

Messenger and Visitor.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSNGER,
VOLUME LXV.

Voi. XIX.

ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 1903.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR
VOLUME LIV.

No. 14.

Reforms in Railroad Traffic.

The great number of railway accidents in Canada and the United States in recent years is rapidly arousing an agitation for reform. In view of the fact that most of the railways in these two countries are earning large dividends on their actual capital, and that hardly a day passes without chronicling some accident endangering human life and safety, and hardly a week without a serious accident, whereby many lives are lost or injured, it seems high time that some scheme of reform was adopted. In Canada, since October, 1902, only half a year, there have been 142 separate and distinct railway accidents. In the United States, during the year ending June 30, 1901, 282 passengers were killed by railroad accidents and 4,988 passengers were injured. But this is only a small part of the story. The total number of casualties to persons on account of railroad accidents for the year was 61,794, the killed numbering 8,455 and the injured 53,339. The summaries giving the ratio of casualties show that one out of every 400 employees was killed, and one out of every 26, injured. One passenger was killed for every 2,153,469 carried, and one injured for every 121,748 carried. This awful destruction was due to a number of causes, most of them traceable to carelessness or neglect. The principal causes were forgetfulness by conductors and enginemen, who run their trains past stations, where, according to written orders, they should stop; overlooking one of a number of orders, mistakes in reading hours or names in written orders; misreading watches, and miscalculating time. Besides these errors, we have mistakes of train dispatchers in issuing telegraphic meeting orders, and of operators in copying and sending these orders. Also the employees complain of too long hours. From the data compiled, it appears that in seven serious cases occurring in six months, the men at fault had fallen asleep on duty, or had been constantly on duty from fifteen to twenty-five hours before the accident.

King Edward's Visits.

The King has gone off on a Mediterranean cruise in the royal yacht. The first place stopped at was Lisbon, where the King goes to repay the visit of the King of Portugal to England. The latter represented his own country at the coronation. King Edward was greeted with immense enthusiasm upon landing at Lisbon. The warships were manned by the sailors and royal salutes of artillery were given Portugal and England from the earliest times, have always been on friendly terms. Ever since 1661 when Charles II. of England married a Princess of the royal line of Portugal, there has been a treaty of alliance between the two countries. Since 1703, for two centuries, this alliance has been "offensive and defensive." Great Britain aided Portugal in maintaining her independence when Napoleon Bonaparte invaded the peninsula, and has repeatedly intervened to protect the reigning dynasty of Braganza against overthrow by revolutionists. It is stated upon authority, that it is practically certain, that King Edward will visit President Loubet of France. Considerable significance is attached to the meeting, owing to the recent movement of rapprochement between Great Britain and France, and the parallel courses they pursued towards Turkey and Morocco. It has also been announced, that the King and Queen will visit Ireland during the summer, and it seems quite certain that they will receive a cordial reception. There is an impression abroad that King Edward has exercised his personal influence to bring about an amicable settlement of the Irish land question. These visits of the King cannot help but further the friendly relations of Great Britain with other countries.

Two important resolutions were passed by the Dominion Parliament last month by large majorities. Hon. John Costigan moved a resolution favouring Home Rule for Ireland. This was passed after a lengthy debate by a non party vote of 102 to 41. Sir Wilfred Laurier and R. L. Borden both voted for the resolution. The trend of the comments of the English press upon Mr. Costigan's resolution are, that Canada has enough to do if she develops her North West, and had better let England manage her own affairs. The other resolution was moved by Mr. Bickerdike, for a legislative enactment prohibiting the sale of cigarettes. Mr. Bickerdike spoke of the well-known evils of cigarettes and showed how it was increasing in rapid strides and that the ultimate effect was to undermine the health and character of our youth. In the United States, 42 out of 48 of the States have passed legislation on this subject. The returns of the Inland Revenue Department showed that the number of cigarettes manufactured in Canada in 1900 was 88,000,000, which increased to 101,000,000 in the following year and 116,000,000 in 1902. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 103 to 48. A bill to prohibit the sale of cigarettes, as it interferes with the revenue, cannot be introduced by a private member, but must be brought down by the Government.

