

A Premature Blaze. The trustees of a non-conformist church in Haywards, California, cannot surely complain if, in obedience to a sense of humour, we help to circulate the story of their unpremeditated destruction of the sacred edifice committed to their charge. Their action was almost as funny, except to an insurance company, as that of the Essex farmers who, at a meeting called by one of their number to devise some plan whereby a calf caught in a fence could be extricated, decided that the best and only method was decapitation of the calf. Just previous to Independence Day the trustees of the church at Haywards, California, decided to burn the grass surrounding the "meetin' house," lest the celebrants of the glorious Fourth might ignite same with a ricocheting rocket or spluttering fire-cracker, and thus destroy the church.

The blaze kindled by these devoted men proved as uncontrollable as a prairie fire, and only a black smudge under the blue sky now marks the place where the Methodist church of Haywards, California, once stood. Whether the unhappy trustees find comfort in the fact that "the loss is partly covered by insurance" we are not told, but we are glad to think they have the consolation of knowing that *the church did not burn down on the Fourth*. They, at least, prevented that.

Our Imperial Highway. The Canadian Pacific Railway has just declared another dividend, and is about to distribute over one and three-quarters of a million of dollars among the holders of its stock and debentures. What a splendid vindication of the boldness of those who conceived such a project, and what a triumph for its financiers. The engineering skill which made the construction of such a railway possible, can only be appreciated by those who have had the privilege of journeying from ocean to ocean over The Imperial Highway. Caviling, carping criticism of our past expenditures upon railway construction is silenced by the success of the Canadian Pacific. To it we owe the development of cities, towns, broad farm lands and innumerable industries, and, as we think of the past and contemplate the present, we doff our hats to those who induced the people of Canada to approve of the credit and the resources of the country being utilised in extending transport facilities and enlarging the conveniences of personal and commercial traffic so as to bring all sections of the country into communication with each other and with the outside world.

The American Currency Question and Politics. The recent expressions of that extraordinary production of United States politics, Mr. Croker, being construed by his friends and followers as significant of an intention to favour the re-nomination of Mr. Bryan for the presidency, some of the Democratic politicians are already speculating

upon the possibility of abandoning the cheap money platform, and relying for success upon the growth of a feeling of hostility to the present Administration on account of the continuance of the campaign in the Philippines. The New York "Commercial Bulletin" urges a reform of the currency legislation before the election, and incidentally disposes of Mr. Bryan in the following fashion:—

But the Eastern States, where commercial sentiment is strong, and where the dangers of trifling with the currency are appreciated, will not vote for a cheap money platform or for Mr. Bryan on an evasive platform. If the Democratic politicians of the West hope to get the assistance of the East—and they know they cannot win without it—they must not only conceal the most revolutionary features of the Chicago platform, but they must conceal the candidate of three years ago.

Copyright of Ideas.

Our legislators at Ottawa and Quebec will doubtless be surprised at the recent decision of the English High Court of Justice, by which the London "Times" has been granted an injunction against the publisher of some addresses by Lord Rosebery. The New York "Evening Post" is responsible for the statement that "Lord Rosebery himself furnished the clippings to his publisher (John Lane), freely making over all his right and title to them. But the 'Times' contended that he had no rights in the premises whatever; that its reports were copyrighted; and it brought suit to restrain publication of the volume containing the alleged infringements on its own copyright. The Court has now decided for the newspaper, and has granted an injunction against the publisher.

"The case was argued on July 14, and from the views then advanced by learned counsel it is possible to infer the grounds on which the decision was based. It was agreed on both sides that Lord Rosebery himself had no copyright in his oral addresses as such. He might have secured it by taking the steps indicated in the law of copyright to protect 'lecturers,' but he failed to do so. Therefore, his winged words became, the moment they left his lips, public property. The only question was as to the copyright of the report published in the 'Times.'"

It certainly seems, at first sight, a moral if not legal absurdity that one man can so copyright the words of another that the latter has no right to reproduce them. The value of the speeches lay in the fact that they were Lord Rosebery's. The words were his. Is it not of the essence of copyright that it can be gained only by the author of original matter? Is the reporter to be given rights above the orator? Is the copy more sacred than the original? The defence made the most of this line of argument. But the plaintiff pressed home the single legal point which seems to have prevailed with the court. This was that there is no such thing as copyright of ideas; it is all a matter of literary form; and Lord Rosebery