

## COTTON'S WEEKLY

FORMERLY  
"THE OBSERVER"

Is published every THURSDAY at Cowansville, P.Q., for the broad field of Canada in general and the Eastern Townships in particular.

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Guaranteed circulation, 2,000  
This issue, 2,200

WM. U. COTTON, EDITOR AND PROP.  
H. A. WEBB, BUSINESS MANAGER

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1909

## THE INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY

The poor old Intercolonial Railway is having a hard time of it. Rumors have been afloat for a number of months that something was going to happen to it. It has not happened yet.

The I. C. R. has been a white elephant on the hands of the people. The Conservatives in power ran the thing and ran it into debt. The opposition Liberals loved the I. C. R. in those days. They could draw down their faces and point with gloom to its recurring deficits. They could wail over Conservative mismanagement, incompetency and extravagance. In those days the Conservatives had little love for the dear old I. C. R.

Today the positions are reversed. The Conservatives love the I. C. R. Now that the Liberals are in power and are not making the road pay, the Conservatives can draw down their faces and point with gloom to Liberal corruption, extravagance and incompetency as illustrated in the ever recurring I. C. R. deficits.

Truly the I. C. R. has been the sport of politics and the end is not yet. The road could be made to pay and should not be alienated by the country.

## PROGRESS

F. C. MEARS

One does not know what an elusive thing progress is until one makes an attempt to define it. All definitions so far attempted display nothing other than the littleness of human intellect and the hopeless limitations of language. The simpler-minded students of the sphynx progress regard it as some peculiar change which is worked in things for the better. But their definition begs another equally difficult question. What is the better? Someone hastens to answer, that is better which makes us happier. Then an interminable debate is precipitated on the meaning of happiness. Every one knows how it feels to be happy, but who can give a satisfactory definition of happiness? It is just as elusive a term as progress.

This introduction is not calculated to indicate the limitations of the human mind, but simply to indicate the difficulties confronting anyone who attempts to form for himself anything like a clear and concise conception of what progress really is. Ambassador James Bryce, one of England's most eminent scholars and publicists, delivered an address at Harvard University two years ago on "What is Progress?" The lecturer showed his wisdom in not attempting any conclusions concerning the nature of progress. The best he could do and the best anyone can do in studying this much vexed problem is merely to study it from every side and be on the alert to receive even a slight hint that might help to solve this eternal riddle. The most we know concerning progress is, and this can be found through experience, that to retard it is to bring eventual disaster upon our heads, but to accelerate it is to greatly enhance our station in life. This sphynx is much like the Church. One can best aid it by believing in it. Optimism, or belief in eternal progress, constitutes a splendid stimulus to nobler and worthier endeavor and a very powerful auxiliary to progress. But pessimism, which is the result of looking at things through the wrong end of the telescope, is a very bitter enemy to progress, and is the most formidable check to evolution.

A Chicagoan who thinks for himself

says that eternal progress means to him the continual advancement of all things in the line of continuous evolution—evolution on the several planes of the physical, mental and spiritual. To him the greatest joy of all joys is the joy of going on. In order to realize the universality of this going on process is to study Nature's way of doing things. Nature is forever going on—constantly progressing. There is no standing still in Nature. Everything is on the move. The work of Eternal change is always and everywhere in evidence. Nothing endures that is on this planet. As someone has put it, "All have within themselves the conviction that things are not merely going, but going on." Everything is on the move toward somewhere, probably that far-off Divine event of which Lord Tennyson sings.

Some mental errands have enunciated a unique philosophy of progress. They call it the theory of eternal Recurrence. They hold that there is nothing in the Universe but constant change without any special object or goal—nothing but a constant doing and undoing, living and dying, ever round and round in an eternal cycle of repetition. In their eyes civilization tends nowhither. That would be a sorry piece of presumption, indeed. It isn't a philosophy that would bolster one up in times of dejection, or brighten one's path on dark days. Although the present writer was born a Liberal in politics he is inclined to cling to the philosophy of Eternal Progress and be its ardent apostle.

