

## The Sun.

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### THE TOLL

In its annual report the United States interstate commerce commission shows that in the last fiscal year the railroads of that country killed 10,685 persons and injured 169,533.

It would be a year of terrible warfare that would produce results more dreadful than this.

More to the point, the commission shows that a large proportion of these casualties are preventable. They are due to carelessness on the part of the railroads or the persons killed or injured, to lack of easily available safety devices, and to inferior equipment.

For instance, out of 8,215 derailments, 1,877 were caused by defects of roadways, and 3,847 were due to defective equipment. In one serious case it is claimed, investigation showed nine hundred and six rotten ties in a distance of a hundred and forty-seven rail lengths.

Sixty-three per cent. of all the accidents are ascribed to mistakes on the part of railroad employees, here enters the inevitable human equation which will always cause casualties, but which can be lessened in a considerable degree by a process of selection and regulation on the part of employers.

The commission rightly points out that to much blame is likely to be attached to employees when these figures are considered. "This is a superficial view which contains no promise of effective remedy. A remarkable increase in the speed and of error on their part. Notwithstanding the weight of trains within recent years, and the overcrowding of tracks and terminals caused by the movement of an ever enlarging volume of traffic, the commission increased the responsibilities of train employees and multiplied the chances for these increases in duties and responsibilities, the commission says, the method of discipline and regulations calculated to insure safety in train operation have remained practically unchanged. In other words, a large proportion of accidents are due to the fact that the railroads are trying to handle an enormously increased traffic with systems devised for a much smaller traffic.

The commission very properly criticizes the railroads that "ignore conditions of safe operation in the effort to bring fast trains in on time." "Making up time" is a practice which

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THE PRINCE OF WALES from a photo taken since he has become a student at Oxford. He is fond of sports but his best game is hand hoyns. The prince is a good runner and stands a long distance better than the average Oxford boy.

some railroads have abandoned and which all railroads should be required to abandon.

The interesting facts in this annual report point to the conclusions that while much has been done to make railroad travel safer, it is still far from safe, and that the railroad and public authorities should be giving as much thought as they can to the problem of reducing the risks of railroad travel.

It is an amazing thing that with the public knowledge that a large proportion of railroad accidents are easily preventable, the deaths and injuries incident to railroad travel should continue annually to outdo the havoc of war times.

### BILL BOARDS AS PEST INCUBATORS.

So many objections have been lodged against the bill boards that it would require much space to enumerate them, and as new ones come to light they can only be noted in passing. It has been discovered by the New York Highways Protective Association that the bill board, whether of wood or metal, is an ideal breeding ground for many insects pests that destroy trees and other growing things. The association's workers found, when engaged in tearing down the disfiguring signs which for years have made many of the state's highways mere alleys between advertisement that there were millions of insects hibernating in the cracks of the boards, to places where no living creatures were found thus harbored there were larvae that would hatch in time into destructive pests. In the absence of the boards these insects would have to shelter decayed trees, and there would be hunted out and destroyed by their natural enemies, the birds. Nature, however, has not equipped birds with mills that will pierce metal, although a few million years of evolution might restore the balance in this respect, nor does the surface of a wooden board offer a bird a secure footing from which he can delve for the hidden eggs or insects. In cases where metal signs have been nailed to trees—and there are millions of such cases in the environs of New York City—it was found that the insects worked their way in through the holes made by the nails, and established themselves where they could not be reached by the woodpecker. These results show that the movement to preserve the beauty of rural highways by abolishing advertising signs along them has a utilitarian as well as an aesthetic value.

### PRISONS AND PRISONERS

Only two and a half per cent. of the prisoners released on parole under the federal act have relapsed into crime. Only one and four-fifths per cent. have had their licenses cancelled for failure to report at stated intervals to the authorities. This is from the annual report of Mr. W. P. Archibald, Parole Officers, which appears in the blue book report termed the Report of the Minister of Justice as to the Penitentiaries of Canada. It is held by most penologists that the great majority of those committed to prison have been "overtaken in a fault," and are not of the habitual delinquent class. These figures would tend to support that opinion. If it be true that more than 95 men out of every hundred released on parole are able and willing to avail themselves of the opportunity to become good citizens, one begins to wonder if our whole penal system should not be recast on broader and more scientific principles, comments the Toronto News.

