



BY STAFF WRITERS

BEFORE work was begun on the new Grand Trunk line between Winnipeg and Port Arthur, it was thought that it might be completed in 1907. Before much was done, the date was changed to 1908. The latest news places the date in 1910. The work has proved much more difficult than was anticipated, both on the part being handled by the Grand Trunk and the main line which is being constructed by the Trans-continental Railway Commissioners. The spout of the wheat hopper is not being enlarged as quickly as the country had hoped.

ENLARGING THE SPOUT

The work of double-tracking the Canadian Pacific line between Winnipeg and the twin towns on Lake Superior—Fort William and Port Arthur—is being steadily prosecuted. The Company is issuing more stock and will have plenty of funds for the continuation of the work in 1908. With plenty of capital and with cheaper labour and cheaper steel, the C.P.R. should show excellent progress in 1908 in this special undertaking.

The volume of traffic passing through this district is steadily increasing. If 1908 happens to favour the West with a bumper crop, the spout of the hopper will be all too small. It is of great importance to the country that the two railways now passing through that district and the one under construction should receive primary consideration from the different managements. Any failure to promptly and fully transport the wheat to the head of lake navigation, means a considerable loss to all the new settlers who are doing their utmost to make the Last Great West the granary of the world.

ON several occasions last year the probability that wages would be lower was outlined in these pages. The expected has occurred. A leading paper manufacturer told the writer a few days ago that his business was never in better condition. The prices of raw material are coming down, while labour is cheaper and more plentiful. A large factory in Montreal which lowered wages and released a small percentage of its work-people had a strike which lasted only a few days. The firm promised to raise wages when times got better and the men returned. The other day, there was a dispute in Cobalt as to wages and an arbitration committee framed a new schedule at lower rates for all classes of miners and helpers; this has been accepted without a murmur. Contractors who last summer were paying \$2.00 for pick and shovel men are now paying \$1.00 to \$1.50.

DECREASES IN PRODUCTION COST

Raw material is lower; wages are lower; the cost of manufacture is lower; and as a consequence most of the articles which the great consuming public regard as necessities are cheaper. Canada was becoming a dear country in which to live and to do business. The cost of production was so high that profitable export was often impossible. The recent flurry in financial circles and the steady increase in the supply of labour have brought conditions to a more reasonable basis. If capital and labour are wise, they will hesitate before returning to the extravagant methods which have prevailed for several years.

ONE of the most regrettable features of Canadian social life is the excessive amount of alcoholic liquor consumed between meals. This ancient custom is slowly but steadily being eliminated. A new trouble is now in sight. The Goderich Township correspondent of the Clinton "New Era" tells of a meeting held to hear the result of the day's voting and speeches by the newly-elected reeve and councillors. The report closes with this record: "Refreshments in the way of candies were then distributed to the large and enthusiastic audience." This is the thin end of a new wedge. Just when people have discovered that election whiskey is not good for them, some wicked man intro-

CANDY AS A REFRESHMENT

duces the practice of giving the electors stomach-ache by supplying them with free candies.

There is grave danger here. If all the candidates for public office—federal, provincial and municipal—adopt the practice of carrying a painful of gum-drops or conversation lozenges with them on their canvassing tours, it will be a grave menace to the national stomach. True, it may stimulate the growth of candy factories and greatly increase the trade in this commodity. It may also, by substituting candies for liquor, enable country hotelkeepers to maintain their old-time profits. Candy bar-rooms may become as numerous, as attractive and as profitable as liquor bar-rooms. Lollypops, bullseyes and sugar-sticks may be as refreshing as beer and spirits, but too great indulgence in them is almost as dangerous.

This transfer of the Canadian affection from beer to candy will also have some other doubtful results. For example, imagine its effect upon our pastimes, our pulpits and our legislation. When the fifth "end" of the curling match is reached, the skip from the Chocolate Club will say to the skip from the Sugar-Stick Club, "Come into the club-house, old man, and let us have a few peppermints. I find they help to keep out the cold and prevent my feeling weary." On Sunday morning the village parson will deliver a sermon on "Over-Indulgence in Sweeties." Some aggressive but meddling member of Parliament will bring in a Bill whereby the municipalities will have "Local option" as to whether or not the hotel bars shall be allowed to serve candies to their customers or whether these shall be sold only in sealed packages for home consumption.

In order that the subject may be further discussed before the public, the editor will give a prize of a two-cent stamp to every subscriber who can add the proper word to the following unfinished Limerick:

There was a young lawyer in Kent
On a political career most intent;
Said he, "I will buy the best sweeties and sticks
If you elect me." It was sad,
For the voters were on to his ———.

All answers must be accompanied by one coloured label from the top of a candy box bearing the name of some confectioner who advertises in "The Courier" or some other reputable periodical. P.S. Enclose twelve and a half cents for return postage.

ROUGHLY speaking paupers may be divided into three classes, viz: people who can't work, people who won't work, people who are able and willing to work but can't get work. In the first class we may place physical and mental cripples, men and women who by

WHY SHOULD POVERTY EXIST

reason of ailments of the body or mind are unfit to earn a livelihood. The State assumes responsibility of caring for those who are mentally weak and it is not unreasonable that the State should be the guardian of those who through birthright, accidents or disease are unable to look after themselves.

In the class of those who won't work we place the able-bodied vagrants and beggars who are parasites on society and those who are chronically lazy. There should be little difference of opinion as to the deserts of men and women of this nature. They should be confined in jail, or better, places specially prepared for them separated from criminals, and at all hazards be prevented from increasing the species. It might not be a bad idea to include among this number those for whom fortune has made it unnecessary to gain a livelihood and who have so little in common with their fellowmen and State that they are unwilling to undertake exertions on their behalf.

Having disposed of those who can't and those who won't work it will be found that there is a very small number of paupers in the country. Those who are willing and able to work and cannot find