

Awful Tragedy on Grand Trunk Railway Two Miles East of London

CHAS. H. DRAKE, OF LONDON TP., WITH SISTER-IN-LAW AND BABY INSTANTLY KILLED BY EXPRESS

Two Were Riding in a Milk Wagon, Which Was Closed, and They Could Not Hear the Express as It Thundered Upon Them.

SCOTTISH RITERS FROM HAMILTON WERE COMING HERE ON THE TRAIN

Members of the Masonic Body Tell The Advertiser of the Sickening Scene When the Engine Was Brought to a Standstill.

THE TRAGEDY.

Dead—Charles H. Drake, Mrs. Robert Drake, and her 2-year-old child.
Scene—Grand Trunk crossing, two miles east of city.
Cause—Express No. 3 struck closed milk wagon.
Time—1:20 this afternoon.

Charles Henry Drake, aged 32, his sister-in-law, Mrs. Robert Drake, and her 2-year-old child, were instantly killed at 1:20 this afternoon by being struck by Grand Trunk Express No. 3 at a crossing two miles east of London East station.

BABY TERRIBLY MANGLED.

The baby was terribly mangled, its head being cut off and one arm torn away. Mrs. Drake's body was found on the tender of the engine and that of her brother-in-law close by. All had been riding in a closed milk wagon to attend Mr. Drake's mother, who is lying seriously ill at her home about 200 yards from where the fatality happened.

SLEIGH WAS CLOSED.

Owing to the terrific gale, which was raging the closed sleigh was being used to shelter Mrs. Drake and her little one, and when the express, coming along about 60 miles an hour from Dorchester, struck the vehicle, it caught it fairly and its occupants probably never knew what struck them.

The skulls of Mr. Drake and his sister-in-law were badly smashed, and the baby was mangled horribly.

A SAD FEATURE.

A particularly sad feature of the accident is that it was witnessed by Mr. Harry Drake, father of Charles Drake. Mrs. Drake lived on Rathgar street, in East London. Mrs. Herbert Rutledge, of 271 Wellington street, is a sister of the dead woman.

A TERRIBLE SIGHT.

"Mrs. Drake lay on the tender of the engine, and her ground near by. The sleigh had been smashed into kindling-wood. The horse, strange to say, escaped unhurt, and we saw it running away down the road. The house of the dead man's father was about 200 yards away, and we saw the old man out in the yard. He was chopping wood, and as soon as he looked up and saw the horse running down the road, and the train at a stand, he seemed to know that something was wrong, and hurried out. His grief was terrible to witness."

WERE INSTANTLY KILLED.

Mrs. Mullin and McIlwraith, of Hamilton, were on the train coming from Hamilton. They at once looked after those who had been struck, but could do nothing, as they had been instantly killed. After examining Mr. and Mrs. Drake, the doctors said that their skulls had been fractured. The bodies were not much hurt, except for the injuries to the head.

MOTHER-IN-LAW WAS ILL.

Mrs. Drake, sen., had been ill for several days, and Mrs. Henry Drake had been sent for to attend her. Owing to the stormy day it was decided to take the closed milk wagon in order to shelter the woman and little child. The doors were all tightly shut, and those inside apparently never had the slightest inkling that the express from the east was approaching at a terrific rate. The frail sleigh was smashed to pieces in a second, and, although Engineer Galbraith stopped as soon as possible, it was too late.

THE DEAD.

The dead man is 32 years of age, and his sister-in-law 27. The baby was 2 years of age. The family is widely known all through the district, and highly esteemed. The brother of the dead man was frantic with grief when he heard what had happened. As soon as possible the bodies were gathered up and placed in the baggage car of No. 3, and rushed to London, where they are being taken charge of by a local undertaker. An inquest will be held.

AT HIGH SPEED.

At the point where the accident happened the trains are accustomed to come along at high speed, and owing to the blinding snowstorm the engineer apparently failed to see the sleigh.

SCOTTISH RITERS ON TRAIN.

On the train was a party of Scottish Ritters en route to the big convention being held here. As soon as the men felt the emergency brakes applied they rushed out, knowing that something serious had happened. The sight that met their eyes was a horrible one.

"When I got out," said one man, "the first thing I saw was the headless body of the baby lying beside the tracks. One of its little arms had been torn off, and its head lay under the engine."

BLIZZARD RAGED IN LONDON BUT STREET CARS KEPT MOVING

Market Was Almost Forsaken
—Steam Lines Kept Open.

From the point of view of the pedestrian and those working out of doors, today has been one of the most unpleasant days of the winter—real March weather, in fact. Coming so unexpectedly after the mild spell of the early part of the week, the contrast is the more noticeable, and those who faced the biting wind that has been blowing a gale from the east ever since early morning were chilled through and through. The wind at times attained the velocity of a gale, and drove the fine snow into people's faces, as though it was coming from a sand jet.