In the same blue book one reads in the report of one of the wardens the strong recommendation that the Winchester carbines supplied to guards for duty on the wall be replaced by magazine weapons shooting buckshot. The modern "riot gun," he believes, is the very best weapon to prevent the escape of convicts and does not carry with it the same element of danger to the surrounding neighborhood. It must still be recognized that in every penitentiary there are men who, by the very nature of their offences, must be restrained by the discipline of fear, the men whose innate cowardice has been

shown by attacks of vicious character, mainly against women. Perhaps for these the buckshot gun is a necessity. But while one warden and his staff are devising new weapons, prisoners at the Guelph farm are working in the fields, without a guard, sleeping in decent dormitories and staying on the farm without the persuasion of force.

The buckshot method of prison discipline may have its uses, but unless administered with great care it fails. Some prisoners may be trusted. Not all should be treated as Bengal tigers instead of as men. Is it not nearly time that a thorough investigation of the penitentiaries should be made? The government might inquire, with profit, into the methods of administration, financial and disciplinary. On the return of the commission some amending legislation might be necessary. In the meantime one may rejoice that the parole system is working satisfactorily under the enthusiastic supervision of an officer so well qualified by training and temperament for his position.

### UNNECESSARY

An editorial in the December Christian Science Journal takes up a newspaper report current some time ago regarding the fact that ninety-eight convicts in the New Jersey state penitentiary were Christian Scientists. Later two Massachusetts men who suffered capital punishment were reported to be Christian Scientists. The Christian Science Journal seems to think it necessary to state that in no case were these hundred unfortunates Christian Scientists when they went to jail, and that all of them were reached by the prison work of this religious sect.

Few will believe that it was necessary to make this explanation. It is possible that some who read the reports may have wondered at it a little, about as much as they would if it had said ninety-eight Presbyterians or ninety-eight Methodists but not much more. It is true that those who gave it deeper thought may have wondered a little more, because it may be that the Christian Scientists work at their faith somewhat more consistently than many followers of many other faiths.

But the average Christian Scientist congregation, as most of us have come to know it, bears marvellously small resemblance to material for a prison population, and no assurance is needed that there is nothing in its faith that is likely to bring its followers behind the bars. On the contrary, we should think it highly probable that they are as little likely to be found enrolled on prison registers as any other body of people in the country.

The Christian Science Journal tells what the members of this sect are doing to reach the inhabitants of prisons, and that's interesting. Anything like a defence against the supposition that belief in its doctrines tends to land people behind the bars was absolutely unnecessary.

### THE EMERGENCY

A do-nothing policy on naval defence was possible in some measure in the old days of wooden ships and muzzle-loading guns. The impression of large ships from the merchant marine was possible. The East Indiaman of those times was not so different in construction from the 74-gun ship of the Royal Navy. A few weeks' work in refitting and remodelling were sufficient to turn a peaceful ship into a Thunderer or a Royal George. Moreover, any seaman was qualified for sailor duty on the yards of a war vessel. Brief drill soon turned a half dozen of lubbers into a capable gun crew, especially when the warrant officers set themselves to the task.

But today a battleship is a floating school of practical science. It is impossible to make a passenger or freight ship into a dependable war vessel, even if you crowd the decks with guns. The whole construction is different. War craft are built to withstand the strain of modern fighting. In spite of hydraulic devices to absorb in a measure the shock of gun-recoil, it is certain that the firing of 13-inch artillery is not easy on the framework of any vessel. It would

shake to pieces the slender palaces that fit so regularly from New York to Liverpool. Protective armour is a necessity in these days of the perfected science of gunnery. One well directed shot would sink the best of the passenger ships afloat.

So it appears that all our dependence is upon war ships which take two years to build, and upon men who have been trained in other war ships to operate the countless electrical and hydraulic devices which exist in duplicate upon these vessels. The only time that these ships can be built is when there is no war. Laying down ships during an international crisis would not aid in its settlement. The only lead that the British government has is the difference between having a real estate agent for mayor and having a mayor who owns real estate all over the city? This question was asked by Mayor Fleming at the big meeting the other night. The difference is that the one depends upon commissions and any monetary excitement in values is to his advantage; the other, the man who owns real estate in all parts of the city, must recognize that he can benefit only from the true substantial growth of the city and by the development of our possibilities.

### FRENZIED DEBATERS.

When the militant suffragettes are again told that the screeching and scratching and other frenzied behavior resorted to in their "struggle" for the ballot show them to be altogether unfitted for it, will they not point to the conduct of members of the opposition in the debate just closed at Ottawa, and ask if it is possible for hysterical women to make a worse exhibition than that? If Mrs. Pankhurst were in the house we are sure she would never so far forget her own dignity, or the dignity of parliament, as to comport herself as Mr. Lemieux did in that debate. It ought to be possible for the ex-postmaster-general, Mr. Carvell, Mr. Murphy and their fellows to take a vigorous part in opposition, instead of giving way to peevishness and shrewishness. To be out of office is doubtless as gall and wormwood to a band of politicians to whom office meant so much, but to be indecorous and waspish will not avail to get back into office.

