

smoke" or how much of it constitutes a nuisance. But the English people being in earnest about the matter are doing a great deal to abate the nuisance. They had an Exhibition of Smoke Consumers at South Kensington, and they have an active Coal Smoke Abatement Society co-operating with the Office of Works to abate what was becoming a very serious nuisance. The trouble with official Montreal is that it knows little about the subject and does not seem to lose any sleep by working over its lack of knowledge. If some time between now and the next civic elections the people of Montreal make up their minds that the whole smoke nuisance has to be abated, it will be abated.

**The Offensive Automobile.** City Attorney Archambault reports that owners of automobiles have no right to cause a nuisance in the streets either as regards offensive smoke, the use of ear-splitting sirens, or of standing an undue time in front of buildings and thereby obstructing the traffic. If this can be successfully maintained, the sooner the nuisances are forbidden the better. The stinks and shrieks of the average automobile make life a burden.

**Mr. E. Roger Owen.** Mr. E. Roger Owen, general manager of the Commercial Union Assurance Company, is visiting Montreal this week. Mr. Roger Owen came out by the "Lusitania" and spent some days in New York. He will remain a few days in Montreal, and then probably visit the West and the Pacific Coast. The Commercial Union has large interests in Canada. It owns and controls the Union, the Ocean Accident & Guarantee and the Canada Accident companies. The annual revenue of this giant insurance undertaking now reaches \$36,893,000, while the total assets at December 31st last exceeded \$111,000,000.

**The Late Sir Robert Hart.** Sir Robert Hart, who died on Wednesday in England, was one of those distinguished Englishmen who have rendered most valuable service to the Empire in the service of foreign potentates. The absolute confidence reposed in him by the British and Chinese governments was a higher tribute to his character than even the numerous honours conferred upon him in London and Peking. Besides being a baronet and a G. C. M. G., he had conferred upon him in China the Red Button, the Peacock's Feather, the Double Dragon and the title of Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent and a patent of nobility was conferred upon his ancestors for three generations. He was made the director general of Chinese Customs and what we would call Inland Revenue as a reward for his assistance in settling the Boxer troubles, and he rendered valuable service in suppressing the Malay pirates. Enjoying more than any other

man living the confidence of the Chinese Government he was able to put the finances of China on a sound basis and to safeguard the interests of foreign investors. When he took hold of the Customs department in 1863 it was collecting 8,000,000 taels at fourteen treaty ports (a tael is about \$1.50). He increased this to about 27,000,000 taels at thirty-two treaty ports in 1901 and estimated the total revenue in that year at 88,700,000 taels. Unfortunately the expenditure was about 101,170,000 taels, but Sir Robert was not in control of the expenditure of China.

**Collision of H. M. S. Hawke and the Olympic.** A great disaster was narrowly averted when H. M. S. Hawke ran into the White Star SS. Olympic.

While it is generally conceded that the cruiser was in some way responsible, it will be for a naval court martial to determine exactly where the blame belongs. That there will be a rigorous enquiry is a matter of course and somebody will certainly be held responsible. In England Divine Providence is never blamed for a serious accident, if negligence can be brought home to any human being. The investigation will be as thorough as though one of the ships had gone to the bottom of the sea. If the Admiralty cannot find somebody to blame, the public will blame the Admiralty.

**Irish Railway Strike.** A big industrial strike is something of a novelty in Ireland.

This is no doubt chiefly due to the smallness of the industrial population. The whole population of Ireland on June 30th, 1910, was estimated at 4,571,163, and probably not more than 630,000 of these belonged to the industrial class. On March 31, 1901, the population, according to the census, was more than half females; they are 4,458,775, classified as follows: Professional 214,343, domestic 219,419, commercial 97,889, agricultural 876,062, industrial 639,413. Ireland is chiefly an agricultural country and has been singularly free from industrial strikes. The present railway strike, which threatens to become general, has no more to do with the relations between the railway companies and their employees, than the cat that refused to kill the rat had to do with the piggy that wouldn't get over the stile at the bidding of its affectionate mistress, who had invested a crooked sixpence in buying the obstinate little porker.

The railway men won't work for the railways because they refused to boycott a firm of timber shippers who refused to boycott some non-union men. As in the case of the English railway strike the greatest sufferers will be the innocent by-standers who have nothing to do with the railways or their employes and probably never heard of the timber merchants or their employes.