

American road is now being pushed eastward to the Sault, an enterprise which would have no adequate object unless there were a prospect of the extension of the Sault branch of the Canadian Pacific. But this is something in the future. Interest centres in the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway proper; what supplementary work may be done afterwards has little present interest for Canadians.

SEDUCTION.

The proposal which has been so often discussed in the Dominion Parliament to make seduction under certain circumstances a criminal offence has attracted considerable attention to the subject. Whether that course is the proper remedy is a matter of doubt, but that some change in the law is necessary, must be evident to everyone. Seduction, unless coupled with a promise of marriage, entitles the party really offended against to no redress whatever in the eye of the law. The actions for seduction, so frequently brought into our courts, are all instituted by the parent or other guardian of the unfortunate victim. Their right to recover is based upon the theory that by what has taken place they have been put to pecuniary loss by reason of the inability of the person seduced to do her accustomed work and perform her accustomed service. True, the jury in awarding damages is not bound to pay strict regard to the actual amount of loss thus sustained, and as a matter of fact takes the sentimental part of the case largely into its consideration in estimating the damages.

While this is true, the loss of service is the only legal foundation of the right of action, and if the circumstances are such that there could have been no such loss the action cannot be maintained. This point is exemplified in a recent decision by the Common Pleas Division of the Ontario High Court of Justice where the plaintiff, who sought redress in the girls interest, was her grand-uncle. It appeared that her father and mother had died when she was about twelve years of age, when she went to live with the plaintiff, and that as soon as she was able to perform domestic service she went from there to various persons, and was at the time of the seduction at service, a situation which she had occupied for three years previously. At the time of the offence she was about nineteen years of age. After the seduction she left her situation, went to Detroit for a couple of weeks, and then returned to the plaintiff's home, where she resided until her illness, when she went to an hospital where the confinement took place. While with the plaintiff she worked as one of the household, did whatever was required of her and was treated as if she were at home with her guardian. Under these circumstances it was held that the plaintiff had no right of action whatever, and of course the girl herself had none. The right of action, if any existed, was said to be vested in the person who was her employer when the offence was committed. Assuming that that person refused, as he might very properly, from his point of view, refuse, to become a party to such an action, it does seem that this is a clear case of wrong for which the law provides no redress.

Another class of cases in which difficulties of the same kind have arisen, is where a girl marries and it is subsequently discovered that she was seduced before marriage, in consequence of which the husband, very properly of course, refuses to continue the conjugal relation. It would seem to be very doubtful whether under these circumstances the right of action against the wrong doer is vested in anyone, unless, perhaps,

in the husband, who, in such a case, is not likely to seek pecuniary redress in the interest of one whom he has discarded. The simple remedy for this state of things would appear to be, to endow the victim herself with the right of action. In the majority of cases, as they occur, it is true that it makes no practical difference, as the father or guardian secures redress in his name; but this is no reason why that redress should be entirely denied in cases where it happens that there is no one who, in the eye of the law, is entitled to maintain a suit. The whole subject is a deplorable one, but it is one with which every community must grapple in some shape, and there really appears to be no reason why the rules of the law, with reference to it, should not be based upon some rational principle.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

The ordinary summer and autumn travel to Montreal has been, this year, supplemented, and the holiday activity of the city increased, by the gathering in that city, during the present week, of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, and the annual meeting of the Canada Medical Association. The last-named would, of itself, have attracted a considerable number of the medical profession from all parts of Canada, as is usual wherever its meetings are held. But the overshadowing attraction is the concourse of distinguished men, in all branches of science, which the yearly gathering of the former ensures. It is pleasing to know that the bold idea of having this year's gathering in Montreal instead of in some city of the United Kingdom, originated with a Canadian, the Lord Bishop of Ontario. The last president was a well-known mathematician, Professor Cayley, L.L.D., F.R.S.; and the president-elect is the Right Hon. Lord Rayleigh, D.C.L., F.R.G.S., &c., Professor of Experimental Physics at Cambridge, and known in former years as Mr. Strutt. The buildings and grounds of McGill College, the David Morrice Hall, and we believe also the handsome Presbyterian College, have all been allotted for the purposes of the meeting, which will include almost a thousand scientific men, members or associates. The wives and daughters of many of these have accompanied them across the Atlantic, and not a few American and British professors and doctors are in attendance as delegates at the various sections.

