

## WESTERN AMENITIES.

London (Ont.) Free Press.

Before the meeting of the Water Commissioners adjourned Mr. Danks said he had a matter to bring before the Board. Mr. Rayner was in the habit of talking in bar-rooms and other places about his (Mr. Danks') private character, and had called him a felon, and in other ways defamed his character. Now as he (Mr. Danks) had a family who would perhaps have to get their living in London after both he and Mr. Rayner were gone, he considered it his duty to defend himself against such assaults. Possibly Mr. Rayner judged him (Mr. Danks) from himself, as when he (Rayner) was running a tobacco factory there was suspicion of an attempt to defraud the Inland Revenue, and the Government were compelled on one occasion to close it up.

Mr. Rayner—That's foreign to the subject! State your grievances, sir.

Mr. Danks—When this tobacco factory was running—

Mr. Rayner—We won't hear anything that has nothing to do with this case.

Mr. Danks—I say this tobacco factory—

Mr. Rayner—I won't allow you to go on, sir. I appeal to the Mayor if the Chairman will not stop it.

Mr. Danks—I will have my say; you have had yours about me.

Mr. Rayner—I tell you I will interrupt you every time you go from the subject. I—

Mr. Danks—(savagely)—Shut up.

Mr. Rayner—(in a shrill tone of surprise)—Shut up.

Mr. Danks—Shut up.

Mr. Rayner—(in a loud and excited tone)—Will you tell me to shut up?

Mr. Danks—Yes, I'll make you.

Mr. Danks then ran round the table and collared Mr. Rayner with his right hand, while his left fist came forcibly against the side of the portly water commissioner's head.

Mayor Hyman then grabbed Mr. Danks.

Mr. Rayner rose up slowly and took his coat off and invited Mr. Danks to two or three favorable quiet spots to be slaughtered.

Mr. Danks intimated that he'd be there.

The Chairman then got in front of Mr. Rayner and told him to sit down, and put his coat on.

Mr. Danks said that he had no remedy for these malicious stories, as Mr. Rayner was not worth anything, or he would sue him for libel. Even the bed he lay on was mortgaged.

The Chairman said Mr. Rayner had brought it on himself. He had no right to go round in bar-rooms using such words about respectable men, and calling Mr. Danks a thief.

Mr. Rayner denied calling Mr. Danks any such name.

Mr. Cousins said he did.

Mr. Rayner had never called Danks a thief to anyone.

The Mayor—Now, don't say that, Rayner, you called him one to me. His Worship went on to say that he wanted nothing to do with the quarrel; but he remembered Rayner saying that Mr. Danks was a liar, and any man who was a liar was a thief.

Mr. Rayner—Oh! yes; I said that I believe any man that will lie will steal.

Mr. Danks then got off his chair and started around to Mr. Rayner's side of the table again.

The Chairman threw himself back between the men.

Mr. Rayner said Mr. Danks had so far forgot himself as to strike him, but if he had him outside—

Mr. Danks expressed himself as perfectly indifferent as to Mr. Rayner's whereabouts; he would punish him if he vilified him again. He also reminded Mr. Rayner of the time when he used to go around with a bull dog at his heels and a sword cane in his possession.

Mr. Rayner had forgotten all about them.

There was considerable excitement at the Board during the affair, but in less than five minutes after sitting down, Mr. Rayner asked for some returns which he had moved for at last meeting, and receiving them, the motion to adjourn was carried in a serene and untroubled lull.

## AUSTRALIA'S DEBTS.

Bradstreet's recently presented a comprehensive debt statement of the Australasian colonies which showed them to be the most heavily burthened communities on the earth's surface having any pretence to solvency. But since that time they have gone on piling up millions of additional debt, all hope of ever paying the principal having been abandoned. On the 6th of May last the little insular colony of Tasmania asked for £800,000 at £98, and was tendered £2,250,000, getting the amount of its loan at something in excess of £100 4s. On the 20th of the same month, May, South Australia called for £1,650,000 at par and was offered £2,750,000, filling its loan demand at £100 6s. On the 30th of May, just ten days afterward, Queensland intimated that £2,672,000 was required by it at £98, and £9,000,000 was tendered. Those who offered within 12s. of par receive 40 per cent of their tender, the balance of the loan being distributed to higher bidders. May was thus a lucky month for Australian borrowers. These are all 4 per cent. loans.

