

prevented from obtaining easy access to our shores, but it would be the height of folly to close the gates entirely. Let us get the very best immigrants obtainable, but let us get immigrants.

SIR FREDERICK GROWS HAUGHTY

SIR FREDERICK BORDEN, Minister of Militia and Defence, grows haughty. First he said he would assemble 25,000 troops at Quebec in July just to show the world what a great army of citizen soldiers Canada could mobilise on short notice. Incidentally he would do honour to the Tercentenary celebration and the memory of Champlain. To his intense disgust, the railways objected to carrying so many troops to a small city where railway accommodation is limited; and the troops objected to going if a portion of the expense came out of their annual pay. Everybody was so nasty about it that Sir Frederick cancelled the orders. Thus ended the first lesson.

Then Sir Frederick decided to send about 8,000 urban troops to Quebec and issued orders that the rural corps should attend the annual training camps. Militia Order 108, dated May 11th, named the staff of officers to command at instructional camps at Goderich, Niagara, Kingston, Ottawa, Laprairie, Three Rivers, Levis, Sussex, Aldershot and Charlottetown. Sir Frederick was determined that the soldiers should have their annual training somewhere, and if not at Quebec then at the regular camps. Now the naughty Opposition at Ottawa steps in and blocks the voting of supplies. The Government of which Sir Frederick is a member has a majority of nearly sixty in the House of Commons but it cannot get its appropriations passed. Sir Frederick is thus in a painful position. He cannot get money with which to hold these annual camps. So he announces that his 30,000 soldiers must go without training this year. Thus ends the second lesson.

It is not easy to decide at whose door the blame for all this bungling must be laid. It is not clear that the Opposition would have passed a special appropriation for the camps if they had been asked to do so. It is possible they might. Nor is it clear that Sir Frederick has done his best to get his appropriations through. It is possible that had he explained the situation to the House, he would have been told to go ahead with his expenditures and that the House would see that an appropriation was ultimately made. Whoever is to blame, the situation is one which reflects little credit on our parliamentary representatives at Ottawa. The political fight may be justified but it will be exceedingly unfortunate if the militia should go without its annual training. The discussion which must follow will probably enable the public to more accurately place the blame.

THE WINCHESTER PAGEANT

ONE of the most interesting events of this month in England will be the holding of the pageant at historic old Winchester which was a city of many traditions when Egbert was king. The continuity of English history, the beginning of the wonderful blending of race-elements which has given us modern Britain, may be picturesquely displayed in the pageant of this gray cathedral city. The members of the Pan-Anglican Congress who meet in England this month will doubtless see an illuminated church history of unique brilliancy when they assemble at Winchester on June 25th. Bishops of England, the United States and Canada will gather at the scene of England's early christening, for it was at Winchester that Egbert first called the new kingdom, Anglia.

Much has been said and written, both in England and America about the degeneracy of modern drama. In the yearly festival at Stratford and the modern pageant there is an attempt to give the people something nobler than inane and vulgar musical comedy and dreary problem plays. In the pageant, the religious element is of robust strength of a rejoicing eagerness such as the Puritans would have condemned, but which is in historic keeping with the traditions of Alfred and Arthur. Mr. F. R. Benson, the actor-manager of the Shakespeare festival, is in charge of this pageant which, it is prophesied, will present a nobler picture of Early England than any other British festival.

FRAUDULENT SPIRITISTS

CANADA has recently come into possession of a Society for Psychical Research. Consequently the recent work done in the United States by a similar organisation is not without interest. A camp near Buffalo, having the idyllic name of Lily Dale, has attracted many pilgrims owing to the psychical claims put forth by certain characters in the neighbourhood. A member of the Society for Psychical Research went into this camp as investigator and, according

to the New York papers, discovered that several clairvoyants and trance mediums were achieving all sorts of fame and fortune by playing tricks as ancient as Egyptian magic at the expense of respectable citizens who paid as much as five dollars for the inalienable right of obtaining a shining gold brick. By this exposure the Society for Psychical Research has shown its honest desire for real discovery and its firm purpose to eliminate false claims to unusual mental power. The simple citizens who went to Lily Dale in the fond belief that spooks would appear or send messages from shadow land are, no doubt, feeling foolish and defrauded.

Many sober critics will say that dabblers in such mystery deserve to lose good coin of the realm in consequence of their credulity; but they forget that the tribe of trance mediums appeals to one of the most natural cravings in suffering humanity—the desire to know of a loved one's existence in another sphere. In spite of all the absurdities in connection with the exposure of certain spiritualistic frauds, there is a pathetic human weakness in the desire of the audience. Those who are merely curious deserve to lose their dollars but those who have gone in the belief, however foolish it may be, that they are appealing to high spiritual powers, are rather to be pitied. The investigation of such claimants can hardly be too rigid and the serious students of psychical phenomena are the most desirous of their complete testing. Canadian cities have had more than their share of such pretenders to extraordinary gifts. Those who really possess any such power are the last to make public their experience and would never associate it with mere money considerations.

RURAL SCHOOLS IN THE WEST

A CORRESPONDENT in the West has sent us a suggestion which should be widely and freely discussed. He is in favour of the Protestant missionary in the remote West being given an extra government grant for combining school-teaching with his clerical duties. There are regions in the new provinces where there are hardly enough children to form a school district and where the settlers are not sufficiently keen to discern the advantages of education. Where a missionary of the Roman Catholic faith goes, he is master of a school as well as religious guide to the parish. Every Canadian remembers Longfellow's description of *Father Felician* of Grand Pre who was both priest and pedagogue. There are many Father Felicians in the West but the Protestant missionaries have unrealised opportunities for educating the scattered communities.

Our correspondent points out the extreme desirability of having every child in the pioneer districts given such instruction as will afford him the "chance" which a new country promises the native-born. The school-house and the church were the early formative forces in New England and should be found as neighbours in the Canada which is a-building. The villages, towns and cities of the West have shown a pride in their school equipment but the remote settlements are another matter. The suggestion that these young Canadians who are in danger of losing early instruction should be instructed by the nearest missionary at government expense is worthy of instant and careful consideration, for every unschooled citizen is an impediment to national growth.

School needs are pressing in many districts of the Province of Manitoba. For instance, the municipality of Rockwood recently sent a delegation of discouraged farmers to Winnipeg to plead for better roads and proper schools, the members of the discontented band declaring that they must move farther west if conditions are not improved. Education is a stern necessity and every means of instruction should be used by the Government for these remote districts. The farmer who will move away if education is not provided for his children is just the kind of man a community should strive to retain.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

BUSINESS conditions steadily improve. Though wet, cool weather has been the rule in Ontario and Quebec, the West is having an ideal spring with prospects of an early and abundant harvest. Money is getting more plentiful and stocks are advancing in price. That imports from abroad are decreasing is not a bad sign, as it shows that merchants are not overloading. There is little wheat to sell, but exports have increased slightly. The Bank of Montreal's deposits are scarcely a million less than on April 30th, 1907. The profits of the Bank for the six months show a slight decrease, but are nearly half a million dollars in excess of dividends. Money wages still tend to decline, but so do prices of the necessities of life so that workingmen are not greatly injured.