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Manager and Editor

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 8, 1909.

It is scarce proper that one man's life should so seriously affect business affairs. Mr. Harriman is seriously ill, and Wall street, New York, as well as other financial centres, stand by in apprehension as to what effect his death, should it occur, will have on stocks. Surely the world's business can go on just the same without Mr. Harriman. The apprehension is, we fancy, largely the result of speculative operations.

Canada's great railways are not to enjoy all the transcontinental trade. A new route has just been opened by way of the trans-Mexican railway. A quantity of freight was shipped from Montreal to Halifax, thence by steamer to Puerto, across Mexico by rail to Salina Cruz, then by steamer to Victoria and Vancouver. As water carriage is cheaper than by land the charges are less, notwithstanding the numerous changes, than by rail all the way. It will hardly become a passenger route. How conditions change in the present day. Facilities for transportation afford one of the world's greatest civilizers.

The loss caused by industrial strikes is much greater than many are aware of. During July there were 15 industrial disputes in Canada, involving 4,338 employees, who lost 118,000 working days. This is a serious loss of time and of wages, and must entail great suffering to someone. During the same month 358 met with accidents, of whom 100 died. The accidents did not always happen to those engaged in what are considered the most hazardous callings. Seventy of them occurred to metal workers, 55 to farmers, 54 to railway men, 30 to builders, and 29 to miners. These statistics, which come from the Labor Department, are interesting and important.

**THE IMPERIAL DEFENCE CONFERENCE.**

The full significance of the Imperial Defence Conference which recently met in London is only beginning to be fully realized. The conference was one of the most significant events in the history of the British Empire. It was a recognition of the fact that the defences of the empire regime to be strengthened and that the colonies are bound to bear a larger share of the burden than they have hitherto done. The conference was the outcome of the disclosures in March—call it war scare if you will—and to the response made by the colonies when danger was threatened. New Zealand offered to present a war ship or two, Australia took steps to provide a local flotilla, and also other assistance, including if necessary a war ship, and Canada, through its parliament, passed a resolution in favor of organizing a naval service to co-operate with the imperial navy, and expressing a readiness, whenever the need arises, as she did in the South African war, to help in preserving the honor and integrity of the empire. South Africa has no parliament yet, but it will soon have, and the delegates to the conference expressed a wish to co-operate with the other colonies.

The proceedings were of course conducted behind closed doors, but sufficient is known to indicate that while there was, as might be expected, differences of opinion, there was the utmost harmony and good feeling. A general plan of action was outlined, and further negotiations will take place with the governments of the different colonies for perfecting the details. Premier Asquith has just given in the House of Commons, an indication of the policy agreed upon, which is in effect that which meets the views of the government of Canada. Each member of the world-empire group of nations is free, retains control of its own forces, reserves the right to say when and for what cause its fleet shall leave its own waters, and, yet all the members are bound in a unity of interest and sentiment and life and stronger than compulsion could secure.

Mr. Haldane, the Secretary of War, in a speech the other day, said:—I am glad to be able to tell you that we are within sight, and indeed, something more than within sight of common plans which will unify the forces of the crown throughout the whole empire.

Lord Kitchener is going to Australia and New Zealand, and Sir John French coming to Canada to work out the details of the plan agreed upon. The steps taken, and to be taken, will have the effect of binding together closer than ever the different parts of the British empire. The conference and its outcome may sound somewhat warlike, but its ultimate effect will be for peace and the extension of that civilization and advancement for which Great Britain always stands.

The loss by fire in the Ontario Legislative Buildings is estimated at \$750,000. Public comment is given great praise to the Premier and the ministers for their plucky work as fire fighters, and severe criticism to the city firemen. Rebuilding will be proceeded with at once; and efforts will be directed to making not only the new portion but the old as well, entirely fire-proof. The loss of the library, with its priceless treasure of rare books, is well-nigh irreparable.

**BALANCED LIBERALITY.**

Whatever abstract opinions may be entertained as to the relations of Church and State, the only practical method of supporting the cause of religion is that which depends on the intelligence, affection and good will of the people. The current of opinion, growing in force and volume every day is in this direction. To many this may seem the most desirable, because they believe it to be the Scriptural course; to others it may be a matter to be deplored. In any case it is what modern society is coming to. Men may protest against it; they may seek to obstruct the movement that will result in assigning Church and State two distinct spheres of activity. These great co-ordinate powers will have mutual relations. Their tendencies may sometimes coalesce, they may sometimes diverge, but the relation will in the future be in nowise a peculiar one. Though in particular instances the issue remains, and for a time may remain undecided, there is little doubt as to the ultimate result. The principle enunciated by Count Cavour, a "A Free Church in a Free State," will be the condition of modern national existence. On this continent at all events the separation of Church and State is complete, and however vigorous the efforts made in the past to secure their alliance in Canada, they belong to a finished page of our national history.

It is easy to see that the cause of religion has gained largely from the severance of the tie that does so much to hamper the cause of Church extension and the various forms of Christian activity. However much some in these days may affect a haughty ecclesiastical exclusiveness, all sections of the Christian Church are on a level so far as privilege is concerned. The State as such—it may be otherwise to some extent with politicians—knows no distinction between the Prelatist and the Hornerite Methodist. They enjoy the same tolerance. Every branch has what it is justly entitled to—a fair field and no favor.

The Church in Canada depends on the voluntary liberality of its people for the maintenance of its ordinances, sustaining its efforts to supply the means of grace to destitute localities, engaging in benevolent and philanthropic work, equipping and maintaining institutions for the training of its ministry, and meeting all legitimate obligations. This dependence in the past has not been misplaced. The stream of Christian liberality has been constant and is steadily becoming broader and deeper. In this one department of Christian activity we have a striking evidence of the power of faith working by love.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has no reason to make general complaints of the want of liberality on the part of its members. The amount of work done, the churches built all over the land, the educational institutions established, the missionary enterprises at home and abroad, and many other schemes of a religious and benevolent nature originated and ably sustained by her pecuniary aid are evidences that in the grace of liberality she is no laggard.

In this respect as in others the most devoted congregations, as well as in-