SOCIAL EQUALITY BEHIND THE BARS.—Two bank presidents, two receiving-tellers, four bank cashiers, a county treasurer and a city auditor constitute the aristocracy of the State's prison at Trenton, N. J. And the bank presidents each of whom has got away with his million, just to create the receiving-tellers, who were mod. rate in their appropriations, and look with ill-disguised disdain on the city auditor, who was narrow-minded and small in his dealings, only managing to corral some ten thousand dollars or so.—N. Y. Luck.

## ELECTRICITY AS A MOTOR.

New York Sun.

The interest aroused by the trial the other day of the Cleveland Electric Street Railroad, the first put into operation for city passenger travel in America, is natural, and the degree of success claimed for it is not surprising. Nearly a year ago electric cars were moved through the crowded thoroughfares of Paris by the Power Storage Company of that city at the rate of nine miles an hour on a level and of more than five on an ascent. A distance of thirty miles was accomplished by moving the car from one route to another in the French capital, often across several yards of trackless ground, and without accident or difficulty of any kind. The locomotion was effected by FAURE-SELLON-VOLCKMAR accumulators, fixed under the seats, and connected with a SIEMENS machine beneath the floor. Last November we had the less successful preliminary trials of the Darr motor on a Saratoga railroad.

The electric railway in Vienna dates back to the Electric Exhibition there, when a mile in three minutes was regularly made by the train. At Berlin the high level railway was at the same time operated by electricity. The small electric railway at Portrush derived interest from seeking its energy in a neighboring waterfall; while the invention of Desprez for transporting electrical force to great distances has been applied to a waterfall near Grenoble, which has worked, to the extent of seven-horse power, a printing press, a sand mill, and other machinery.

An electrical omnibus, also, has been tried with success in Paris during the busiest hours of the day, and the heavy vehicle was handled and turned with facility. In some of the coal mines of Saxony electricity has for many months been employed, not only to draw trains of coal, but also to work a ventilating fan. Even a thermo-electric stove has been invented, as have also electric lights that can be used on railway cars, in spite of the vibrations and frequent shocks to which trains are exposed.

On the water, electricity as a motor has made no less rapid progress than on land. Last summer an electric boat was plying on the Danube Canal, taking thirty or more passengers six miles an hour against the strong current and eighteen miles an hour with the stream. Two years ago a launch propelled by electricity was shown on the Thames, and the following year a boat of that character, forty feet long, attained a speed of eight miles an hour on the measured mile—this boat being the one, we believe, already spoken of as used on the Danube. Its trips were accomplished, of course, without smoke, or heat, or smell of oil, and also without noise of engines or vibration. As for the application of electricity to submarine torpedoes, it is now the subject of much study, attended with some success. Electric small arms have already been invented, and one such weapon was operated not long ago by Col. Fosbery at London, before an assembly of army officers and others, by means of a small accumulator secreted under his waistcoat. The gun was the invention of Pieper of Liege, who has fired more than a hundred rounds with it in two minutes. We may yet see electricity revolutionizing the manufacture of small arms.

But there is special interest attaching to the use of electricity in transportation, because here an enormous element in modern life, affecting great populations at all times, is dealt with. Of course the matter must still be viewed as experimental, since only protracted tests fully determine those considerations of economy, convenience, and safety on which ultimate success depends. It is certainly noteworthy, however, that while various new motors, such as caloric, compressed air, coiled springs, and grip cables have been under contemplation and trial for so many years as possible substitutes for horses in street railways, electricity has suddenly come to the front, threatening to supersede them all.

## THE PARCEL POST.

London, August 3.—The Post-Office officials are still at their wits end to know what to do in reference to the parcel post, the business of which is diminishing instead of increasing. The heavy loss which the account shows is not the worst part of the matter, as a vast amount of the work is now done by employees who receive no payment whatever. The fact is Postmaster-General Fawcett has now discovered that he was no match for the astute railway managers with whom he ventured to discuss and arrange terms. The Professor has been outdone by the men of business with whom he attempted to cope, and the bargain made was solely in the interest of the railway companies. It went through the House of Commons without discussion, but even if it had been debated, the result would probably have been the same, as the railway companies have 170 representatives in the House of Commons while the workmen have but two. The worst of it is that the existing agreement makes a practical parcel post impossible for twenty years to come unless the state of things becomes so bad that a rearrangement of this one-sided and unjust agreement is insisted upon.

FIRE IN THE DOG POUND.—The plaintive yells of fifteen tortured dogs attracted the attention of a passer by on Wellington Avenue near the dog pound at twelve o'clock on Saturday night. It was soon discovered that the enclosures in which the imprisoned canines were confined was on fire, and an alarm was promptly rung from Box 95, King and Stafford Streets. The fire in the meantime spread with great rapidity and before the first hose reached the scene considerable damage had been done to the property. The unfortunate brutes within were left to their fates, and their yells could be heard some distance as they frantically attempted to escape only to fall back into the fire and smoke and be suffocated or slowly burned to death. The loss in property is estimated at \$50.

