

## OVER-MANY LAWS.

## A Crying Curse of the Degenerate Legislatures.

Henry St. George Tucker, of Virginia, is the latest public speaker to call attention to the evils inflicted on the public by the excessive over-production of laws and statutes. In his address to the members of the American Bar Association, of which he holds the presidency, Mr. Tucker, among other excellent things, said:—

"What impresses one most deeply in an examination of the legislation of the States is the number and variety of subjects of legislation and the assumption (I will not say always improperly) by the state of functions which in our earlier history were unclaimed by it. We are a much-governed people, and there is nothing which affects the American citizen, from infancy to the grave, awake or asleep, in motion or at rest, at home or abroad, in his personal, social, political or property rights, which is not the subject of regulation by the state. Indeed, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we do it all in subordination to the law of the state. The Government, as trustee for society, controls our rights, our wants, our necessities, and our individual action in their relation to society. The pangs of hunger and thirst, the uses of property and the freedom of individual action are all regulated by their effect upon others, and we realize at last in its fullness of meaning the truth that 'no man liveth unto himself.' The home is no longer a man's castle, but it may be a prison house with the family as the inmates and the board of health as jailer."

Upon these remarks the Albany Argus comments as under.—

"The same thing has been said before, but it cannot be said too often, or too emphatically; too many be-it-enacted are the growing curse of our time. The people are in part to blame for the abuses and excesses of legislation, for a delusive notion has grown up that every evil or misfortune can be cured by a statute decreeing that it shall no longer exist; but thousands of laws are on the books at which lawyers, even, are surprised when their attention is called to them—they never dream of their existence."

"More than 700 new laws were added to New York State's total by each of the last two Legislatures. Think of such a total; in an old state, where all ordinary and natural subjects of legislation were covered, years ago. In great part, these new laws are tinkering and fixings-over of old statutes, to gratify a legislator's whim that he can do it better; but ignorance of the law excuses nobody, and the impossibility of keeping track with them all, and understanding the changes in old laws with which one may chance to have been familiar, is no defence."

But for the fact that a large percentage of the inquisitorial paternalistic legislation of the States is dead letter from the start, the patience of a much-legislated people might give way, or force the election of Legislatures pledged not to legislate.

## ANSWERS TO ENQUIRERS.

Land Owner, Kingston.—(1) The paper is too technical, and not of sufficient immediate interest. Send it to a chemical journal. (2) The general view of mining men seems to be opposed to royalties on minerals. The business of mining or prospecting for mines is laborious enough, and, indeed, it is also risky enough, and expensive enough, without loading it with a tax of the kind. Here's an extract from a recent letter to the Canadian Mining Review on the subject, signed by A. McCharles and J. E. Hammond, of Sudbury: "The mere suggestion of a royalty makes the soul of a Sudbury mine-owner or prospector sick—and, no wonder. For the royalty that was put on the nickel mines in 1891 only produced instead of revenue two bad results, and had to be abolished in the end. It destroyed the selling value of all the nickel properties it applied to for seven long waiting years, and, worse still, it enabled one company to get a practical monopoly of our

nickel mines. Those who are engaged in the mining industry are quite willing to pay their fair share of the burdens of the community in the way of taxes, but they are not willing to be singled out for a special tax from which all other industries are free. The ordinary risks of mining are enough to take. Besides, in Ontario, except a few little broken stringers of silver-cobalt ore in a very circumscribed area in the Temiscaming district, nearly all the economic minerals so far discovered, such as nickel, iron and copper, are low grade ores and expensive to treat, notwithstanding all the windy yarns published in the daily press."

F. M., Boston.—The name of the Superintendent of Mines for Canada is Eugene Haanel, Ph. D., whose address is care Department of Interior, Ottawa. The Ontario Bureau of Mines is not a Dominion affair, but belongs to the Province of Ontario. Its director is Mr. T. W. Gibson; its secretary and inspector is W. E. H. Carter, B. A. Sc.

Bank Clerk, Chatham.—France has been a republic for a quarter century or more. Her population is nearly 39,000,000.

## OUR HALIFAX LETTER.

The attention of business people and others here during the past two weeks has been taken up principally with the annual exhibition, and a large number of visitors from all over the Province, have been in the city. The attendance, however, has not been so satisfactory as could be wished for, and the Provincial Government will undoubtedly be called upon to face a pretty heavy deficit this year. Sentiment in favor of holding the fair every two years instead of yearly is gaining ground, and it is not improbable that after 1906, when the Dominion Fair is to be held, the two year rule will be the one adopted. Another drawback is that holding the exhibition so early in the year does not permit of an adequate display of fruits and vegetables. About the poorest display made this year was in the fisheries section, which is somewhat surprising, considering that fishing is by far the largest resource of the Province. Next year a new and properly adapted building will be prepared to house the fishery exhibit, and it is hoped that it will be up to the expectations which visitors from other provinces will undoubtedly entertain regarding it.

Black Brothers & Company, Ltd., fish dealers, has passed into the hands of a receiver. The Blacks' hardware business was started in Halifax in 1816, and has recently been carried on by Messrs. Troop. After the fire on Water Street last year, in which the hardware premises of the firm were destroyed, they retired from the hardware business and devoted themselves entirely to the manufacture of prepared codfish. They were indebted in a large amount to the People's Bank, of which the head of the firm was a director, and theirs was one of the accounts which made it necessary for the People's Bank to be merged in a stronger institution. The court has appointed William Duff, of Lunenburg, as receiver, and he is now advertising for a million pounds of green fish with which to carry on operations. The failure of the firm has been expected for some time. Another fish firm, also heavily indebted to the People's Bank, that of L. Anderson, Lunenburg, has also assigned; and it is thought that there will be a merger of Black's, Anderson's, and some other concerns in the same line.

J. C. McIntosh & Co., Halifax, have been awarded the city loan of \$207,000, at four per cent., thirty-five years; floated for sewerage construction. Their tender was \$207,274.27. There were seven other tenders at or below par.

The City Engineer's annual report shows that the cost of maintenance of the waterworks last year was \$83,511.77, an unusual quantity of new work having been performed in the renewal of old mains. The engineer used the waterworks as a moral to point some remarks he made on the subject of municipal ownership, the system having earned each year the entire cost of maintenance, renewals and repairs, and left a margin of profit. The rates are low as compared with other cities of about similar size.

Judge Longley has been re-appointed president of the Exhibition Commission.