In the group of portraits of leading members published in *Harper's Weekly* we recognize the well-known features of two Canadian scientists, Dr. Dawson, of McGill College and Dr. T. Sterry Hunt, both vice-presidents, while the list of Sectional Officers includes Dr. Daniel Wilson, in Anthropology; Prof. J. Clark Murray, in Economic science and statistics; Dr. Bell and the Abbe Lafamme in geography; Profs. Osler and Ramsay Wright in biology; Prof. Selwyn in geology; Prof. Pike and Mr. Thos. Macfarlane in chemistry; Prof. Cherriman and Mr. Chas. Carpmal in Mathematical and Physical science, names which will be readily recognized in Canadian scientific circles. The citizens of Montreal have made most hospitable arrangements for the entertainment of their distinguished guests. Excursions, either free or at reduced rates, are arranged, in order to give opportunity for visiting Quebec, Ottawa, Toronto and Manitoba. The Government of Ontario, we understand, makes the members of the Association its guests for a visit to the Agricultural College of Guelph during the coming week, and an excursion party, limited to 300, is to be conveyed free over the Ontario and Quebec road to Toronto. Finally, according to the official excursion programme, 150 ladies and gentlemen,

members and associates, will be conveyed by train from Montreal to the Rocky Mountains, free of charge; and, so far as Canadian liberality been carried: "Trans-Atlantic members of the Association, who have not already visited the North-West, and who are not included in the special excursion, may, if they so desire, obtain free passes to the summit of the Rocky Mountains by the Canadian Pacific Railway, enabling them to make the journey by regular trains."

If, therefore, the strangers do not "have a good time," the fault can hardly be said to be ours. The result of this great gathering cannot well be other than beneficial to Canada in affording so many able and prominent men the opportunity of seeing for themselves what Canada is like.

PREVENTABLE FIRES.

Mr. Edward Atkinson, President of the Boston Manufacturers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company is among the visitors to the science meeting of the British Association in Montreal. To this gentleman's thorough and scientific investigation into the causes and prevention of fires, is due the credit of the great reductions effected in the rates of insurance on particular manufacturing risks, which under certain specified conditions his company insures. By patient and laborious work, he first tabulated the losses his company had sustained for a period of 28 years. He then classified, with great care, the origin and cause, so far as known, of each fire, and found that nearly one-half of them was due to spontaneous combustion and the use of broken lanterns. He offered prizes to the students in the Massachusetts School of Technology, for investigation into the comparative danger arising from the different kinds of oils used in mills. Various methods were resorted to in order to solve this interesting question. The most successful experiment was that of saturating pieces of cotton waste with the different kind of oils, enclosing each in a separate metallic case together with a thermometer. Some popular oils were soon proved to be extremely hazardous, while others were found to be comparatively safe—and a few quite safe. Mr. Atkinson took advantage of the knowledge thus obtained and insured such mills, only, as used the non-hazardous oil. Animal oils were found to be the most dangerous and mineral oils the least.

An improved lantern was invented the use of which greatly reduced the number of fires; the old lanterns were at once abandoned. It appeared that many fires occurred during the night when one workman only was employed in making repairs. A rule was at once adopted requiring all repairs during night or day to be done by two workmen at least, on the ground that if there was only one, he could not extinguish the fire and give the alarm at the same time, whereas in the other case, one could give the alarm, while the other attempted to extinguish the incipient fire. This was also found to work satisfactorily in reducing fires. The rule is that one of the workmen must be competent to start the engine and pumps promptly.

One thing was clearly made manifest, that fires were more frequent during the night, and when work was suspended than at other times. The 4th July, thanksgiving day, Christmas and other holidays, were found to be notable for fires. Increased care and vigilance during such times were insisted upon by the mill mutuels. This eminent underwriter recommends strongly the use of wooden doors sheathed with tin, to divide one part of a risk, in a large building, from another. These doors are looked upon as being much superior to those made of