

THE EVENING TIMES, ST. JOHN, N. B. FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 1908.

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GUARDING THE FOREST

During the recent forest fires in the Maine woods a good deal of benefit was derived from the system of watch towers in the northern portion of the state, from which wardens sweep the surrounding forest with telescopes, detect and locate fires, and give warning by telephone to the fire wardens of the district. The Bangor Commercial, describing these watch towers, says:

"There are already eight watch towers, and the state is planning for more. They are situated on the topmost points of land in Washington, Somerset, Piscataquis, Aroostook, Penobscot, Hancock, Franklin and Oxford counties. Attendants at each station are in telephonic communication with thousands of acres of timberland. At the watch tower on Attie Mountain there is a view of 200,000 acres of solid forest. Mount Bigelow overlooks 200,000 acres of timber and farming country. At Whitecap Mountain, a station in the Kennebec and Penobscot watersheds, 300,000 acres are under surveillance. The Squaw Mountain station at the southern end of Moosehead Lake is 4,000 feet above the sea level.

"The watch towers are square cabins of logs averaging in cost and equipment about \$750 each. Each is fitted with telephone, telescope, a chart of the surrounding country and a range finder, an instrument such as is used in the army and navy for fixing distances and direction. The telephone lines connect the stations with settlements. There the fire wardens now have hundreds of men, many of them volunteers, at their beck and call when an incipient fire is reported. Observations are made by the watch tower operators every hour, and a careful record is kept. At the Squaw Mountain station between 30 and 45 fires were discovered in one season, and their consequent early extinguishing enabled thousands of acres of timberland to be saved. The watchman at this station kept a record of all the fires.

"If the wind is slight, the extinguishing of an incipient forest fire is a relatively simple matter. They are beaten with houghs, and earth and sand are shovelled upon them. When a heavy wind makes the smoke and heat almost unendurable, efforts are made to head off and stop the fire by clearing a strip of some distance ahead of the line of flame. If the ground fire is so strong that there is danger that it may leap this cleared strip, a fire is made along along the inner edge of this cleared strip. It will burn against the wind and meet the big fire. Both will then subside for lack of fuel."

THE UNEMPLOYED

The United States Bureau of Labor has recently issued a bulletin dealing with methods adopted in European countries for the benefit of the unemployed. The bulletin presents the results of a study of the problem by Mr. W. D. P. Bliss. The following convenient summary of the report is from the Toronto World:

"Mr. Bliss, in dealing with the unemployed, notes that three general classes are usually recognized in Europe, the employable, the unemployable and the vagrant, the incorrigible or more or less vicious. Each of these distinct divisions of the workless is dealt with in a different way, and although the various countries are not altogether in line, there is substantial agreement on the main features of the endeavor made to assist those who are willing to work. But as regards those who are unable or unwilling to work, there is more variety in the method of treatment.

"The principal agency everywhere for dealing with the employable is the employment bureau, both private and public, supplemented by efforts to get men back to the land, a movement which is in progress everywhere. Germany has developed the public employment bureau very considerably during the last twenty years, and there are now over 400 of them finding places yearly for more than half a million individuals. In France also the public bureau is favorably regarded, and since 1904 the maintenance of such offices has

been compulsory in all towns of 10,000 and over.

"British cities, except temporarily and in times of special stress, have not organized official bureaus, but a means of relief for unemployed members of trades unions that has been greatly developed is the out-of-work benefit. In the 'Ghent' system this is supplemented by additional sums contributed by the municipal or communal and sometimes the provincial or general government. This practice has extended throughout Belgium and has spread to other countries, notably France. Switzerland essayed insurance against unemployment, but the experiment has not proved successful, but temporary relief works either by the state or by cities has become extensive in Britain, France and Germany, especially during the winter season.

"In German countries traveling either in search of work or in order to practice experience has long been the practice of working men, and Germany, Switzerland and German Austria have an organized system of 'home shelters.' These are found in all the larger cities and towns, and workmen can find lodging and food for a night or two, either by paying a small sum or by doing a little work in the morning. They are private institutions often maintained by trade unions or by religious societies. In connection with them a subsidiary system of smaller relief stations has been established under government administration or support and often within walking distance. All are connected by telephone so that a workman traveling in search of work can learn at any point where to look with best hope of success. If without funds he can work in the mornings and travel in the afternoons. This system, it is reported, has caused a marked diminution in the numbers of tramps and irresponsible vagrants.

