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The San Jose Scale. The San Jose Scale has become quite prevalent in parts of Ontario, and is giving much trouble to orchardists. Already quite a large area is affected. This is a serious matter, not only because there is great danger of the infection spreading through the country, but also because the fact that Canadian orchards are thus infected may cause an agitation in other countries against the importation of fruit from Canada. The government of Ontario is wrestling with the difficulty. It had been hoped that the scale could be exterminated by cutting down the orchards infected, but this has been found too expensive a business, as it would involve a very heavy drain upon the public funds to afford even a partial compensation to the orchardists, and even then the loss to many orchardists would be ruinous. The Minister of Agriculture is accordingly now seeking to deal with the trouble by furnishing fruit-growers with the means and the instructions necessary to destroy the scale without cutting down the trees. Experience, it is said, teaches that by systematic work this can be accomplished. Strict precautions are being taken to prevent the spread of the infection through nursery stock, but it is to be feared that it will be found to be a matter of great difficulty to exterminate the pest. Fruit-growers in the Maritime Provinces cannot be too strictly on their guard against its introduction.

Hon. Mr. Mulock goes to Australia. It was generally understood that at the opening of the first Parliament of the Australian Commonwealth, which is to take place on May 6, Canada would be represented by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. But it is now announced that parliamentary duties will prevent the Premier's going as had been intended. The session of Parliament is likely to be prolonged considerably beyond the limit at first anticipated, and in view of this fact and the important character of business still to be dealt with by Parliament, it is said, the Premier has deemed it wise to forego the pleasure of the proposed visit to the antipodes, and to send a member of his cabinet to represent the Government and the country, at the Australian inauguration. The choice for this important mission has fallen upon Hon. William Mulock, the Postmaster-General, who by virtue of his character and ability, as well as by his connection with the realization of Imperial Penny Postage and the Pacific Cable scheme, will very worthily and suitably represent the country. Mr. Mulock is to sail from New York on the 16th inst. for England on his way to Australia. During his absence the business of the Post Office Department will be in the hands of Hon. James Sutherland.

The Pacific Cable. A resolution submitted by the Postmaster General has been adopted by the Dominion House of Commons authorizing the Government to guarantee the payment of five-eighths of the principal sum of £2,000,000 required for the construction of the Pacific Cable to connect Canada and Australia. This sum which is £300,000 greater than that previously estimated as necessary for the construction of the work will be loaned by the Imperial Government, while the Colonial Governments guarantee their several shares in the expense. In connection with this vote, Mr. W. F. McLean of East York, brought up the matter of the nationalization of the whole telegraph system of the country, of which he is a strong advocate, contending that it would result in a large saving to the country, and, through the reduction of rates, in giving a most valuable impetus to the country's trade. He held also that trans-Atlantic Cable would be a paying investment for the Canadian Government. Mr. Mulock intimated that

he had his own views upon the subject, but did not consider the occasion opportune for discussing a scheme for the nationalization of the telegraphs. It was further stated in the course of the discussion that the company which is contracted with to lay the Pacific Cable is virtually the Eastern Extension Company, which is the greatest rival of the undertaking, and might naturally be expected to delay the work. The opinion was generally expressed that the terms of the contract should bind the Company under heavy penalties to the fulfilment of its obligations within the time specified, that is January 1st, 1902.

A Railway Commission. The question of the appointment of a Railway Commission for Canada was discussed in the House of Commons last week, on a motion of Mr. Davis of Saskatchewan, who moved a resolution expressing the opinion that the interests of the country demand the appointment of such a commission at the earliest possible moment. Mr. Davis evidently has a great deal of faith in the power of a commission such as he advocates to prevent unfair discrimination in rates and to remedy other evils connected with the present railway systems. He presented figures to show the existence of such discrimination and argued from the advantages which appeared from railway commission in Great Britain and the United States. The Minister of Railways spoke to the motion at considerable length, but in a non-committal manner. He recognized the existence of much popular sentiment in favor of a railway commission, and thought that the experiment of a commission should be tried, but declared that the legislation to establish such a commission could not be introduced at this session of Parliament. In the meantime he favored investigation by Government of the facts and of the question to what extent existent evils were remediable through a commission. Hon. Mr. Borden, leader of the Opposition in the House, agreed with those who doubted that a commission would bring to an end the evils complained of, though recognizing the existence of evils and the importance of dealing with them as effectively as possible. These views seem to have represented in a general way the attitude of the House toward the subject. Mr. Davis' motion was adopted without division.