Mr. John Charlton brought a bill before the Dominion House of Commons, the latter part of March, to amend the Dominion Elections Act, to secure purity in elections. This is a step in the right direction. All Canadians who have the welfare of their country at heart are deeply concerned over the wholesale bribery and corrupt practices at elections, indulged in by both political parties. Any Act which will tend to minimize these evils will have the hearty support of all true Canadians. In many of the States of the Union this evil has been stamped out by drastic measures. By Mr. Charlton's bill proceedings before the courts in election trials are made much simpler and less expensive. The following is also added to the offenses detailed under the Dominion Election Act: Abduction, duress, or forcible interference with a voter, threatening of employees by firms or corporation in any form whatever and undue influence by officials of dominion or provincial government on voters. Also, a new section is added giving the right of bribed to sue his briber and recover \$500, thus placing the briber completely at the mercy of the person he bribed. R. L. Borden, leader of the Opposition, in discussing the bill, said, that he would like to see an Act passed to compel voters to use their franchise, he thought this would do away with the evil of paying a man to stay at home and not vote. Mr. Fielding, Minister of Finance, agreed with the leader of the opposition, and suggested that the evil corruption at elections be taken up and dealt with in a non-partisan manner by a committee. On this, Mr Charlton withdrew his bill.

Sir Wilfred Laurier brought down the Government's Redistribution Bill the latter part of last month. Representation by population is the keystone of the Canadian confederation. By this Bill, Ontario will lose six members; Nova Scotia, two; New Brunswick, one; and P. E. I., one; while Manitoba gains three; North West Territories, six; and British Columbia, one. The Yukon is given one member. The North West Territories are not numerically entitled to ten members, according to the last census, says Sir Wilfred Laurier; but in view of its rapid development during the next ten years, it is the intention of Parliament to give it that number.

The Government expresses the intention to preserve county boundaries as far as possible. The readjustment of constituencies is to be made by a special committee composed of four Liberals and three Conservatives, thus following the precedent set by Mr. Gladstone in the Imperial House in 1884. The Bill is not to take effect until the dissolution of the present Parliament. Sir Wilfred Laurier disregarded New Brunswick's contention, that according to the strict terms of the B. N. A. Act, they did not lose a member. Attorney Gen. Pugsley when questioned in the N. B. House concerning this, said that he still held to his contention, that it was not an unusual thing for the Provinces to differ from Ottawa, and that the Dominion Government had consented to have the question submitted to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Recent Development of Wireless Telegraphy.

The success of Marconi has indeed been phenomenal. He persuaded the Canadian Government to advance him the money to build the station at Glace Bay. His stock has already sold at more than forty per cent premium on the Montreal market. Through the King, it is said, he has overcome the obstruction of the British post office. The Cunard line is bringing out newspapers on the ships by the aid of Marconigrams. The system is being very generally employed in light house and other coast service, and now the "Times," the world's premier newspaper, so far, at least, as its foreign service is concerned, has arranged for the regular transmission of news by the Marconi Company on a contract basis, by which it receives messages from the United States at a cost only a little in excess of the cable rate from England to France. The "Times" in an editorial makes reference to the vast importance of this system in various strategical problems. Wireless telegraphy is yet only in its infancy, and no one can tell what the next few years may bring forth. As is the case of every new invention, so in the case of wireless telegraphy, there are numerous competitors and law suits already pending. In the United States, the deForest company is suing the Marconi company for a million dollars damages, for certain statements said to have issued from the Marconi company. The latter replies by a suit for infringement against the deForest company. In Germany the Slaby-Arco and the Brown system have had a clash. In France the government has practically confiscated wireless telegraphy. Italy seems to have taken up with Marconi, and the English Government has also equipped many of its warships with Marconi instrument.

The Antarctic Expedition.

Interesting news has just reached England concerning the English exploring expedition now on the Antarctic. The members of the ship "Discovery" have succeeded in reaching latitudes farther south than any heretofore reached. They are now entering on their second winter over 2,000 miles due south of New Zealand, the latitude 82.17 degrees and 163 degrees longitude being reached by travelling over the ice with dog sleds. The lowest point ever before attained was latitude 78 degrees. Captain Scott believes that Victoria Land, which was discovered by Sir James Ross in 1841-42, stretches on to the pole in a series of mountains and that the great belt of ice is really in the nature of a glacier coming down from these heights. Great hardships were suffered by the explorers, on their dash from the ship, and one of them nearly died from exposure. Their dogs all died and they had to drag their sleds back to the ship themselves. The "Discovery" was sent out by the Royal Geographical Society of England. She cost over \$500,000, is built of wood and is the strongest ship afloat. She is commissioned to spend two summers and one winter in the Antarctic regions, and is expected to return next autumn.