"As regards unemployables, Mr. Bliss adds the most notable efforts to deal with them in the 'labor colonies' of Germany and Switzerland. There are thirty of these in Germany, all agricultural, maintained by private philanthropy and in them any man can find shelter so long as he abides by the rules. He is free to leave when he pleases, but while he remains he must do the work assigned him. In Switzerland an attempt is being made to grade the various classes of labor colonies, but it is only as yet in its initial stage. For vagrants arrested for begging, persistent idleness and other minor offences, penal colonies have been established by Belgium, Switzerland and Holland."

IN THE CONGO

Yesterday's despatches stated that there was almost a crisis in the Belgian cabinet over the Congo question. The Toronto News thus summarizes the Congo situation:

"Reform of administration in the Congo seems to be still remote. Four years ago King Leopold, under pressure of the powers, appointed a Commission of Inquiry, which occupied over three years in securing evidence, and did little more than confirm the testimony of un-official observers that the Congo was the open sore of the world. In view of this report, it was announced that Belgium would annex the Congo State, thus limiting the absolutism of Leopold and giving opportunity for reform. The terms of the treaty of transfer were published in December last, but were so unpopular with houghs, and earth and sand are shovelled upon them. When a heavy wind makes the smoke and heat almost unendurable, efforts are made to head off and stop the fire by clearing a strip of some distance ahead of the line of flame. If the ground fire is so strong that there is danger that it may leap this cleared strip, a fire is made along along the inner edge of this cleared strip. It will burn against the wind and meet the big fire. Both will then subside for lack of fuel."

"In the meantime conditions are growing worse all the time. The natives are in a state of slavery, and are treated with the utmost cruelty. In a recent issue of The London Morning Post Mr. E. D. Morel reviews the official statements of Stanislas Lefranc, a prominent Belgian, who is friendly to the Administration. He was appointed a magistrate in the Congo in 1901, and remained there until March of this year. Recently his position has been Judge of First Instance. His testimony as to the effect of the 'Reform Decrees' of 1903 was that they had only tightened the grip of the rubber concessionaires upon the natives. Slavery according to the law is illegal, but these decrees permit 'forced labor' on the Grand Lacs Railway or in the Kilo gold mines because it is 'in the public interest.' He says: 'I have seen men in chains for whose incarceration there was no written permit.'

"Mr. Morel points out that the Kilo mines are a part of the private property of Leopold, and adds that six months after the decrees were signed the statement was made in the Belgian Parliament that the labor was voluntary. Magistrate Lefranc acquires the reputation in Brussels of being an interfering and inconvenient busy-body solely because he investigated murderous raids and acts of appalling cruelty from which the natives were constantly suffering. It would seem that unless the Belgian Government ceases its tortuous and dilatory course the powers may be forced to intervene. And public opinion in every civilized country would approve."

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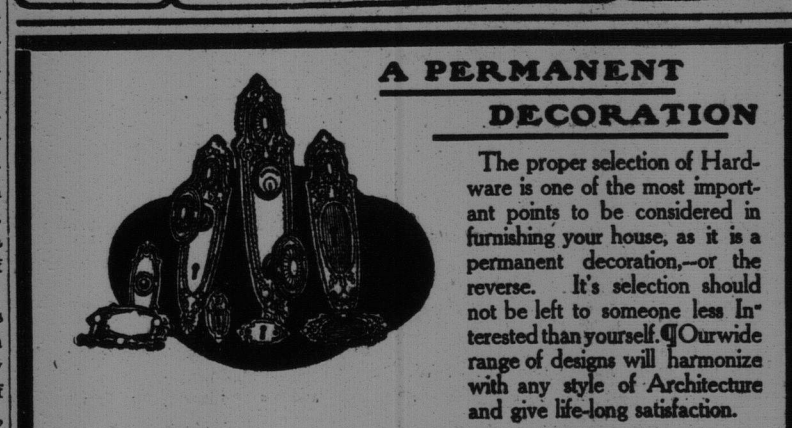
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WHEN THE FISH WON'T BITE.

(By Joseph Thurman, in National Sportsman.)

There's days when the fish won't bite; It's either too calm or else too rough; It's either too warm or not warm enough; It's either too cloudy or the sun's too bright; The wrong way, or the moon's not right; Or for some other reason, you can't tell why.

But there's days when the fish won't bite. You may try every lure, you may try every bait; You may do what you will, and wait and wait; From morning till noon and from noon till night; But you won't get a nibble tho' you try all your might; You may grumble or swear, But the fish don't care.

