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President JAMES L. MORRISON.
General Manager J. V. WRIGHT.
Artist and Editor J. W. BRINGOUGH.
Manager Publishing Dept. R. T. LANCEFIELD.

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Comments on the Customs.



AN-SQUAT-ULATE.—The move so kindly and considerably made by the Government in the interest of the C.P.R., in applying for an injunction to restrain the Red River Valley Railway from crossing certain Crown lands, has been rendered abortive by the timely discovery that the lands in question belong not to the Crown but to certain squatters who have occupied them for the full period required by law, and are in a position to demand their title deeds. There seems to be no doubt upon the point, and of course in the face of such a fact no injunction can be granted. What the Dominion Government's next move will be is a matter for curious speculation. If Sir John and his colleagues were really free agents they would no doubt be very glad to wash their hands of the whole affair at this point, but as they are mere marionettes in the hands of the Syndicate they will of course be set at some other trick to circumvent the will of the Province. That it will prove equally futile we have no doubt.

SLIGHTLY CONTRADICTORY.—Mr. Norquay's visit to New York to sell the R.R.V. bonds was an event of interest throughout the Dominion, and his progress in the business was the subject of despatches in the papers every morning. These despatches were good reading for the man who is fond of getting muddled as to facts. On the 19th, for instance, (the day upon which it was necessary for our artist to depict the condition of affairs for this number) the *Globe* announced that the mission had proved a failure, while the *Mail's* telegram asserted that there was no doubt Mr. Norquay had succeeded

beyond his most sanguine expectations. The *Globe's* news proved unfortunately correct, though the New York set-back has by no means disheartened the Provincial authorities. Simultaneously with Mr. Norquay's departure from the American money market it is said an offer was made by a Toronto financier to place \$1,000,000 of the bonds at par.

HE'S ALL RIGHT.—Now that Mr. Mowat is back from the Old Country in renewed health and vigor, the conference of Provincial Premiers is in order. Some of our contemporaries think it their duty to warn the Hon. Oliver not to commit himself to any schemes that may be suggested that would be against the interests of Ontario. If this is the same Mr. Mowat that we have known for some time as Attorney-General up in the old ram-shackle red brick building on Front street, the warnings and cautions of our well meaning contemporaries are "a work of supererogation." They have perhaps forgotten that Mr. Mowat always takes his "consideration" with him when he goes among the bad boys, and into that ample receptacle every proposition goes. And this reminds us, by the way, that there are heaps of valuable suggestions lying in the abyssal depths of that "consideration" that were dropped there long, long ago, and might be the better for an airing now.

THE ORIGIN OF LANDLORDISM.—The statement made long ago by John Stuart Mill and other thinkers of acknowledged weight, that private ownership of land is wrong, is beginning to command general attention. It has got into politics, and in the State of New York is at this moment the principal issue of the "fall campaign." This has come about chiefly through the influence of Mr. Henry George's writings, in which the evils and injustice of private ownership of land are amply set forth in popular language, and, what is better, a simple and practical plan of removing them is suggested. The fact that nobody has refuted Mr. George's arguments, and that most of his opponents find it necessary to misrepresent him, has naturally led a great many to conclude that his conclusions are sound. That land is a natural element, essential to the existence of the human race, is a self evident fact, and it follows irresistibly that it must have been created for the equal use of all the race. No individual can therefore fairly appropriate any of it to his own exclusive enjoyment, unless either he can show an absolute title, which, to be absolute, he must hold from the Maker of the land; or he is prepared to render up to society an equivalent for the advantage he has acquired over his fellow men in appropriating a portion of the common heritage to his own use. This equivalent is the rental value, which is created by society, and in all justice ought to go into the public coffer in the shape of a tax. While this tax would in all respects accord with strict justice, it would be easily and cheaply collected, and in every country would furnish a revenue sufficient to permit of the abolition of all the taxes now levied upon production.

GRAMMATICAL.

"THE adverb may be distinguished from other parts of speech by the fact that it may be transferred from one part of the sentence to another without altering the meaning."

Example :

"The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy."—*Scott.*

1. *Often* was carried by a boy.
2. Was *often* carried by a boy.
3. Was carried *often* by a boy.
4. Was carried by an *orphan* boy.
5. Was carried by a boy of *ten*.

STREET CAR DRIVERS FOR SALE !

It has often been asserted that the employees of the Street Railway Company, in this city, are treated like slaves, but we had no idea the expression was meant literally. That the car-drivers at least are looked upon as chattels by Mr. Smith seems clear from the following announcement in an advertisement in connection with an auction sale at Grand's:—

"Those having horses to dispose of will find this an unparalleled opportunity, this sale being extensively advertised throughout Canada, Manitoba and the United States. Several lumber men will be present, also buyers for useful street car horses and drivers."