## CHEWTON-ABBOT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

(Chambers's Journal.)

THE Abbots of Chewton-Abbot, Gloucestershire, were county people, and, moreover, had always occupied that coveted position. They dived not the researches of the officious antiquary who pokes about in pedigrees, and finds that, three or four generations ago, the founders of certain families acquired their wealth by trade. They at least were independent of money-earning. The fact that Chewton began to be known as Chewton-Abbot so far back as the fifteenth century, showed they were no upstarts. Indeed, if not of the very first rank—that rank from which knights of the shire are chosen—the Abbots, from the antiquity of their family, and from the centuries that family had owned the same estates, were entitled to dispute the question of precedence with all save a few very great magnates. They were undoubtedly people of importance. The reigning Abbot, it need scarcely be said, was always a county magistrate, and at some period of his life certain to serve as sheriff. But for generations the family had occupied exactly the same position, and exercised exactly the same amount of influence in the land. The Abbots seemed neither to rise nor fall. If they added nothing to their estates, they alienated nothing. If they gave no great statesmen, warriors, or geniuses to the world, they produced, sparingly, highly respectable members of society, who lived upon the family acres and spent their revenues in a becoming manner.

The estates were unentailed; but as, so far, no Abbot had incurred his father's displeasure, the line of descent from father to eldest son had been unbroken, and appeared likely to continue so. True, it was whispered, years ago, that the custom was nearly changed, when Mr. William Abbot, the present owner of the estate, was leading a life in London very different from the respectable traditions of his family. But the reports were not authenticated; and as, soon after his father's death, he married a member of an equally old, equally respectable, and equally proud family, all such ill-natured gossip died a natural death; and at the time this tale opens, William Abbot was leading the same quiet life his ancestors had lead before him.

It was one of the cherished Abbot traditions that the family was not prolific. So long as the race was kept from disappearing, they were contented. In this respect the present head of the family showed himself a true Abbot. He had but one son, a young man who had just taken a fair degree at Oxford, and who was now staying at Chewton Hall, before departing on a round of polite travel, which, according to old-world precedent, his parents considered necessary to crown the educational edifice.

Mr. and Mrs. Abbot were in the breakfast-room at Chewton-Hall. Mr. Abbot was alone at the table, lazily discussing his breakfast. His wife and son, who were early risers, had taken that meal nearly an hour before. The young man being away on some outdoor pursuit, the husband and wife had the room to themselves. Mr. Abbot had just poured out his second cup of tea, and, according to his usual custom, commenced breaking the seals of the letters which lay beside his plate. His wife drew near to him.

'I am afraid that infatuated boy has in some way, entangled himself with the young woman I told you of,' she said.

'What young woman?' asked Mr. Abbot, laying down his letters.

'I told you last week he was always riding into Bristol—so often, that I felt sure there was some attraction there.'

'You did, I remember. But I took little notice of it. Boys will be boys, you know.'

'Yes; but it is time we interfered. I found him this morning kissing a photograph and holding a lock of hair in his hand. I taxed him with his folly.'

'My dear Helena,' said Mr. Abbot, with a shade of contempt in his voice, 'will you forgive my saying, that in matters of this kind it is best to leave young men alone, and not to see more than can be helped. Leave the boy alone—that is my advice.'

'You don't quite understand me,' replied Mrs. Abbot. 'He wants to marry her.'

'Wants to do what?' cried her husband, now fully aware of the gravity of the situation.

'He told me this morning he had asked her to be his wife. She would, he knew, consent, if we would welcome her as a daughter.'

'How kind! How considerate!' said Mr. Abbot scornfully. 'Who may she be, and where did Frank meet her?'

'He saved her from some incivility at the railway station, and so made her acquaintance. Who she is, he scarcely seems to know, except that her name is Millicent Keene, and that she lives with an aunt somewhere in Clifton. Frank gave me the address, and begged me to call—assuring me that I should take her to my heart the moment I saw her.'

'He must be mad!' exclaimed Mr. Abbot, rising and pacing the room. 'Mad, utterly mad! Does he think that we are going to let him—an Abbot—marry the first nameless young woman who strikes his fancy? I will talk to him, and soon bring him to his senses. The estates are unentailed, thank goodness! so I have some hold over him.'

Mrs. Abbot's lip just curled with scorn, as she heard her husband's direct commonplace plan for restoring her