

The Canadian Courier

A National Weekly

NEWS CO. EDITION

Subscription : \$2.50 a Year.

Vol. I

Toronto, March 9th, 1907

No. 15

Topics of the Day

HON. MR. MATHESON, Treasurer of Ontario, has reported a surplus of one million dollars in two years. This is an immense sum of money and shows that Ontario is reaping a portion of Canada's prosperity. It also shows that the Whitney Government has been economical to the extent of keeping the expenditure within the income. It does not sound difficult, but neither private individuals nor provincial treasurers find it easy. By the end of the year, Mr. Matheson hopes to have a total provincial surplus of four million dollars—one-third larger than John Sandfield Macdonald's famous balance, which is said to have brought about his defeat.

Mr. E. J. Pense, who criticised the Budget for the Ontario Opposition, makes a new mark in this field. He confined himself almost entirely to praise and congratulation. He claimed, however, that the former Liberal Government had sowed what their successors were reaping; therefore they shared in the glory of this prosperity. It was a statesmanlike and broad-minded utterance which does Mr. Pense much credit.

The recent disastrous fire in a Montreal school-house, resulting in the death of nearly a score of children, has led to a discussion as to the advisability of having fire-escapes on the outside of school-houses. The weight of opinion is against them. In winter they are dangerous and at all times they are unsuitable for the use of children. The only safe-guards seem to be two-storey school-houses, double exits, careful construction, and fire drill. Inspector Hughes of Toronto says that they have had nine fires in thirty years; in three of these the school-houses were destroyed; in all cases the fire-drill proved equal to the emergency.

Parliament has been discussing old-age pensions in an academic manner. Apparently the object is to stir public discussion on the subject. How to provide against the poverty of old age without putting an embargo on thrift is a problem which many economists have faced. Sir Richard Cartwright prefers annuities guaranteed by the government. These would cost the state little, would encourage the labourer to save for his helpless period, and would furnish a means of enabling the interest on the public debt to be paid to the public at home rather than the capitalist abroad. In Great Britain a similar discussion is proceeding and a start may be made in that country this year.

The success of the Governor-General's theatrical and musical competition at Ottawa, the visit of the Mendelssohn Choir to New York and the subsequent public dinner to Dr. Vogt show that Canada is not wholly interested in chasing the almighty dollar. Art and culture are receiving due attention. Moral and intellectual progress are by no means neglected.

Manitoba is having an election this week and the result may be a surprise. Mr. Edward Brown, the Opposition leader, is an untried man. He states that if called to office he will devote all his time to public business and divest himself of all personal interests. It is often difficult for provincial cabinet ministers to live up to this ideal.

In Canada last year, the fatal railway accidents numbered 361, a decrease of 107. Of this number, 16 were passengers, 139 employees and 206 were "others."

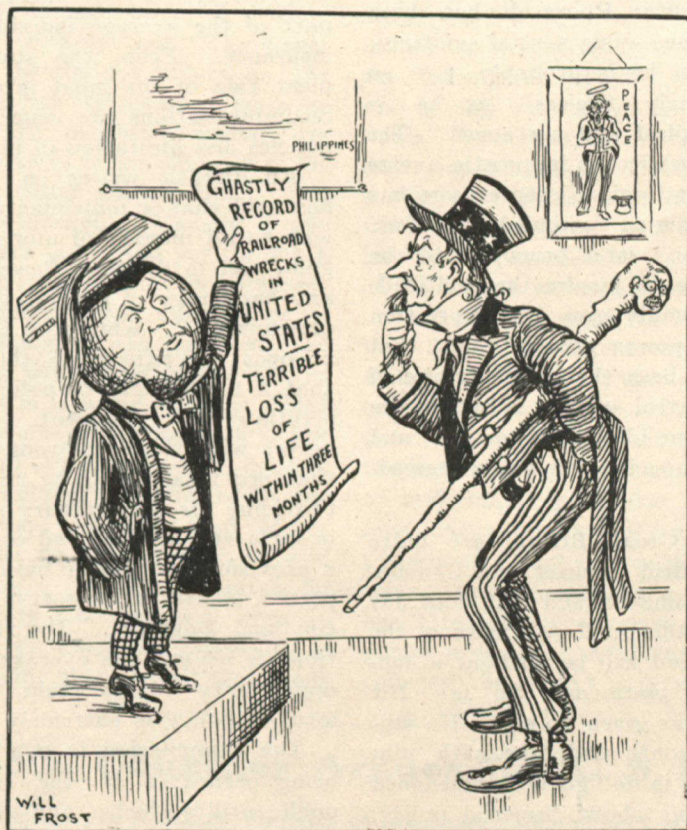
In the first nineteen days of January of this year, the United States railways killed one hundred and thirty-six people. In 1905, the total in the United States was 9,703, of whom 537 were passengers. In 1905 Great Britain's railways carried over a billion passengers and killed only 166 passengers. In Germany, only 74 lost their lives, and in France only 18.

It looks as if human life is less highly regarded than speed and profits by the United States railway managers. Canada's showing is favourable, although it is by no means clear that carefulness is on the increase.

New Brunswick has had a forestry convention at Fredericton, awakening public opinion as to the need for preserving the timber resources of that district. The change in sentiment on this subject has been contemporaneous with the steady rise in the price

of lumber. Canada is discovering what Europe found out hundreds of years ago, that there is an art in cutting down a forest. If care is exercised, and only the ripe trees selected, the forest may be preserved indefinitely. She is also learning that much land which has been denuded of its forest, is fit for nothing but tree-growing and should be replanted.

The capitalisation of Cobalt mining companies is now over three hundred million dollars. The yearly output will have to be pretty large to give a return on that amount of money, after paying the expenses of mining, the cost of refining, the provincial tax, the cost of management and the promoters' profits. A few mines will be wisely and honestly managed, and a fair deal given to the stockholders. But—



The World—Say, Uncle, isn't it about time you attended to your own particular beam?