A recognition of Eternal Progress and its immanence will help us all to live and do our work better and leave us less fatigued at the evening hour. Mr. Atkinson says, "The human race is not all wrong simply because someone has failed to do exactly what you wanted done. Nor is the human family depraved because a few fall short of your particular standard of perfection. If you lose faith in the entire race simply because one or a few persons have failed you, your view of life must be extremely narrow."

## The Master Paradox

Though it is the working class which makes all the world's clothing, it is the working class which goes shabby.

Though it is the working class which produces all the world's food, it is the working class which goes hungry.

Though it is the working class which builds all the world's houses, it is the working class which goes shelterless in panicky times.

Though it is the working class which fights all the world's wars, it is not the working class which profits by them.

Though it is the working class which maintains all the world's colleges, it is not the children of the working class who are taught in them.

Though it is the working class which produces all the world's wealth, it is not the working class which enjoys most of it.

But this sort of talk promotes that evil thing called "class consciousness."

## Children of the Poor

For a piece of consummate snobbery the following from the London Daily Chronicle would be hard to surpass: "Loss of infant life is a more serious matter among the better classes, because the children of parents who can provide a decent bringing-up and good education for their offspring are more valuable to the nation." All children are equally valuable to the nation, and it is the nation's own fault entirely if some are deprived by it, when growing, of the proper means of developing into equally valuable adults. As we have contended previously, "the children are the greatest asset the state has, and the state should provide for and protect its own." If all are provided by the state with equal opportunities for mental, moral and physical development, all will be equally valuable citizens. State endowment of motherhood would be one way of furthering this end.

## MOVING VERY SLOWLY

The big action of the Minister of Militia against the editor of Cotton's Weekly, formerly the Cowansville Observer, is slowly driving its dreary way as several incidental proceedings have to be disposed of. It is now stuck on a motion for particulars on the part of the defendant. It seems that the fading echoes of the elections tend to take away the vim and zest necessary to carry on such a case. Sherbrooke Record.

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## A SEA VOYAGE

Miss Muir Writes Interestingly of the Trip to Barbadoes

Fourth Letter—Dominica and St. Lucia

On Sunday November 23rd, 1493, Columbus first saw Dominica, and he named it in honor of the Lord's Day. On Sunday, November 22nd, five centuries later, we saw this mountainous and most picturesque of the Leeward Islands. When Columbus was asked by his Queen to describe Dominica, he took a piece of paper in his hand, crumpled it up and threw it on a table. A dark irregular mass of lofty mountains rise abruptly from the ocean, covered with a mantle of green. When we drew near to the town of Roseau, the anchor chain was heard being let down, on and on it went, was it never going to stop. There, they have found bottom. No more chains needed, and after nearly 200 feet of chain is payed out, the bed of the sea is so deep that no sounding line has reached it. The town which is paved with cobble stones, is on a narrow strip of land near the shore, and we are told that there are now carriages on the island, all travel being done on horse back. The houses are mostly one storey boxes of wood, but every street is picturesque, green with fruit trees and cocoa palms. Near the town is the river from which it gets its name, and in all the numerous fertile valleys are streams swarming with fish. I heard there were 347 streams. Dominica is 29 miles by 16, and has the highest mountain of any of the islands, Mount Diablotin 5,314 feet. A few Caribs, the last of their race; still linger there; they have a reservation among the mountains of 1,000 acres. They seldom come to the settlement. All these islands were once inhabited by these warlike Caribs, who fought foot by foot for their territory until they were overcome by the white races.

The Caribs who inhabited all the Windward Islands, were cannibals. They ate human flesh at their great festivals. The story comes down to us, that one chief said, "they did not care much for Spaniards or French, they tasted so strong of garlic, and they did not enjoy Englishmen, for they were so highly flavoured with tobacco."

Some of our fellow passengers started off on horse-back to see the Boiling Lake, away up among the mountains over 2,000 feet above the sea. After enjoying a stroll in the public gardens, I was glad to have an opportunity of attending services at St. George's church. It is a large stone building and there was a good congregation about equally divided between white and coloured. I was glad to see that as far as seating them, there was no difference. Most of the best seats, being occupied by coloured people and all the people were well dressed. The offering was taken by four black men, and in the choir there were three white boys, the rest coloured. The rector and curate were white. Socially there is a colour line, but in God's house there is none; on perfect equality, we all knelt before the same God and Saviour. I enjoyed the hour very much, but my thoughts were often in Cowansville.

