

The idea has originated in Toronto of having police patrol waggons covered, in order that painful and degrading spectacles may be kept from the eyes of the public as much as possible. This is a commendable move and ought to work well. The police commissioners of Toronto have communicated with a number of the police departments in the United States on this subject, and it is not unlikely that after being discussed the new system may be established in the United States as well as in Canadian cities.

The thought that the ocean is going to swallow up New Jersey is preying on the minds of some people who have an interest in that State. The estimate of the rate at which the New Jersey coast is sinking, made by the official geologist of that State, is two feet per century, and this means, as the seaward slope is about six feet per mile, giving a foot of lowland to the sea every year, thus making investment in seaside real estate a very risky business. It is stated that on almost all other eastern and southern coasts the waves are also encroaching, but their progress is slower. When the sea persistently creeps over the land for centuries, it is obvious that man cannot stop it, and the only thing to do is to retreat before the invasion.

The British people treat their representatives in parliament with tender care. The air which is supplied for them to breathe while settling the affairs of the nation is purified by being driven through thick layers of cotton wool and other things calculated to retain all that is injurious, letting only pure air into the House of Commons. It is let in upon the floor and escapes by a ventilating apparatus which the gas-lit roof is cleverly made to assist. The *Court Journal*, from which this information is obtained, remarks that a process for purifying the members themselves has not yet been invented. Persons who must needs breathe the ordinary London atmosphere regard with melancholy wonder the black deposits in the cleansing apparatus. Under ordinary circumstances this stuff is swallowed, and its effects on the human system are anything but beneficial.

The Taj Mahal, that magnificent mausoleum at Agra, British India, is soon to be permanently lighted with electricity. It is proposed to place 1,200 candle-power lights on each of the front minarets, and 1,000 candle-power lights on each of the back minarets and on the masjid and iwab. The main building will have no light stationed upon it, and so will be thrown into relief. The expense has been computed at \$6,000. The building is of white marble, built in the form of an irregular octagon. It is 100 feet in diameter and 200 feet in height, rising from a high marble terrace resting on another of red sand stones. In the construction of this mausoleum it is said 20,000 men were employed for twenty-two years. It is incrustated inside and out with precious stones, the whole koran being said to be wrought in mosaic on it. What a magnificent spectacle it will present when illuminated with electric light.

The vice of gambling is unquestionably one of the most demoralizing of our times. This is a recognized fact, and yet, within a few days, we have seen the Louisiana lottery given a new lease of twenty five years. Governor Nicholls, of that state, vetoed the bill, and so has washed his hands clear of the disgrace, but the bill went back to the legislature and received the two-thirds votes necessary to pass it over the Governor's veto. Extensive bribery has done this. The lottery company make so much money that they can well afford to spare a million dollars annually to the state for public purposes. "There's millions in it" truly, and it seems as if money is much easier to get by questionable means than by the old honest way, working for it, either with body or mind. Money is a good thing, it can bring much that is beneficial where it is properly used, the excessive want of it causes untold suffering, but the love of it is the root of all evil.

Although Mr. W. E. Gladstone has never been in America he has had an opportunity of comparing American singing with the singing of English people, and he is said to admire the former very much. The selection which Mr. Gladstone heard was a song sung by a crowd in New York at the time of the last presidential election. The song was carried to England in a phonograph and released for Mr. Gladstone's benefit in the London house of a friend of his. The *Musical Times* takes hold of the idea of the phonograph and suggests that it be used for singing competitions. "It would," it says, "save a good deal of travel and expense, and remove from the adjudicators the disturbing influence of personal impressions. The plain young lady would then stand as good a chance as her lovely and graceful sister, and the consciences of judges would less often feel called upon to sting." No doubt Mr. Gladstone enjoyed the election song just as well as if he had been among the crowd which produced it.

The Montreal Fire Department has been very much annoyed by false alarms recently. So much indignation has been expressed about this useless calling out of the men that a gentleman has invented an apparatus to prevent the giving of false alarms. It is a box with a hook in view. To grasp the hook one has to place the hand through an aperture. As soon as the hook has been pulled, giving the alarm, a bracelet clutches the wrist, preventing the hand's withdrawal until released by a fireman. It is said the Chief will recommend its adoption in the city of Montreal, but it is not likely that those who want to give a genuine alarm will care to be held prisoners until a fireman releases them. If only the rogue who amuses himself by calling out the firemen for fun would be caught, the plan would work admirably, but it would not be fair to imprison the good right hand of an honest man, who might, while at such a disadvantage, be made the subject of a searching inquiry by any thief who would be mean enough to pick his pockets.

