give signs of great uneasiness, and with difficulty he prevented them from bolting.

The cause of their fright was soon apparent. He heard a weird, droning noise and presently a strange procession hove in sight, composed of about fifteen Doukhobors, mostly women, and all stark naked. My friend would have passed them by without notice for by this time people living up here have become accustomed to the eccentricities of conduct in such neighbors. (Indeed the staunchest Liberals in this part of the country have come to regard the infliction of the Doukhobors a test of their faith in the Laurier government.) But as the naked ones drew nearer, he became aware of a peculiarly disagreeable odor. By the time they were abreast of him he knew from whence it proceeded. These creatures, as destitute of every sentiment which would distinguish a human being from something worse than a beast as their bodies were of clothing, were dragging a cart in which Mr. Henry was horrified to discover the naked corpse of an old woman. Anxious to know the outcome of this ghastly business, he turned round and followed them, but not far. For soon they halted, took the corpse from the cart, carried it a few yards from the road, and carelessly dropped it on the ground. Then the unhalloved mob coolly returned to the village.

With all speed the horror stricken witness of this barbarous procedure notified the R.N.W.M. Policeman and a medical man, Dr. White. He also summoned several of his neighbors, who were so justly indignant on learning what had happened, that they rightly proposed administering a severe chastisement to the perpetrators of so foul an act, but were restrained from doing so by the policeman, who was of course, acting in the interests of law and order.

The condition of the corpse by the time the doctor, policeman, Mr. Henry and the other people reached it, was indescribable, for it had been lying in the sun for several hours, and remember it was 90 degrees in the shade and the flies were swarming. Dr. White, an experienced practitioner, inured to such sights, was yet quite unable to look upon it. Eventually the policeman and the settlers interred the remains. Now supposing some farmer with his wife and children driving to church or elsewhere on that beautiful Sunday morning, had been suddenly confronted with that dreadful spectacle, and I leave you to imagine what a terrible shock it would have been to them.

We can excuse the fanatic much on the grounds of faith, but I very much doubt if this disgusting funeral was in accordance even with such religion as these savages possess, for I have since heard that it was expressly undertaken to annoy their neighbors and the government. At any rate such practice is a violation of the law, and contrary to decency and public health to allow a human corpse to rot on the prairie.

Up to date no move has been made to punish the offenders, though every one I have spoken to considers the case calls for prompt investigation and correction. That this indifference of the authorities to so flagrant a transgression alone deserves publicity, I think you will agree with me.

New Rates of Pay.

Ottawa, Aug. 19.—Under the schedule of rates of pay agreed to by the board of conciliation and investigation appointed to settle the matters in dispute between the G.T.P. and its employees, and which arrived at a basis of agreement between the company and the men, the following rates of engineers and firemen on the lines west of Fort William: Passenger trains, per mile, engineers 4 to 4 1/2 cents, according to engine; firemen from 2 1/2 to 3.05 cents. Freight service, per mile, engineers, 4.40 cents to 4.90 cents; firemen, 2.60 cents to 3.25 cents. Construction and other work trains, engineers 40 to 45 cents per hour, firemen 3.25 to 35 cents per hour. On regular assigned work, freight 25 cents to engineers and 15 cents to firemen will be allowed in addition to the through freight rates for each one hundred miles and pro-rata for any fraction thereof. On all

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passenger trains unless otherwise specified, the men will be paid for the time used in making the trip in excess of the time necessary to complete the trip at an average speed of 15 miles an hour. On all way freight and mixed trains, not otherwise specified, detention will be paid for the time used in making the trip in excess of 11 miles per hour. Detention will be computed from the time the crew is called to go to work until it is registered in at the arriving terminal. The time of work trains will commence thirty minutes before the leaving time of the train. Engineers assigned to special runs will be paid extra for work done outside the regular run and for work performed either before or after the time card hours at the rates in effect for the class of work performed. The agreement provides that regularly appointed members of the adjustment committee of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Eng-

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