Near the church is the old fort, it is a quiet place now, but for hundreds of years, it was the scene of many fierce struggles between the French and English. Some guns are mounted pointing to the sea and at nine o'clock every evening one is fired, a signal that all rum shops must be closed. The heat is intense and we were glad to get into the boat and row toward the ship.

In the distance to the north, is the outline of Guadeloupe, in the twenty miles of sea between it and Dominica, was fought one of England's great naval battles. To refer to it may interest some of the readers of COTTON'S WEEKLY. When England's thirteen American colonies revolted, France, Spain and Holland united to tear her West Indian possessions from her. Fortunately, the Islands were then under Rodney. He took the Leeward Islands from the French and the Islands of St. Eustatius from Holland. The peace at any price party in England, led by Fox and Burke, summoned Rodney home, and in his absence most of the islands were retaken. The French fleet, now supreme, blockaded New York and Lord Cornwallis was obliged to surrender. The French admiral, Count de Grasse, hurried back to Martinique; the Spaniards had a fleet at Havana and they were to unite, capture Jamaica and drive the English out of the West Indies. It was a critical moment, Gibraltar had been besieged

for three years. One chance remained; Rodney was ordered back to the West Indies. Gibraltar was relieved and Admiral Rodney hurried back to St. Louis, which still flew the Union Jack; waited his opportunity. On April 8th, 1872, news came that the French fleet had sailed and was becalmed near Dominica. Rodney at once pursued them. The French ships were immensely superior and had 20,000 soldiers intended for Jamaica. Defeat at that moment would have meant ruin to England, but Rodney thought only of victory. On his ship Formidable he led the attack and after two days all the French ships were either sunk or disabled. The Ville de Paris the largest ship in the world only surrendered after all her masts were shattered. On the quarter deck of the Formidable De Grasse gave up his sword to Rodney. Peace followed, but it was peace with honor. The American colonies were all lost, but England kept her West Indian Islands and her command of the seas.

St. Lucia looks very pretty as we draw near to the port of Castres. The town seems to be in the centre of almost a circle, the only opening being the channel we enter. The houses in gardens, white with red roofs are built up to the top of the hill back of the town. At the points of land are fortifications which are considered the finest in America. The batteries are connected by subterranean passages. They are hid by dense foliage and have disappearing guns. Great Britain spent \$5,000,000 on them. St. Lucia was intended to be the Gibraltar of the West Indies. Of so great importance was St. Lucia considered as a naval station, that for 160 years France and England fought for it. Under the present government in England the troops have been withdrawn and the West Indies left defenceless. It is not very pleasant reading to see how the sacrifices of brave English sailors, have gone for nothing with the Home government in regard to this island. In 1728 there were large settlements of French and English in the island. It was under British rule from 1756-1763 when it was ceded to France. It taken by the British in 1778, given back by treaty in 1784. Taken again in 1795 handed back 1802. Taken again in 1803 and has remained in British possession ever since.

This is the only island where the ship has been able to come up to a wharf and it is a great coaling station. The coal piles are regularly built up in terraces on the side next the sea. On the south of the Island are two high pinnacle shaped rocks close to the sea called Pitons, one 2,715 feet and the other 2,500 feet. We sail close to them and smoke from the volcano Soufrieres was pointed out to us. So far the course of the ship has been south, now it turns east to Barbadoes.

A. Muir.

Montreal's morgue statistics for 1908 form rather a gruesome record. In all, 850 violent deaths or deaths under suspicious circumstances occurred. Of these twenty-three died from foul play and ten from Italian stilettoes. There were twenty-nine suicides, nineteen from gas inhalation; seventy-nine were drowned in the St. Lawrence, fifty were killed on the railways, twenty-two by the street railway; fifteen by explosions, ten of which were due to the Ile Perrot accident. There were 218 sudden deaths recorded, fifty-seven were burned and six scalded to death. One fireman was killed on duty.

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