While the mercury did not at any time get below 17 above zero, the piercing wind and the dampness in the atmosphere made it seem much colder, and everyone who had any business to do started to shiver.

the railways, and made trains late. Railwaymen, however, are congratulating themselves that there was no snow on the tracks, and no loose snow in the streets. The street car company, anticipating it was kept running all over the various lines. Little trouble was experienced in keeping the cars fairly well on time.

The market today presented a desolate appearance. Very few farmers ventured out, the majority preferring apparently to remain at home, and do odd chores about the place, or stay indoors.

Trouble With Wires.
The telegraph and telephone companies had a good deal of trouble with their wires. The telegraph wires all day have been working very heavily, and great trouble has been experienced in getting messages through from the east.

The return to cold weather is not unwelcome to skating rink men, who hope to continue for a couple of weeks longer the harvest they have been reaping of late.

A PICTORIAL SERMONETTE.

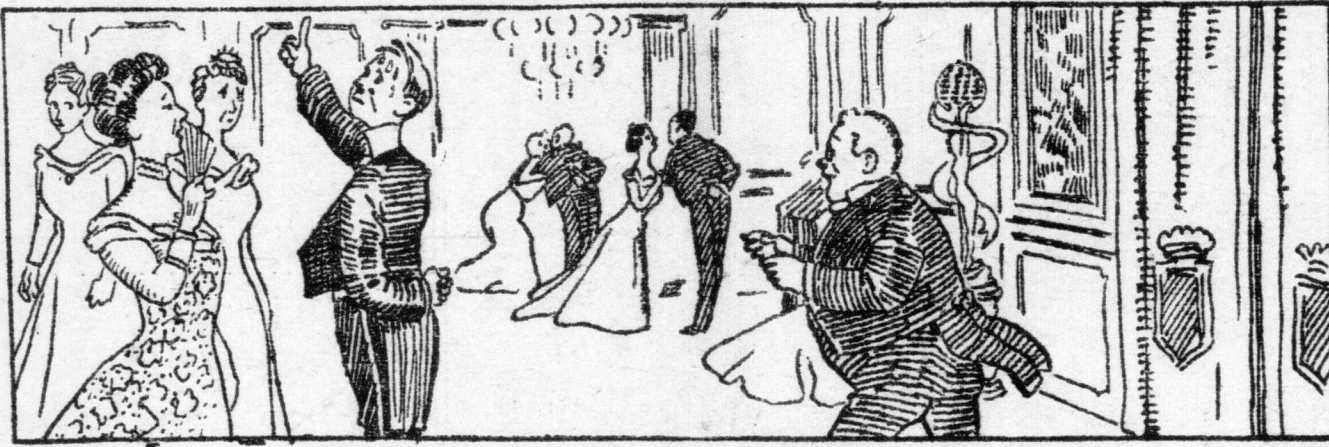
One of the Perils of Those Whose Positions in Society Are Not Secure.

By John T. McCutcheon.

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Mr. Snobbly (aside)—"Great Scott, there's that man who spoke to me at the hotel. I wonder how he broke in here. I hope he doesn't speak to me right here before Mrs. Topnotcher."



"Oh, Mrs. Topnotcher, what a beautiful tapestry that is over there!"



"And what a lovely chandelier you have." (Aside.) "I hope that old man has not recognised me."



As a matter of fact, old Mr. Bullion didn't know Snobbly was on earth. He merely came over to speak to his old friend, Mrs. Topnotcher, with whom he spent a week at a house-party in Windsor Castle as the guest of King Edward.

COAL STRIKE MENACE CLOSING DOWN PLANTS

Many English Concerns Inform Employees That Work Will Cease.

[Canadian Press.]
London, Feb. 21.—Conditions throughout Great Britain, particularly in the manufacturing districts of the north of England are becoming rapidly worse as a result of the threatened coal strike, which if it occurs at the end of the month, will throw 300,000 miners besides workers in other trades out of employment.

At many of the ironworks and other big factories the men today received notices from the employers that their services would not be required after Feb. 29 should the coal strike be decided on.

Most of the factories have supplies of coal, but these are required for the most urgent work in hand. In London and other cities the price of coal had already reached \$3 a ton, and the poorer classes of people are paying almost double this rate, as they purchase only in small quantities.

THE WEATHER.

TOMORROW—MODERATELY COLD.

Forecasts.
Toronto, Feb. 21—8 a.m.
Today—Easterly gales with snow, turning locally to sleet or rain.
Thursday—Strong westerly winds; clearing and moderately cold.

The following were the highest and lowest temperatures during the 24 hours previous to 8 a.m. today.

