

## EDITORIAL SECTION

THE TORONTO SUNDAY WORLD

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FRESH FIELDS AND PASTURES NEW.

### THE HORSE AND THE GOVERNMENT.

There was nothing in that somewhat wordy, if not excessively long, document called the King's speech, read by the Lieutenant-Governor at the opening of the provincial assembly on Thursday, about the government's intention to give further attention to the horse-breeding industry than its predecessor did. There was quite a little in the speech that might have been omitted in favor of some reference to the horse, and generally the agricultural interests of the country; but, doubtless, it was thought that Hon. Nelson Monteith required a little more time than he has had to become acquainted with his department and its requirements before any plan was formulated on the lines of the promise made by Premier Whitney previous to the elections and prior to his ascension to power. It would, however, have gratified a large number of people if an announcement had been made to the effect that inquiries would be set afoot to ascertain the needs of the horse with a view to legislative action in the near future. Some such intimation as this would have satisfied the expectants, while at the same time pledging the government to nothing. It would have been accepted as a guarantee of the government's intention to carry out its prior election undertaking. As it is farmers and others concerned must maintain their souls in patience, trusting that in the fulness of time something will be done and something will be accomplished. Just the same, such mention as is here suggested would have lent encouragement not alone to the breeding interests, but to General Benson, Major Gage and the other gentlemen who are concerning themselves regarding Canada as a field for the supply of remounts to the British army.

### PEACE PROSPECTS.

It is natural, perhaps, that the bureaucrats of Russia should regard with dismay the making of peace on the ruins of Russia's reputation as a military power. They acknowledge, however, that the outlook on land is about as discouraging as it well can be, but they have hopes that Rojestvensky may accomplish something with his huge fleet, which now that the second and third divisions are within hail, is twice as powerful in numbers at least as the naval armament commanded by Admiral Togo.

A few months ago everybody thought the Russian commander was going to his destruction. Everybody didn't know then that he was to be joined by second and third detachments. They know now, and it begins to look as if Togo with all his cunningness of strategy and his tactical ability may have his work cut out to keep his country's foes at bay. A decisive Russian victory at sea would yet do much to turn the fortunes of the campaign. It would hardly convert the Russian rout on land into a triumph, either temporary or permanent, but it would do one of two things, either indefinitely prolong the war or compel Japan to accede to more satisfactory peace terms than she is at present willing to accept, while at the same time restoring to a certain extent the prestige of the Muscovite Empire and soothing the amour propre of the czar's subjects. Under such circumstances it is not wonderful that the bureaucrats, who have everything at stake, should have some glimmering hope of something favorable happening thru the efforts of the victim of the North Sea scare.

Whatever may be the outcome of the naval clash which cannot now be long deferred, all will agree that it is high time an end were put to the strife. If Kruger had lived he would have recognized that it was not the Boer and the English who were destined to "stagger humanity," but other peoples altogether. As a contemporary suggests, the most callous of mankind cannot listen unmoved to the tale of Port Arthur, of Liaoyang, of the Shaho and of Mukden. Our only hope, and that of all people,



Mr. O'WHITNEY: It's in great condition she ought to be th' summer. She'll have a range from Lake Erie 'way back to Hudson Bay.

must be that the impression which this carnival of carnage has made upon the world will not prove merely transient, but that it will be an object lesson meaning a lasting farewell to such spectacles as have been presented in Manchuria during a century that is yet hardly out of its swaddling clothes.

### THE RECLAMATION OF CRIMINALS.

The reclamation of the criminal is commanding attention all the world over, and all the world over it is beginning to be felt that present systems are utter failures. In England the home secretary has issued a new set of rules for convict prisons which denote a sweeping change in the methods to be followed in the punishment of crime and the reclamation of the offender. The progress of knowledge has made the occasion ripe for such a revolution. Our whole conception of the nature of crime and the possibilities of its repression has been altered by the course of experience and by the systematic study of human nature. Present prison methods have been in some respects, as has been suggested, worse than futile; they have positively developed those faults and propensities which it was their object to extirpate or to cure. Society has unconsciously been fulfilling the smug protest of the parent who informs his erring progeny that "It hurts me more than it hurts you." It has subjected the criminal to a course of treatment which, after several years, restores him to the world a more inveterate and determined criminal than before. No serious sociologist any longer believes in fear and pain as the chief agencies in the reformation of character. It is notorious that devil-worshippers are of all grades of humanity the most incapable of progress, and yet it is by appealing to the instincts of the devil-worshippers that we have chiefly endeavored to restore to manhood the degenerates of our civilization.

The present convict system has even worse elements of self-defeat than the mere reliance upon fear of punishment. It has been destructive of all that was healthiest and most hopeful in the human organism. It has ignored the fact that without social intercourse degeneracy must supervene, and that without substantial incentives to industry and order interest in the great aims of life must necessarily wither and disappear. All that can be said for the convict system as it has been practised for so many years is that, so long as the convict was kept within prison walls, society was saved from his depredations, while it must be recorded on the other side of the balance sheet that it turned him out a far more dangerous enemy to his fellows than when it received him. Fundamental change in a system which transgressed all the best-known laws of psychology and causation has been one of the most urgent demands of those who have been seeking to realize the essential object of social betterment.