The vote-seeking women who poured sulphuric acid into letter boxes in London, would hardly be less self-controlled as members of parliament than those associates of Sir Wilfrid Laurier who poured out the oil of vitriol of their discontent the last few days in the house of commons. Their asseverations, and their judicious grive, were it not made incongruous by the pretence that they are wrought up to it by outrage to their feelings on the subject of the purity of elections. On that subject they profess to have sensibilities that feel a stain like a wound. This is what turns their debating fury into a howling farce. When members of the ring of politicians who were at the head of Canada's affairs for the greater part of the sixteen years preceding 1912, make scenes in the name of election purity, the country must give way to Homeric laughter. When these politicians were dismissed from office by order of the people and end was made of a career of political iniquity the like of which this country never experienced before, and if

is hoped, will never experience again. Monumental graft, systematic corruption, wholesale bribery and interference with elections were vices habitually practiced under the late government. Its last attempt against the welfare of Canada—its attempt to bargain away this country's fiscal independence, and make Canada, as President Taft put it, "only an adjunct to the United States," finished its work.

But though they left office with a brand upon them, that is no reason why the late ruling politicians should not mend their ways and try to do their part sanely in the forefront of an opposition. To behave like a lot of neurotic persons is of no service to the country and of no advantage to themselves. It is quite the opposite. We can understand, of course, that the present government leaves little opening for rational adverse criticism. But an opposition's occupation is not of necessity gone because the government is excellent. In such a state of affairs it is expected to assist the government in the work of improving measures brought before parliament. Toronto Mail and Empire.

### PRICES CONTINUE UPWARD.

The index number of wholesale prices rose approximately one point in November, standing at 134.3 as compared with 133.1 in October and 129.4 in November 1911, according to the Department of Labor reports. The advance was due chiefly to higher prices for fish, textiles, hides, and leathers, the ring of politicians who were at the head of Canada's affairs for the greater part of the sixteen years preceding 1912, make scenes in the name of election purity, the country must give way to Homeric laughter. When these politicians were dismissed from office by order of the people and end was made of a career of political iniquity the like of which this country never experienced before, and if

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### ENGLAND'S LAND FORCES

Lord Rosebery has warned Great Britain against lightly ignoring the advice of Lord Roberts. His less enlightened associates are inclined to make party capital out of Lord Roberts' campaign by declaring that it is part of "a Tory plot" to force conscription on the country. Lord Roberts has no connection with either of the political parties. He is a soldier with vast experience in mobilization, organization and handling troops on the field of battle. No one knows better the strength of the opponents England may be called upon to face if weakness is allowed to court attack.

He considers the Territorial force too small and insufficiently trained for home defence, though he admires the material and the spirit of the men. The expeditionary force cannot be regarded as adequate for offensive tactics. No war can be pushed to successful conclusion by a nation remaining on the defensive. This is the problem England has to face. It cannot be solved by abusing a great general.

Conservatives have a scheme to offer, but this cannot be described as conscription, nor has it been adopted officially by the party organization. However, opinion on the subject is formidable and there is little doubt that a measure of universal training will be championed by the Conservative party. It is hardly honest to describe universal training as conscription. The latter takes young men from their work and confines them in barracks for two or three years when they should be perfecting themselves at their various trades. The former entails a fortnight in