Stations.	High.	Low.	Weather.
LONDON	33	20	Snow
VICTORIA	46	38	Cloudy
CALGARY	40	24	Fair
WINNIPEG	12	0	Cloudy
PORT ARTHUR	24	8	Cloudy
PARRY SOUND	20	4	Cloudy
TORONTO	32	12	Snow
OTTAWA	30	2	Cloudy
MONTREAL	36	19	Cloudy
QUEBEC	35	2	Clear
FATHER POINT	34	19	Cloudy

Weather Notes.
The depression which was situated in Texas yesterday morning has since developed into an important storm, which is now centred in Kentucky. The outlook is very stormy from the Great Lakes to the Maritime Provinces.

15,000 VOLTS PASS THROUGH MAN YET HE LIVES TO TELL THE TALE

Allan McLean, an Operator at Springbank Pump House, Had a Marvellous Escape From Death When Niagara Power Current Was Suddenly Turned On.

To have 15,000 volts of electricity pass through his body and live to tell of it was the remarkable experience of Mr. Allan McLean, an operator at Springbank pumping station on Tuesday afternoon. Mr. McLean is now confined to his home as a result, and is under the care of Dr. W. J. Stevenson. His injuries consist of severe burns about the hands, a wrenched back, and a general shock to his system.

Tuesday afternoon the power was turned off the high tension wires to the Springbank power plant from the Horton street station. Mr. McLean then proceeded to work about the wiring, cleaning the parts with a piece of waste. He was perched upon a ladder several feet above the floor at the time.

Without warning, the fifteen thousand volts, enough to kill a battalion, were sent over the wires and flashed into the place at which Mr. McLean worked. The electricity flared out, and, short-circuiting through the oily waste which he held in his hand, burned him about the arms.

The waste served to a degree as an insulator, but a tremendous current passed through Mr. McLean's body, wrenching him from the ladder and knocking him to the floor.

He at first did not consider the injuries serious and remained on duty alone until 10 o'clock. On arrival at his home, however, his condition was such that the services of a physician were necessary.

May Be Investigation.
It is thought that an investigation into the cause of such a serious error will be made. The current is always turned off when the work of cleaning is being done at Springbank and should not be switched on without first giving warning by phone.

SALARIES WERE DECIDED UPON AT MEETING HELD ON THE QUIET

Graded Scale Plan Was Adopted and Certain Stipends Were Fixed.

At a secret meeting of the finance committee of the city council, held on Tuesday night, salary increases for the civic officials were taken up. The graded scale plan was adopted, and several of the officials are started off with slight increases on the present year's stipend. The heads of the departments will go up by easy stages. City Treasurer Bell's maximum being placed at \$2,500. City Clerk Baker will also receive the same amount, both at-

THOUSANDS ARE MADE HOMELESS BY FIRE AT HOUSTON, TEXAS

Populous Section of City Swept By Great Conflagration Which Destroys Many Warehouses and Big Buildings, Doing Many Millions of Dollars Damage.

[Canadian Press.]
Houston, Texas, Feb. 21.—Impelled by a gale that swept in with one of the coldest northerners of the winter, flames swept the eastern section of Houston early today. At least twenty-five blocks of the city were destroyed. Scores of cottages were destroyed. Several big manufacturing plants were burned down. Thousands of persons are homeless.

The losses are conservatively estimated at from five to six millions of dollars.

Big Cotton Loss.
The greater part of this is confined to the lumber and cotton industries. Forty-five thousand bales of cotton stored in warehouses and compresses were burned. This item alone sets a loss of \$2,000,000.

The fire started in a cottage near the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks soon after midnight. Its origin has not been definitely established. A roaring wind picked up the flames and hurried them to neighboring cottages and boarding-houses. In a flash these ignited, spouting great columns of sparks. Sizzling steam, the forty-mile gale carried them two and three blocks. Within half an hour after the fire broke out a great area of small residences were in flames.

It spread rapidly to manufacturing plants that bordered on cottages and boarding-houses, where hundreds of workmen lived. The fire spread so rapidly that firemen abandoned attempts to check the flames, instead devoting their energies to warning householders.

Possible loss of life was thus averted. At the big manufacturing plants and cotton compresses, city firemen and volunteers had organized to fight the on-rushing flames. Walls and roofs of the plant were water soaked. This water was kicked up in the flash of an eye by the advance guard of sparks, however, and when the great column of flames reached the factories they succumbed as easily and with less resistance than rows of cottages.

Stream Saves City.
An hour after the flames began their irresistible advance, the firemen organized for a final stand at Buffalo Bayou, a small stream that divides the eastern part of the city from the main section. Every piece of fire fighting apparatus was stationed along the banks of this stream, which passed by the fire, thus bringing the destruction of the entire city. The fire raged to a much larger figure.

Thousands of persons were driven from their homes. In the cold of the norther they suffered slightly from exposure. Relief work was immediately set under way, however, and food and clothing provided for the refugees. Many persons were hurt during the fire, but so far as can be determined there were no casualties.

