

Prominent Topics.

Imperial Defence. The correspondence between the Army Council and the Canadian Government on the subject of an Imperial General Staff shows that an important and yet most delicate question has been handled with admirable discretion and common sense on both sides. The memorandum from the War Office indicates that most of the difficulties from a colonial point of view were anticipated by the Army Council. It sets forth:

The necessity for the maintenance of sea supremacy, which could alone ensure any military co-operation.

The desirability of having a certain broad plan of military organization for the Empire, but not a rigid model making no allowances for local difficulties.

A conception of combination, in which the Empire's armed forces would be organized in two parts, the first having local defence as its functions, the second being designed for the service of the Empire as a whole.

Without asking the Colonial governments to assume any definite responsibilities in connection with the contingency of a great war, the Council suggests the nucleus of an organization to adequately cope with any difficulty of the kind. Sir Frederick Borden cordially assents to the general principle involved, only stipulating that all communications between the Imperial authorities and the local staff shall be through the responsible local government.

The Standard Oil Fine.

The Standard Oil Company of Indiana has finally been found "not guilty" of accepting rebates. This is the natural yet ludicrous ending of a sensational case, in which a judge of an inferior court gained world-wide notoriety, by inflicting a fine of \$29,240,000 upon a corporation which is now declared not guilty of the offence for which the ridiculous and monstrous penalty was imposed. The very extravagance of the sentence rendered the judgment open to the severest criticism. It was lacking in common sense and therefore challenged instinctive condemnation. Every court of superior jurisdiction would naturally feel disposed to take advantage of every technicality, in order to render substantial justice, of which the original sentence was a caricature. The final judgment vindicates the intelligence of the American Judiciary.

Montreal Harbour.

The Harbour Commissioners have sent out official notice that the proposed increase in the wharfage rates of the Port of Montreal will not go into effect for at least another year. As to the proposal that the Government should take over the harbour, and make Montreal a port free of wharfage charges, the commissioners point out that the Minister of Marine has already stated that such action with regard to Montreal would call for similar treatment of various other ports—involving too great a financial undertaking. It is understood, however, that a bill may shortly be brought down in Parliament asking authority to advance money to cover interest paid by the Harbour Board during the period of construction work in the port.

Health of the King.

To know the truth about the health of reigning monarchs is not always easy. For personal reasons, as well as for reasons of state or business, any alarmist rumours about the health of King Edward will always create grave anxiety among his subjects. There are, however, many people who are not too scrupulous to trade upon these anxieties and therefore all reports upon the subject should be received with caution if not with suspicion. There is every reason to believe that the reports in circulation with regard to His Majesty's ailments are grossly exaggerated.

Daylight Saving.

That remarkable piece of legislation, the Daylight Saving Bill, has passed its second reading in the British House of Commons. It provides for putting the clock forward twenty minutes on four successive Sundays in April and reversing the process on four successive Sundays in September. It may have the desired effect, but it seems a most ludicrous and clumsy expedient for making people get up early in the morning. If people want to rise early why don't they get up without an act of Parliament to falsify the clocks?

Clerical Controversy.

The daily papers and especially the Toronto papers are very full just now of controversial letters signed by clergymen—not all of them written in the most Christian spirit. No doubt it is occasionally necessary for a clergyman to make explanations or corrections through the press; but it is not a good thing to make a habit of the practise. It is apt to involve a loss of dignity and influence in the community, and when the letters show bitterness of feeling they tend to injure the church.

Legislation and Administration.

The trend of public opinion is steadily towards separating administrative and legislative functions in civic government. The New York Charter Commission has brought in a recommendation to abolish the existing board of alderman and in its place create a council of 30 members with enlarged legislative powers, but without control over the administrative business of the city, or over franchises. It will, however, have the right to veto specific appropriations in the budget and will make the tax levy.

Steel-Coal Matters.

The directors of the Dominion Steel Company have issued a circular to their shareholders, announcing their willingness to consider the offer of the Coal Company to re-instate them in their contract rights, but adding that they are advised by counsel that the refusal of the offer could not be urged in mitigation of damages. This, however, is a point upon which lawyers may differ.

C.P.R. GROSS EARNINGS for the first week of March were \$1,380,000, showing increases of \$277,000 and \$144,000 over the corresponding weeks of 1908 and 1907. Current wheat shipments are practically double those of a year ago.

JOHN LUBBY, alias Charles Hammond, etc., was found guilty this week in the Court of King's Bench, of receiving money stolen from the branch of La Banque Provinciale at St. Raphael, Que.