Mr. Laurier is reported to have said in the course of his speech at the recent banquet at Montreal that the time must come when we shall have to take our proper place in the world, and for one, he awaited independent. This may come, but as yet there is no necessity for Canadians to be alarmed at the responsibilities of the future. It is a good thing for the national sentiment that independence and not annexation to the United States should be looked upon as the ultimate condition of affairs. Every boy with any ambition looks forward with eager anticipation to the time when he shall be a man, and all his efforts are to the end that his manhood may be a success. Surely what is a healthy sentiment for the boy individual is also good for the nation. While looking to independence as a desirable end when the nation has reached a state of development which will insure its success in standing alone, it is well during the years that must pass before this can be accomplished, to be content with the not altogether unsatisfactory present condition of affairs. Under Imperial Federation our position would be one of practical independence, as we would then take our proper place as a part of the Empire to which we belong, being one of a band of sister nations.

The "terrible heat" has been working havoc among the denizens of the United States. In Chicago horses have died by scores daily, and the number of applications for burial permits show that the mortality has enormously increased among men, women and children. These things should make us feel thankful that we live in a land where the heat is never oppressive, and also make us content with the cool breezes which even at this season remind us that there must be a big lump of ice around some where. In spite of the hot weather, an Ohio clergyman took upon himself a few days ago to request his congregation to cease using their fans, as it was excessively annoying to him. This in the middle of a sermon on Charity! The request created astonishment, which speedily turned into resentment, and a number of the half-baked parishioners took themselves and their fans out of the church where they could keep cool without disturbing their pastor's nerves. The poor man must be in need of rest and change of air. An indignation meeting is to be held on the subject by the parishioners, so that it is quite possible he may be given leave of permanent absence should he continue to insist that his flock shall not use fans in warm weather.

Accounts are published in Paris of the devastation caused by crickets in Algeria. The insects resemble, but are not identical with either grasshoppers or locusts. Last year swarms of grasshoppers razed the colony. This year the crickets have taken their place. They spring like grasshoppers, but have a more rapid and sustained flight. They form clouds that exclude the light of the sun at noonday. When they alight on the ground they destroy every trace of vegetation. They sometimes fall in such numbers as to cover the ground with a layer of dead bodies from which pestilential exhalations arise. The method still employed to check the evil in the African possessions of France, is the old and expensive one of digging long trenches at right angles to the line of advance of the swarm, placing on the farther side a web of cloth; the insects striking this barrier fall into the pit and are then covered with lime or mould. The Algerian authorities have spent \$140,000 in destroying them, and contemplate a further outlay of \$200,000 to complete the work. It was recently stated that the English authorities in Cyprus had traced the locusts there to their breeding place, and had there to a great extent succeeded in destroying them before they became developed into the huge swarms that periodically in devastated that island.

Are Englishmen ill-mannered when they go abroad? An English resident in Paris, writing in the *London Daily Graphic*, thinks they are, and seems very much mortified at the behavior of his fellow-countrymen. Some of the offences laid to their charge are that Englishmen and Englishwomen attend the opera in Paris and sit in the dress circle and stalls dressed in travelling costume, which is much resented by Frenchmen. They enter places of worship, chiefly Roman Catholic cathedrals, and regardless of the worshipping congregation and the sacred character of the place, strut about and make audible comments on the music, architecture, etc. Englishmen seem to find difficulty in removing their hats on occasions where it is considered polite to do so in France. It is the custom there when entering a public building, or when addressing anyone, especially a lady, for a gentleman to doff his hat as a sign of respect and deference. In some cases Englishmen transgressing this rule of good manners have been brought to their senses in a summary way by French officials. It is said that Frenchwomen now do not feel any indignation when a man does not raise his hat. She just shrugs her shoulders and says—"Only an Englishman." Then French people do not like to hear a man whistling all the time, and the unfortunate Englishman offends in this way very frequently. The pent-up music must find its way out, and as it is a sign of cheerfulness ought to be rejoiced in, nevertheless it is not considered quite the thing to do in public places. Another head of offence is the way in which Englishmen tender payment for anything or any service. A Frenchwoman is said to have refused payment for some cherries because the money was "thrown" at her. Now, none of these things are crimes, but it is mortifying to have such things said. It would be quite worth an Englishman's while to inquire into the customs of any country he visits and "do as Rome does," so he would avoid those impolitenesses which cause the English to be regarded as the worst bred of nations. The reputation of the Prince of Wales, as the "first gentleman in Europe," is insignificant to overcome the effects of the mistakes made by Englishmen of less note.