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THE TIMES.

There is a good deal which to my lay mind is quite bewildering in the trial of Jones for the McNamee robbery—I mean as to the evidence given by Mr. McNamee himself, and the prisoner's counsel, Mr. Archambault. A little more light on the matter would be acceptable, but those who are not lawyers had better not put too many leading questions, perhaps, at this stage of the strange proceedings.

A friend writes:—

“In view of the continued losses of life and property through derangements in the train service on this continent, it is urged on the attention of the railway companies that the lines require a new class of officers for their daily working, who, beyond the duty of supplying statistical information to his fellow-officers, would report to the General Manager alone. They should be called safety officers. There should be one such officer to each principal station or shunting ground, and his duty would be to post himself so as to be in constant possession of the movements of all trains to and from such station, comparing the actual expectations of arrival with the time-tables, and enforcing punctuality in departures. The safety officer would also exercise an effective oversight by telegraph or telephone, so far as possible, over the position and course of trains going and coming between his own and the next stations up and down the line. He would have to see that all operations in shunting, coupling, &c., were conducted in such a way as to keep the line clear for advancing trains, and to have all work performed so as to ensure the safety of the lives of the public and the employees in connexion with it. He would have especially to see that the rules of the line were attended to as to the intervals between the starting of trains, their limit of speed, and the starting and signalling of extra trains, enforcing punctuality as stated. The station masters and train dispatchers of his own station should be bound to report *viva voce* to the safety officer when called upon to do so, and from distant stations through telegraph or telephone, but except in cases of emergency he would not apply to them when busily engaged in their duties. The safety officer would have a general oversight over the position of all the rolling-stock that might seem to him to threaten danger by its position. He should have access to all telegrams and despatch books, and also precedence in the use of telegraph and telephone—this last privilege to be used with discretion. Brakemen, trackmen, and employees of the locomotive and car department and the fire engine corps, with all their superior officers, would always have to reply to any questions in their several departments put by the safety officer of the station. The report of the safety officer for the fine or dismissal of any employee should always be considered by the General Manager, and in certain cases such powers should be vested in him without reporting. Beyond the duties enumerated, and others of a like kind, there would be no claims upon the time nor attention of these officers, and the most suitable men being chosen for the duties, a great accession of safety to life and property should result. The expense of the new arrangement would be far more than covered on most lines, although it is of course understood that where human life is concerned, expense is not the principal consideration. If the companies should

not see their way to arrangements of the kind described—the situation is quite serious enough, now, to demand the attention of legislative bodies all over the northern continent. Safety to life must be had, in all contingencies, so far as it is possible to attain to it.”

I am glad to see that Mr. Frechette is to be banquetted at Quebec, and I hope it may be as great a success there as it was in Montreal. It was really a very fine gathering and a great occasion here, giving promise that we are about to learn the value of the higher branches of literature. But if I might offer one word of advice it would be after this fashion somewhat: not to have too many speeches at the banquet, and not to insist upon it that the hero of the hour shall first name himself a poet and then extravagantly laud all poets.

That is a very pretty bit of rumour which the newspapers have been circulating, to the effect that Argyle is to come to Canada and make enquiry as to the general state of Canadian opinion with regard to the question of annexation. How would they put the Duke to work, and where? Would they have a private commission or a plebiscite or a series of meetings and a show of hands at each? Why not do a little work for his grace before he comes—in the way of testing or creating public opinion by asking for an expression of opinion in the correspondence of the columns of the newspapers, or by those who approve of it offering a better chance of office to “the other fellows,” or something of that kind? Then the Duke would find the way prepared and easy.

The following communication from a gentleman is so good and so timely that I would like to commend it to the attention of all my party-giving readers:—

“Winter is coming on; society is beginning to gather itself together again; hostesses are making arrangements for entertainments; *patres-familiarum* contemplate with more or less horror the prospect of bills and accounts; maidens are working out, in their own minds, plans and tactics for conquests; and men (young and old) of the dancing class and the party-going class are filled with dread and alarm at the idea of another season's dissipation and frivolity. I propose to speak from the standpoint of a society-man, if I can; for the *genus* is by no means alike in thought or feeling. Therefore, I doubt my ability to represent it. What does winter mean to us? What significance is there to us in the announcement that the season is *on*? A round of balls and parties; of all kinds and descriptions; a succession of evenings with the mazy waltz; night after night of dance, and rapid conversation, indigestible supper and insufficient sleep. Morning after morning of parched lips and aching heads, tired limbs and unwilling awakenings. Day after day out of all condition for business; weary, worn-out and exhausted. Why is this? To be plain and brief, because of the insane edicts of society. Edicts which say that it is bad form to commence a party before half-past nine or ten. Edicts which say that it is not etiquette to cease earlier than two or three in the morning. Women who can sleep it out next day; who can rest their jaded bodies are better off than are we. We must be off to work—the bank, the desk, the office, as usual. We must try to work a day's work and then go at it again. Is it pleasure? Is it enjoyment? Why is the end of the season hailed with delight by men? Simply because they are fagged out. Now, to be practical and plain—would not all this discomfort be avoided if hostesses began their parties at half-past eight and closed them, say at twelve. We could then get a decent night's rest and feel bright in the morning. Four hours of it ought to satisfy the most ardent dancer. In other places than Montreal—in Ottawa, I