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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any other person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

OVER one hundred MSS. have been received by THE WEEK for its Short Story Prize Competition. These are now in the hands of the judges; but some time must necessarily elapse before their labours can be completed. The awards will be announced in these columns at the earliest possible moment.

THANKS to the liberality of Mr. William Mulock, M.P., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Toronto, the people of this city, and of Canada generally, are likely to be among the foremost in proving the virtues of Dr. Koch's great medical discovery. At the request of Mr. Mulock, Professor Ramsay Wright has been granted leave of absence by the Medical Faculty of the University, and has set out for Berlin, with the view, if possible, of learning from Dr. Koch personally, and his coadjutors, all that is to be learned concerning the mode of preparation and use of the remedy, the potency of which in the cure of tuberculous diseases has already been to some extent demonstrated, and from which so much is hoped for in the treatment of consumption in its earlier stages. Whatever uncertainty still exists with regard to the efficacy of Dr. Koch's remedy—an uncertainty which, in the nature of things, can hardly be dispelled for months or years to come—there can be no doubt as to the desirability of testing its powers and distributing whatever blessings it has to confer as widely and as speedily as possible. With this end in view Mr. Mulock has generously undertaken to defray all the expenses of Professor Wright's journey, including the cost of investigation and of purchasing all the apparatus required in the preparation of the material. It is thought that Professor Wright, whose proficiency as a student of bacteriology specially qualifies him for his mission, may be able on his return to produce in the Biological Laboratory of the University all the material required for use in Canada, and Mr. Mulock expresses the hope that it may be possible to arrange for its free distribution.

FROM the enquiries which are being made by the Minister of Justice, it appears that the question of the abolition of the time-honoured Grand Jury is under consideration. The matter is one which concerns every citizen and demands the fullest discussion. We have, of course, no means of knowing at present what is the exact tenor of the answers made by the judges, who are in many

respects in the best position for forming an opinion. We are not surprised to learn that in many cases those opinions are distinctly in favour of the retention of this ancient institution. It is evident to the plainest comprehension that certain functions hitherto performed by the Grand Jurors are indispensable in securing justice and guarding individual liberty. The first condition in order to the formation of an opinion in regard to the matter is a knowledge of what means for attaining these ends it is proposed to substitute for the Grand Jury. First and chief among these functions is that of determining whether the evidence of guilt in the case of the prisoner or accused person is sufficient to justify his being put upon trial. The importance of this duty can hardly be over-estimated. It would never do to accept the decision of a single police or other magistrate as sufficient. Under any circumstances it is sufficiently hard that a person who, in accordance with a trite but just maxim of British law is to be held innocent as not having been proved guilty, may be kept in prison for weeks or months prior to trial before a jury of his peers. The fact that it is necessary to interfere so far with the liberty of the subject makes it absolutely imperative that there shall be a preliminary investigation by some unbiased and competent authority. All things considered, what better tribunal for this purpose can be had than a jury made up of a considerable number of the most intelligent and most highly respected citizens to be found in the neighbourhood? The number of the Grand Jury, as now constituted, may or may not be larger than is necessary; the property qualification may or may not be the best guarantee of good sense, intelligence and honesty on the part of those chosen; there may, in short, be room for improvement in the *personnel* of these juries as usually chosen, but it is not easy to see what substitute could be found which would command and deserve the confidence of all concerned in the same degree. Mr. Pirie, who discussed the question so ably and impartially in our columns last week, favours the appointment of Public Prosecutors, as in the Scotch system. As Mr. Pirie points out, it is well that the wisdom of a scheme should be measured by its successful working, and this seems to have stood the test of long and thorough trial in Scotland. At the same time, it is quite possible that a method which proves successful in one country might fail in another. We fancy that the very fact that these Public Prosecutors are appointed by the Government and under the direction of the chief law officer of the Crown, which he adduces as an argument in favour of the system, might be, in the eyes of many, its chief fault, seeing that one of the original and chief functions of the Grand Jury is to stand, to a certain extent, between the private subject and the officers of the Government. The same defects which are urged against the Grand Jury, as, for instance, want of skill in weighing evidence, might apply with equal force as against the jury system generally, a safeguard which the people will not soon relinquish. Is it not too much to assume that the time has long past when there is any danger of unjust exercise of power by the authorities, or any need of somebody representing the people to stand between the Crown and the subject? The lack of publicity, on which Mr. Pirie rightly lays stress, in the working of Grand Juries, is certainly indefensible. Why not reform procedure in this and other respects, rather than experiment with radical changes? As to the other chief function of the Grand Jury, that of examining and reporting upon the state and working of gaols and other public institutions, it seems very likely that this duty could be much better performed by competent and trustworthy public officials, though, in this case, too, there is something to be said for inspection by representatives of the people.

