

between Havana and New York get over \$4,000 from the Government for each round trip.

Until these systems were inaugurated the shipping interests of these countries were in a depreciated and deplorable condition, and the international ocean commerce of the world was carried on almost exclusively in British-built ships. But no nation aspiring to maritime importance can afford to be dependent upon any other nation for its shipping, the reasons for which are obvious; and the several nations alluded to finding that they were building up in times of peace vast industries in Great Britain to the unqualified wrong and injury of both capitalists and workmen at home, also realized the fact that should war ever occur between themselves and Great Britain, they would not be in any condition to replenish their commercial fleets, so necessary under such circumstances. The British system of subsidizing its merchant marine, nearly every vessel of which is capable of transformation into either transports or gun boats at small cost and short notice, has served to create an auxiliary reserve to its navy that would make her the mistress of the seas whenever occasion might arise for her to assert her sway.

MUST BUSCOMBE GO?

A FEW days ago the Hamilton papers reported a meeting of the Bricklayers' and Masons' Union there, the most important question discussed being relative to continuing work on an engine house and a bell tower being built for the city. The discussion all hinged on the Buscombe question, and whether the "ethics" of the union in particular, and organized labor generally, would permit the union bricklayers to work on any city job as long as Buscombe was allowed to lay bricks in the city sewers. The union was anxious to learn whether some of the jobs on which the members had been working had been let to the contractors before the trouble with Buscombe commenced. If yes, then the union would kindly permit its members to continue at work building engine houses and bell towers, even if Buscombe did lay bricks in the sewers; but if no, then all work must stop and the city of Hamilton go without engine houses and bell towers, or discharge Buscombe. The union have had a good deal of trouble in getting at the facts, and the members are wrathful at the custodians for not permitting their committee to have access to the city archives and examine the contracts on file to determine their exact date. They felicitate themselves, however, that the work in the sewers where Buscombe is employed will soon be stopped by the approaching cold weather; and the feeling was expressed that when work is recommenced next Spring it will be given by those who may then be in authority to another man.

Must Buscombe go? Every citizen of Hamilton—yes, of Canada, is interested in the question. Is this a free country any way? Are a committee of jawsmiths and agitators belonging to and controlling a labor union to dictate to the authorities of Hamilton who shall and who shall not build sewers, engine houses and bell towers for them? Are unlawful conspiracies, such as this which seeks to force Buscombe, a poor bricklayer, from his humble occupation, to be allowed to flourish and override both law and justice? Have the authorities of Hamilton any sense of justice about them that they allow themselves to be brow-beaten and bull-ragged by such fellows? The

action of these union men is clearly a conspiracy to deprive an innocent man of the rights and privileges guaranteed him by law. Has the poor man no friends who will appeal to the law in his behalf, and have these conspirators arrested, tried, convicted and encased in striped clothing in the penitentiary? Such is the punishment for conspiracy.

O, is it not pitiful,
In a whole city full,
Friends he has none.

We have looked in vain to see either of the big daily newspapers of Hamilton speak a word of encouragement to Buscombe, or to denounce his would-be oppressors. We suppose that it is too close to election day for either of them to venture to do so.

"KLEPTOMANIA" vs. THEFT.

THE Windsor, Ont., *Review* tells of a woman who recently stole an article of merchandise from a store in that city, but was discharged from custody by the magistrate, who believed that the woman was irresponsible for her acts—otherwise afflicted with "kleptomania"—and who was subsequently up on a similar charge in Detroit. In hearing the case the Detroit magistrate said: "I am not a believer in the theory of kleptomania. When people get to stealing it should be called theft, and proceeded against accordingly. Kleptomania is a good deal like gout. None but the rich can afford to be afflicted with it."

This incident is confirmatory of what was recently said in these pages regarding the way offenders against the law are regarded in Canada, at Windsor, and in the United States, at Detroit. Although smuggling is a violation of the law, as is theft, according to the *Review* "the smuggling bag is in a large majority of the houses along the Canadian frontier, and a part of the bride's trousseau," the sentiment of the people being that it is not immoral to smuggle; and when Windsor "ladies" are caught stealing they are excused on the plea of "kleptomania." Across the line smugglers are punished by imprisonment and wear prison garb, and the thief who is exonerated from blame in Windsor, being a kleptomaniac, is punished as a thief in Detroit for committing a similar violation of law. Canadian law-breakers, it seems, can systematically smuggle goods across the line, or steal merchandise from stores in Windsor, and go unpunished therefor on the grounds that smuggling is not disreputable, and that theft is kleptomania, for which the thief is not responsible.

Morality in that part of the country must be at a very low ebb, but violations of law should be punished, even if the population of a public institution at Kingston be largely increased. Let smuggling be suppressed.

GET OFF THE FENCE, PLEASE.

WATER and oil have no affinity and will not mix, and fire and water will not exist in the same place at the same time. On like principles, probably, our worthy contemporaries the *Spectator* and *Times*, of Hamilton, seem to always vary regarding all matters of public importance, but there is one thing concerning which they are agreed and are entirely homogeneous—they both most religiously abstain from any expression of opinion regarding what is probably the most important ques-