A Tumult in Parliament. On Tuesday night of last week the British Parliament was the scene of tumult and violence said to be scarcely paralleled in its history. The trouble arose in consequence of a number of the Irish members refusing, at the request of the Speaker, to withdraw into the lobby, in order to a division of the House. The Education Estimates were before the House, and sometime after midnight Mr. Balfour, the Government leader, moved the closure—that is a motion to shut off further discussion. As the part of the estimates relating to Ireland had not been discussed, the application of the closure was resented by a number of the Irish Nationalist members who persistently refused to obey the request of the Speaker to withdraw to the lobby. Sixteen recalcitrants were then named by the Speaker. Mr. Balfour moved their suspension which was agreed to without a division. As the members named by the Speaker persisted in their refusal to withdraw, the Sergeant-at-Arms was called upon to remove them, and as they still shouted defiance and resisted, policemen were called in and the mutinous members were removed by main force, some of them resisting violently and their friends taking a part in the melee, so that for some minutes there was a free fight on the floor of the House. In the face of such information as is contained in the despatches it is scarcely possible to say whether or not the Irish members had just grounds for resentment at the course pursued by the Government, but in any case the conduct of these members is not of a character to cause the Irish demand for home rule to be regarded with greater respect in England. The whole incident is one to be deeply regretted as tending to embitter race feeling and resentments already too strong for the happiness of the Kingdom. On the motion of Mr. Balfour, the House has adopted a motion making the penalty for disobeying the Speaker suspension for the remainder of the session.

Against Russian Aggression in China. Some recent London despatches in respect to the situation in China, and especially in respect to the attitude of the Russian Government toward the occupation of the Province of Manchuria, have been of a somewhat alarmist character. It is represented that a crisis has arisen in Eastern affairs, which, in the opinion of the British Government, is of a very grave character, and that secret negotiations are going on between Great Britain and the United States with a view to thwarting what both Governments appear to consider a determined attempt on the part of Russia to plant herself permanently in one of the richest tracts of the Chinese Empire. From Washington it is denied that the United States Government is carrying on secret negotiations with any Government in respect to Chinese affairs, and it seems probable that the London despatches have magnified the gravity of the situation. It is quite certain, however, that the apparent determination of Russia to take possession of Manchuria under the plea of temporary occupation is far from agreeable to Great Britain, the United States, Japan and any other nations that desire to maintain the integrity of the Chinese Empire, and it is also probable that the situation is being canvassed with a view to determining how much pressure can be brought to bear upon Russia with the purpose of securing her withdrawal from Manchuria. Much will evidently depend in this connection upon the strength of the protest that the United States Government is prepared to make against the Russian occupation and much also upon Germany's attitude, which at present is regarded as rather doubtful in respect to the maintenance of the integrity of China. If Russia is permitted to have her way in Manchuria, it would likely involve the entire dismemberment of the Empire. So far as China itself is concerned there appears to be no effective protest against Russian occupation, the Government having apparently been captured by Russian diplomacy. The only thing therefore that could be expected to be effective against the partition of China among the nations would be a united and vigorous protest on the part of Great Britain, Germany, the United States and Japan against Russia's occupation of Manchuria.

South Africa. Though no despatches from Lord Kitchener appear to have been published touching negotiations with the Boer General Botha, London newspapers are in possession of information which they regard as trustworthy, to the effect that such negotiations, looking to the surrender of the Boer leader and the end of the war, have been in progress and that they are at present in abeyance pending an answer from the British Government. The London Chronicle learns that the wife of General Botha has been the untiring agent in bringing about these negotiations. To General Botha's enquiry as to terms, General Kitchener is said to have given assurance that a general amnesty would be granted to all who surrendered and to all prisoners, except those Cape Dutch who, being British subjects, had actively fomented Boer resistance. General DeWet and ex-President Steyn were also, it is said, expressly excluded from the terms of the amnesty. Lord Kitchener further promised, it is said, that if peace were concluded, the government would assist in rebuilding the farm houses and other buildings destroyed under military exigencies, would reinstate the lawful owners and would help them stock their farms. Those guilty of acts of treachery would be excluded from these benefits. With the exception of DeWet who remains irreconcilable and declares that on his part the war has become one of revenge, it is believed that General Botha's officers are inclined to accept the conditions offered, and March 11 has been named as the date when the formal act of surrender might be expected to take place. It is quite certain that the Imperial Government will insist upon the abolition of anything like an independent political authority on the part of the Transvaal and the Orange State, but it will as certainly be ready to grant those territories the rights and privileges of British Colonies as soon as the willingness of their people to accept the position as loyal British subjects makes such a course practicable.