

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

By PETER McARTHUR

OUR Canadian winter seems to be coming to its own. For years all reference to ice and snow was regarded as treasonable and winter carnivals were frowned upon as bad advertising for a country that wished to attract settlers. Now, however, grave and potent editors are laying aside hot political issues from time to time and writing cool, refreshing editorials on the weather. It is being recognised that the Canadian winter is really an asset and that a lung-full of the air we are enjoying just now does a man as much good as a holiday in the Alps. And yet those who are beginning to sing "Blow, blow thou winter wind" are a little off the tune. They need an old-fashioned precentor with his tuning-fork to lead them properly. The trouble is that most of the panegyrists are city men, writing in the city. As a matter of fact winter in the city is a hardship and a slushy abomination. It may enable fashionable folks to bring out their furs and set their sleigh-bells jingling once in a while, but otherwise it is no good. It makes the streets uncomfortable and increases the sufferings of the poor. In the country it is different. It is there that winter puts his bravery on and braces the good people with his exhilarating touch. We have had four weeks of good sleighing and everybody has been around to visit everybody else. In the country winter is prepared for with warm clothing, warm houses and plenty of provisions. As there is no work to do except chores this is the real holiday season. There is skating on the ponds and coasting on the hills for the young people and long evenings with abundant reading for the old and serious minded. Then there are the sleighrides by sunlight and moonlight. The only thing the country really objects to is a thaw. It is as unwelcome as a June frost. It spoils everything. And yet there are editors who write gloating paragraphs about people going about in their shirt-sleeves in midwinter. They point with pride to such facts as if they went far to contradict the slanders that have been heaped on Canadian winters. Nonsense. The chief charm of our winters is their steady cold. When the weather remains constant what is usually thought of as a season of discomfort becomes a season of revelry. If it were not for the long, idle winters we would have no time to enjoy the money we make in the fruitful summers. We have not been doing our festival season justice. All together, now:

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot.

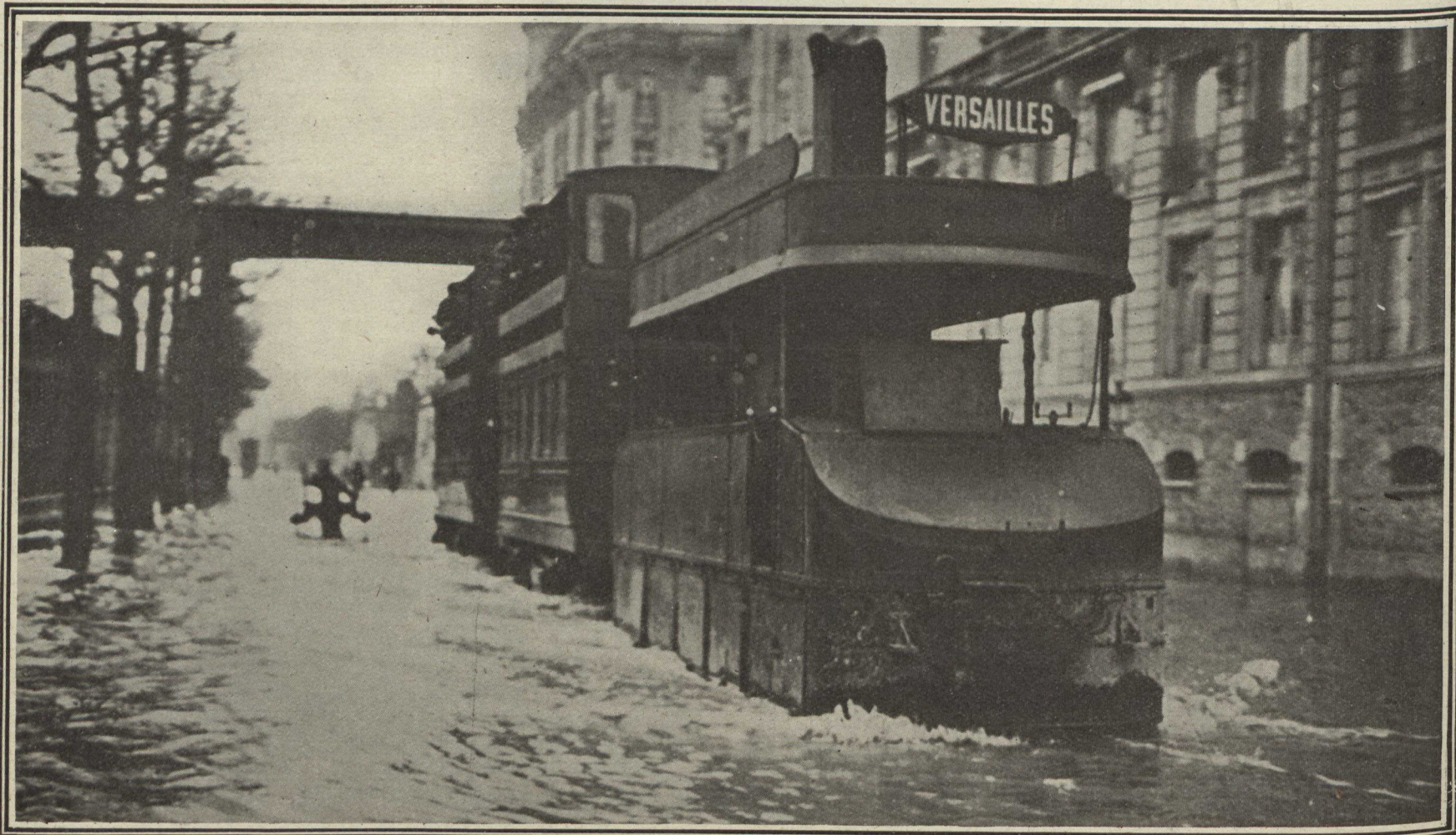
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While on the general subject of Canada I wish to protest mildly against a certain brand of immigration advertising that is being used with much success. Pains are taken to show how quickly men get rich in Canada. Letters from settlers telling how they made their

