

The Toronto World.

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ANOTHER PREVENTABLE ACCIDENT

Another terrible accident due to the continuance of unguarded level crossings, occurred at Grimsby on Saturday morning, when a sleigh with seven occupants returning from a social entertainment, was struck by a G. T. R. express said to have been traveling at a rate of about a mile a minute. Four of the party were instantly killed, one died shortly afterwards in hospital, the two others may be fatally injured. It is the second serious accident occurring at this particular crossing, as in 1902 three young men were sacrificed while returning from a church service. What renders the crossing peculiarly dangerous is the fact that a train approaching from the west cannot be seen owing to the blocking of the view by the station building and it is suggested that the high east wind prevailing on Saturday morning prevented the warning whistle from reaching the ears of the occupants, who, besides, were thickly muffled against the biting air.

The tragic part is that these and similar accidents are distinctly due to preventable causes. For years Mr. E. A. Lancaster, M.P. for Lincoln, has prosecuted a bill in parliament designed to protect level crossings near towns and villages throughout the country. It is an excellent measure and Mr. Lancaster deserves every credit for the pertinacity with which he has championed this simple act of justice to the people. After four years of hard fighting the bill passed the house of commons, but it was thrown out by the senate, a body which in railroad matters may be safely trusted to ignore public rights. Morally speaking responsibility for this accident rests upon the senators who were instrumental in securing the rejection of the bill quite as much as on the railroads that refuse to adopt necessary precautions against preventable accidents. One may well ask how long this needless slaughter of innocent persons is going to continue and when the government and parliament will recognize their duty to compel the roads to operate with proper regard for the public safety.

CANADA AND A BRITISH PREFERENCE

Some enthusiastic imperialists in the mother country and some here apparently over-anxiously concerned about the sentiment and attitude of Canada in the event of the United Kingdom continuing its present fiscal system. The people and the government are being entreated, indeed implored, to restrain their impatience, to refrain from encouraging reciprocal trade with foreign countries by means of mutual tariff concessions, and, above all, to retain their British preference at its existing figure. Canada is asked to wait and see what the next British general election will do, and is confidently told that with it the day of tariff report and imperial preference will arrive. The World will be delighted to welcome the realization of these hopeful anticipations, for which no doubt there is warrant in the story of British by-elections. But The World does not at all agree with the implied affirmations that the preference voluntarily granted by Canada is dependent on the mother country reversing her fiscal system, and that reciprocal arrangements are improper if they lead to that preference being modified.

Every Canadian concedes the absolute right of the British people to maintain or establish whatever tariff regulations they consider best adapted to their interests and special circumstances. The Canadian has no difficulty in making this admission, because on his own behalf he claims and exercises precisely the same privilege in connection with the affairs of his own country. He may have his own opinion regarding the advisability of protecting the home industries of Great Britain just as British free traders have their opinion concerning the wrong-headedness of Canada's policy, and are not backward in uttering it either. But no Canadian desires to influence public opinion in Britain in a matter that primarily concerns themselves. As, however, Canada is a member of the imperial co-partnership, any Canadian is free to advocate any policy which he may consider beneficial for the empire as a whole, even though it be an inter-imperial preference, and he is perfectly justified in commending it to his kin beyond the Atlantic. And the fact that the other self-governing imperial states favor this proposition is an element in the case which the British people are entitled to have before them, and, indeed, are bound to give due consideration.

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