The new regime adopted in England has for its basis the recognition of that endless variety of degree and character which enters into the composition of what is so loosely described as the "criminal" class. The law receives for punishment young and old, first offenders and hardened professionals in sin. If the vindication of society is to be effectual, all these different species must receive the treatment suitable to their record and disposition, and best calculated to make them profitable citizens when they regain their liberty. An elaborate division of types and grades is provided for in the regulation which have just received official sanction. The most important and welcome departure is the setting apart in a category of their own of all those who are under the age of twenty-one years at the date

of their conviction. To these the principles of what is known as the Borstal system will be applied according to the stage at which they have been arrested in their criminal career. When the convict is under eighteen he may be sent to a special prison more akin to the ordinary reformatory than to the usual type of penal detention, and treated on the presumption that his permanent character is still unformed, and may, with proper attention, acquire a normal and satisfactory bent. With all "juvenile-adult" prisoners the utmost efforts will be made to give the period of incarceration its highest educational value. They will be kept entirely from contact with habitual offenders and from the infection of that criminal esprit de corps which has proved so prolific a source of incurable perversion. They will be treated in a special sense as wards of the state, and every effort will be made, not merely for their regeneration under prison treatment, but for the furtherance of their prospects in life upon liberation.

With this attempt to nip criminal aberrations in the bud very tangible prospects of success should be associated, and with its inauguration Britain may claim to have applied at last to the problem of crime the best methods that science, in its relation to human nature, has yet been able to prescribe. What it may be possible to achieve for the habitual offender is a more dubious matter; but the changes in his treatment cannot, at any rate, have results for the worse. In the "long-sentence" class there will be for the future environment which develops those capacities of conduct and perseverance which have not been entirely effaced by brutality and corruption. The prisoner will be allowed to effect improvements in his own condition by application to industry, just as in ordinary life, and thus to acquire the lessons by which

humanity, under happier conditions, seeks to work out its salvation. The absence of motive in prison which produced insensibility to motive after release will cease to throw its destructive light upon convict existence, and it will be seen how far the criminal, even in his advanced stages, is capable of having rebuilt in him the fabric of human character. If that end cannot be realized then liberation itself becomes illogical; and that a certain residuum ought for its own sake, and that of society, to be kept in perpetual confinement is an opinion avowed by many authorities, but before we assent to that pessimistic conclusion there should be much instruction to be drawn from the system now to be applied in England, in order to discover the furthest limits of reclamation.

### BRITISH OPINION OF THE NORTH SEA REPORT.

The decision of the commissioners respecting the North Sea incident appears to have given general satisfaction in England, that is judging from the newspapers just to hand, while it has also terminated in as pleasant a manner as possible a painful and even dangerous international dispute. The essential finding by a majority of the commissioners, as details by cablegram have shown, was that there were no torpedoes near Dogger Bank on the night of the attack on the Hull fishing fleet, and with this verdict Britain has perforce to rest content. The commissioners added other findings, but they amounted to no more than the twenty given by the man who refused a loan to a friend and urged as his first point that he hadn't a penny in the world. According to the generally expressed English newspaper opinion with the declaration that there were no torpedo boats the whole case breaks down, while the remainder is merely a diplomatically worded document to spare the susceptibilities of Russia. Not that the latter, *The Newcastle Chronicle* sentimentally observes, really deserves any consideration in the matter. If Admiral Rojestvensky and the Russian government had admitted immediately after the occurrence that an unfortunate blunder had been committed nothing more would have been said. It was the irritating persistency with which Great Britain was practically charged with a dishonorable breach of neutrality by shielding the presence of Japanese torpedo boats that exasperated the people of that country and nearly provoked a conflict with Russia. But, as already remarked, the incident is closed. The Russian government never denied its liability to make suitable compensation to the Dogger Bank victims, and as for censure or punishment of Admiral Rojestvensky and those who blundered with him, that is Russia's affair and nobody else's. At the same time, it is interesting to reflect upon what might have happened if the situation had been reversed, and Russian fishermen peacefully pursuing their avocation had been wantonly fired upon by a passing British squadron.

### Postoffice Savings Bank.

"According to our consul-general at Halifax," remarks *The Boston Herald*, "the Canadian government savings bank did not make a particularly good showing last year. Deposits increased over those for 1903 by \$1,357,320, which was several hundred thousand dollars less than the interest earned by the amount that was owed depositors at the opening of the year. While, therefore, an actual gain is shown in the total amount of deposits from one year to another, the withdrawals exceeded the deposits to an extent that used up a portion of the interest paid. Up to 1899 deposits increased rapidly in the Canadian bank. In that year they exceeded \$41,000,000. Since then the growth has been slower, for in fourteen years deposits increased by only about 50 per cent. This is explained by the low rate of interest paid. Up to 1889 the bank gave 4 per cent. interest, which attracted depositors. Since then the interest rate has been 3.2 per cent. On the whole, the Canadian Savings Bank, run as a government institution, has not made anything like as good an exhibit as have the banks in such states as New York and Massachusetts, either as regards the increased amount deposited or the interest paid to depositors. There are a number of banks in New York City with a large amount on deposit than the total held by the Canadian Savings Bank, even if it is a government institution."

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