For there's days when the fish will bite; When it ain't too calm and it ain't too rough; When it ain't too warm, but just warm enough; And the big old fellows, oh, joy, how they fight! Your rod's bent double as you keep your feet light; How they leap! How they run! Get while you can, for the fish will bite!

On the days when the fish will bite!

IN LIGHTER VEIN UP TO HIM.

He (in the hammock)—"Dare I light my cigar?"

She (also in the hammock)—"Do you wish us to be regarded in that light?"

He—"A cigar?"

She—"A match."

THE NEEDS OF EZRA.

Old Ezra Hanks, who has been sick for some time, wrote him. We've known Ezra for twenty years and we know what his stomach is pluing for. Give him anything with 50 per cent alcohol—Leadville (Colo.) Light.

THE OTHER BOY'S PAULT.

Mother—"I hear you were at the foot of the class last week, Tommy."

Tommy—"I wasn't my fault, Johnny Smith, who's always at the foot, was sick at home."

Circle.

THACKERAY'S CHANCE TO HELP.

A man once asked Thackeray to lend him \$20,000, which he explained that he knew a young woman with \$20,000 who he had pawned his ring in, in order to propose effectively.—M. A. P.

BOTH DISGUISED.

When Mrs. de Staal published her celebrated novel, "Delphine," she was supposed to have painted herself in the person of the heroine and Thackeray in that of an elderly lady, who is one of the principal characters. They tell fingers. "That we are both of us in your novel, in the disguise of women,"—Literary Digest.

OPPORTUNITY.

The two sat on the park bench, looking at the moonbeams dancing over the lake. "Sh," she whispered, "I feel as if some one were watching."

Just then the moon, accompanimentally went behind a cloud—and the man in it disappeared.

FALLING OFF THE CAR.

(With Apologies.)

Someraults and seeing stars; Someraults and seeing stars; Oh! when you fall off backward from the car, May there be no one to see. A bump, a bruise, a mad desire to weep; A torn dress and a butterfly in his finger; And who tried to take the backward leap Turn again home.—From The Bohemian.

THE INGLENOOK PHILOSOPHER OF KENNEBACCAIS BAY

The average man is like the squirrel in a revolving cage, always on the run for something that always eludes his grasp. I say always advisedly. No matter what the one's pursuit may be, his object is the gratification of a desire, and when the desire is gratified it is no longer a desire, for another usurps its place. The child craves a butterfly in his finger; then it has no more use for butterflies; later it craves a horse, and when it has recovered from the effects of the counter it seeks other game. One youth matches pennies in an alley; then he gets on the race course, and finally he gets on the stock market; then he disappears. Another thinks he will be learned; he devotes years to study, and then wakes up to the fact that he knows nothing at all. The best of us guess many things, but the sum of what they know can be counted on one's fingers. The infant continues its quest for amusement, the speculator for gain and the student for learning, until at last they fold their hands and cry with Solomon, "All is vanity." Honor, fame, power and riches are like the toys of childhood; they gratify for awhile; then come to gratify or take wings and fly away. Alexander wept for world to conquer; this is the story of the whole human race. "Over the hills," we say, "lies the valley of contentment," but we never get over the hills.

Here my reverie was interrupted by the appearance of Aaron, who came briskly up the road. He is becoming a tall and rather manly looking boy. Said I, "Aaron, sit down here and tell me what you want."

"I want," said Aaron, seating himself, "I want twenty thousand dollars."

"Say a million, Aaron," said I, "say a million. You want to be rich, and nobody is rich now-a-days who is worth less than a million. And you want an auto for the pleasure of good, kind Mrs. Pollard, as well as of that little fairy that picked strawberries with you so indistinctly last summer. Ah, Aaron, after a few years you will want to marry that little fairy, and if I were sixty or seventy years younger I might want to marry her myself."

Aaron grinned, and I told him the subject was one that should not be treated with levity.

"Aaron," I continued, "we are restless mortals; we are always chasing our phantoms, knowing as well as we can know from the experience of others that they are nothing but mist. Neither riches, nor fame, nor power satisfy the cravings of the heart. Neither does love; your fairy of the strawberry patch is nothing but common clay, as you may discover before you are a dozen years older. Something less than 50,000 decrees of divorce were issued in the United States last year, and 150,000 more would have been issued but for the notoriety and discredit which divorce involves. Divorce is more costly and more difficult to obtain in Canada, and for this reason it is less frequent than across the border."

I turned to see what effect my preaching might have on Aaron. He was away down the road and he was whistling "Annie Laurie" to the stars. Whitehead, Kings Co., Aug. 18.

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