The burned area is at least a mile and a half long, and at points a quarter of a mile wide. The burned area embraced long rows of cottages and solid streets of manufacturing plants. It was swept clean by the flames. Nothing was saved. Some thirty cottagers and boarding-house keepers set their furniture on the sidewalks before the flames reached their homes but as soon as the fire came the piled-up belongings went the way of the destroyed houses.

One of the first of the more pretentious buildings attacked was the brick Star and Crescent Hotel. Inmates had been warned of the oncoming flames and all escaped without injury. The flames roared gave warning of their coming. Hundreds of persons, giving no heed to their night attire, rushed from their homes as they heard the roar of the fire. Women, carrying babies, women at whose skirts small children clung, gathered in homes of nearby neighbors for refuge, only to be driven out a few minutes later by the further progress of the fire. Firemen organized leaders among the men of the burned area, and these, marshaling the refugees, led them to the rear of the flames and out of danger.

Homes were quickly provided for these people in other residence sections of the city. Clothing and food was prepared by a relief committee, and there has been comparatively little suffering. Destruction of baled cotton and manufacturing plants make up the bulk of the losses on which estimates are based. This reaches about \$5,000,000. Losses on residences and household effects may bring the destruction of the entire city. The fire raged to a much larger figure.

BOURASSA WARNS FRENCH MINISTERS

He Says They Must Insist on Separate Schools in New Part of Manitoba.

OR RESIGN FROM CABINET
Not a French-Canadian Who Took Their Place Could Be Elected in Quebec—Signs of Crisis.

Montreal, Feb. 21.—Mr. Bourassa's paper, Le Devoir, warns the French-Canadian members of the Government that they must insist on the right to establish separate schools in that portion of Keewatin to be annexed to Manitoba. Le Devoir says:

"Mr. Monk in 1905 made a fight to maintain the first draft of article 16 (of the Northwest autonomy bill). Mr. Pelletier, who presented himself last year as an independent candidate, has never failed to denounce the backslidings of Sir Wilfrid Laurier."

"We do not wish to believe that if there is a crisis—if the three French ministers are constrained to abandon portfolios become too heavy for their honor—there will be a single member, Conservative or Nationalist, to take these portfolios."

"If such a man exists, it would be immediately necessary for him to ask the people to approve his act. We doubt if there is in this province a county where he could return with the mandate of a deputy (an M. P.)."

"But all this is hypothesis founded on some newspaper dispatches. We shall wait before judging men and things until the Government has officially made known its intentions. Have we need, in the meantime, to reaffirm our own? We have not changed since 1905; we shall be found whatever comes on the side of liberty, justice, and right."

LORD STRATHCONA HAS HEAVY COLD

Some Anxiety Felt Over Condition of the High Commissioner.

Montreal, Feb. 20.—A cable from the Star's London correspondent says: "Some uneasiness is caused by today's developments into influenza of the cold which Lord Strathcona has had for some days."

Sir Thomas Barrow is in attendance. The high commissioner's splendid constitution will, it is hoped, assert itself.

PIERRE THOMPSON'S FRIENDS ANXIOUS

Dispatch From West Tells of Death of Man of Almost the Same Name.

ONCE IN LOCAL BANK
Former Londoner Is in the West, But It Is Hoped He Is Not the Person Referred to in Dispatch.

A Canadian Press dispatch to The Advertiser on Tuesday told of the death of a man named P. Thompson, teller in the Bank of Hamilton, at Fernie, B. C. The dispatch has caused a great deal of uneasiness in this city among friends of Mr. Pierre Thompson, who was in the Imperial Bank here a few years ago, and later, after being removed to Quebec, went west.

Pierre Thompson was also employed at one time in the business office of The Advertiser. He was a well-known hockey player and had scores of personal friends here.

So far as is known, he left the banking business some two years ago, and had become interested in some lumber enterprise. But certain of his friends who read the dispatch fear that it may have been he who perished in British Columbia.

Wired the Manager.
To clear the matter up, The Advertiser wired the manager of the Bank of Hamilton, but up till the time of going to press no answer had been received.

The dispatch of Tuesday read as follows: Fernie, B. C., Feb. 20.—P. Thompson, teller in the Bank of Hamilton here, and recently transferred from Winnipeg, perished alone in the hills across the river yesterday. His body was found yesterday afternoon above Ferry Falls.

He started for a tramp at 10 o'clock Sunday, taking with him a camera and snowshoes.

A Lorry Upset.

Shortly after noon today a G. T. R. lorry laden with boxes of heavy paper upset on the street car tracks between Clarence and Wellington streets, on Dundas street, and tied up traffic on the street railway for about fifteen minutes. The slippery condition of the road was responsible for the upset. Several boxes of the paper were broken open and the contents blown all over the street.