fortunes in a few years are given wide publicity with a view to attracting settlers. This should not be. It is true that men do get rich in Canada, but why parade the ugly fact? Canada is above all else a land of homes, a place where the harried and driven of the world can find a refuge. Fortunately the great mass of immigrants up to the present have been homeseekers whose ambitions did not range beyond "A happy fireside clime for weans and wife." Because they found what they sought their quiet patriotism and that of their descendants is the surest bulwark of the growing nation. But the cry has gone forth that Canada is the place to come to if one wants to scramble for dollars. Come to us and get busy. We have the last West and the last wealth. Get a home but above all get a wad. This is the spirit if not the exact wording of this new advertising. That it is succeeding is proven by occasional paragraphs in the papers telling of the vast amounts of wealth brought into the country by a certain class of settlers. It is boasted that many of these newcomers left good homes to take advantage of the opportunities to be found in Canada. This may be a good thing for the future of the country but I doubt it. Of money grubbers we already have too many, but of homeseekers we can never have enough.

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The hunger strike now in progress in Detroit and other American cities is a pathetic form of human protest. Because the price of meat has become intolerable six thousand heads of families in one day signed a pledge not to eat meat for a month. They would be wiser to eat more beef and work up the energy needed to enforce their rights. The food trust is rich and can afford to wait until they are starved into submission. Of course the vegetarians will rejoice and perhaps urge their propaganda with presentations of "Ten Nights in a Restaurant" and harrowing tracts on "The First Chop," but no one will be benefited by this unseasonable Lent. Man in his later development is carnivorous and a real hunger cannot be satisfied without meat. Vegetarians are doubtless sincere in their attempts to convince themselves that they do not need meat, but I have never had much use for the cult since the hungry host at a succulent banquet—a dinner fit for a cow—choked himself during a hurried visit to the kitchen by eating beans with a ladle. If those who are protesting in Detroit are sufficiently organised to pledge themselves not to eat meat they are sufficiently organised to buy meat in quantity from the producers and in that way foil their oppressors in a way that will really hurt. When I realise the cost of production of the various foods used I cannot help wondering why consumers do not organise to purchase their supplies. There are companies operating cheap restaurants in all the leading American cities and possibly in some Canadian cities that maintain their own farms so as to get their supplies at the cost of production. They furnish good food at prices far below those charged at the standard restaurants and declare ten per cent. dividends every three months. A sufficient number of exasperated consumers should be able to handle the problem in the same way. The farmers in various parts of the country are organising to sell. Why should not the consumers organise to buy? To refuse to eat meat simply because it is too dear is foolishness.



A Street Scene in Paris during the Recent Disastrous Floods of the Seine, entailing a Destruction of Property aggregating \$200,000,000.

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