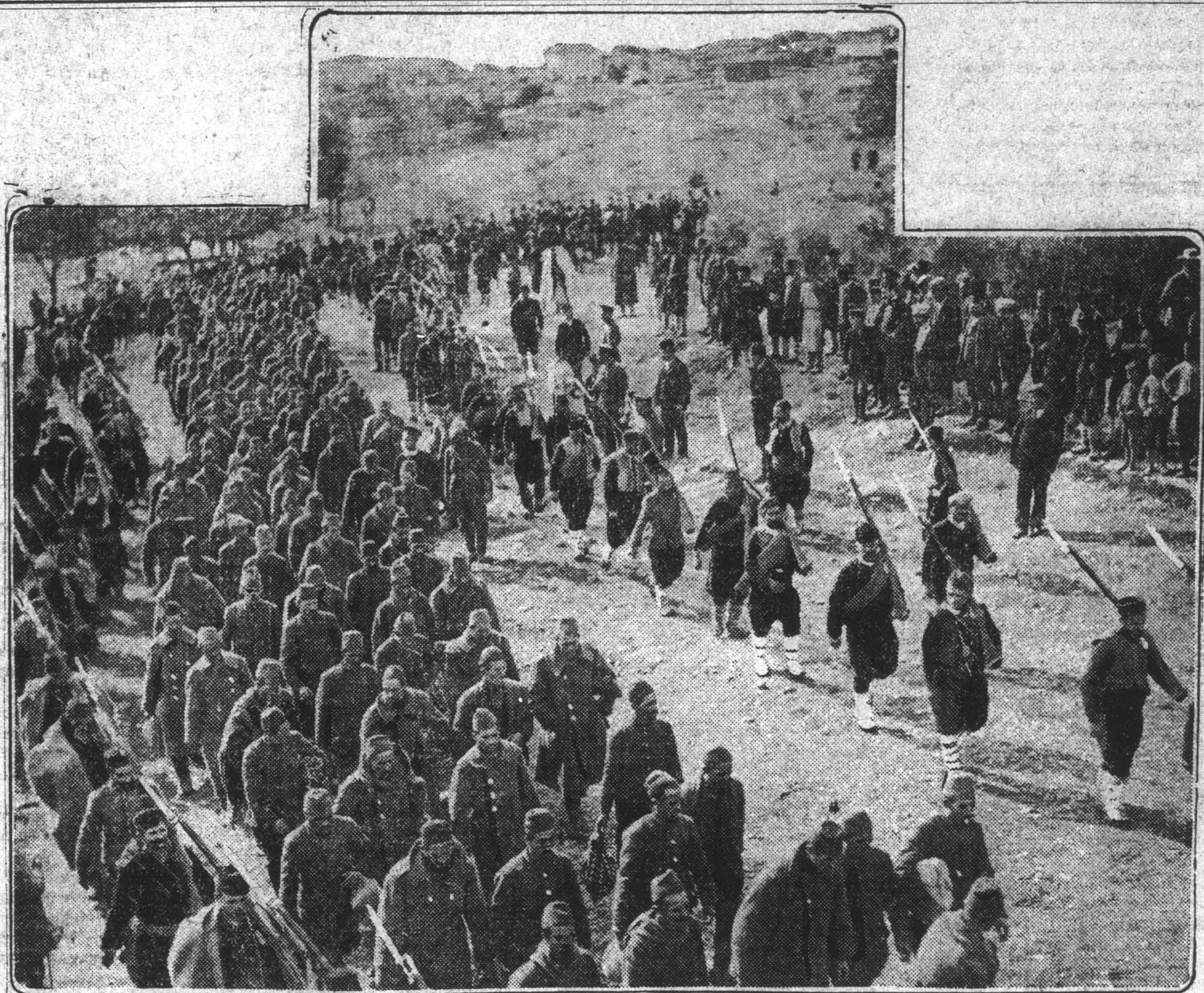
camp every year for three years, and the sacrifice of a certain number of evenings in order that the young men of the country may be drilled and may learn to shoot.

The sacrifice of time asked from the able-bodied young men is not serious. Such training would not interfere with business or with liberty as does conscription. It works without friction in Australia, while in New Zealand the opposition to it is decreasing. It embodies the principle that no man can discharge his obligations to his country by mere payment of taxes and that personal service is due from him. This applies to all ranks of society. If a man is worthy of country and home, he should be capable of defending these. Such are the principles underlying the policy of Conservatives in England. They seem to be just and reasonable, and persons best qualified to judge consider that these measures

### POLICE COURT

From Monday's Daily.  
Fritz Proset, a foreigner, was charged on the information of Detective Foster at the police court this morning for driving a motor car without a chauffeur's license. In giving evidence the detective stated that the man had been warned on several occasions to discontinue the practice, but in spite of this, also a previous warning he had received from the magistrate, he was driving the car on the 17th conveying people to and from the different polling booths. The defendant seemed not to understand the charge or at any rate pretended that the matter was not clear to him. The magistrate, however, considered that he had had sufficient warning and fined him ten dollars and costs and ordered him to immediately take out his license.

Two drunks fined \$2 and costs each completed the docket for today, which was a singularly small one compared with Saturday, when over twenty cases were heard.



Turkish prisoners of war. This picture, taken at Sophia, shows a long line of Turkish troops captured by the Bulgarians and escorted to the rear by a double column of soldiers.