IT is to be hoped that the rumour that the Government will at its next session propose the reduction of the letter-postage rate from three cents to two cents per ounce is not, as an exchange has suggested, "too good to be true." Cheapness of postage and weight of mails may be said to be among the best evidences of a high state of civilization. It is not to the credit of Canada, as one of the most progressive of semi-independent states, that her postal rates are fifty per cent. higher than those of the

Mother Country and her next door neighbour. Is there any sufficient reason why this anomaly should continue? The question is not wholly one of book-keeping in the Postmaster-General's office. There are ends to be served by giving the best possible facilities for inter-communication by mail which may well warrant a liberal expenditure of the public funds. It would be gratifying, however, to learn that the Post Office authorities have become convinced that the time has come when a thirty-three per cent. reduction may be made without fear of serious increase of the present annual deficit in that department of the public service. The effect of cheapness in enlarging the volume of business is too well understood in these days to need argument. The art of increasing revenue by lowering rates is one that has often been successfully employed by the greatest financiers in public and in private business. We see no good reason to doubt that with a two-cent postal rate for ordinary letters, the sum-total of Canadian correspondence by mail would increase with a bound. Business men in receipt of much correspondence must have been struck with the difference now seen in the practice of American as compared with that of Canadian houses. Many correspondents on the other side of the line almost invariably send as sealed letters documents of a kind which in Canada would be sent unsealed as "Circulars." So, too, the two-cent letter takes the place in very many cases of the postal-card, which on our side of the line is parsed into the service wherever practicable to save the extra two cents. And, by the way, it would, we think, puzzle the Postmaster-General himself to point out any difference in expense in handling or transmission which can justify the Department in charging three times as much for conveying a sealed note as for conveying a postal card. It would be interesting to learn, in this connection, to what extent the doubling of the charge for delivering letters in cities and towns has increased the revenue from that source. Possibly the failure of that attempted economy may have disposed the Government to take the hint, and try the effect of cheapness on the larger scale.

BY the law of Association, the subject of the foregoing paragraph suggests the query whether the rates of railway travel in Canada are not altogether too high. Professor Edmund J. James, President of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, gave some interesting facts bearing on this question, in a recent address before the Manufacturers' Club of Philadelphia. Among European States, Hungary and Austria have, it appears, within the last year or two made immense reductions in passenger fares. Under the rates now prevailing in the former country, the cost of travelling from New York to Chicago would be \$3.20; under those established in Austria, a thousand-mile ride, third-class, would cost \$6.50 instead of \$20 to \$30, as in the United States or Canada. Commutation rates for local service are still lower. Thus workmen can travel to and from work on the railroad for 2 cents a trip, up to 6 miles; 4 cents up to 12 miles; 6 cents up to 18 miles; 8 cents up to 24 miles; and 10 cents up to 30 miles. Yearly tickets good for 30-mile trips are sold for \$17.40. Yet, Professor James tells us, the experience in Austria shows that these rates are profitable to the railways. The traffic has increased so rapidly that the accommodations are taxed to the utmost. It is a regular thing to sell 200,000 tickets in Vienna on a holiday to people who wish to go into the country to spend the day. It would be idle, of course, to expect the same results to follow to the same extent in a sparsely populated country like Canada. The question is, could not the railway rates even here be largely reduced, not only without loss, but with absolute profit to the railways? Professor James states that while England has twenty-five railroad passengers per year per head of the population, the United States has but five. We have not statistics of the Canadian roads within reach, but we suppose the average cannot be much higher here than in the United States. These figures are most suggestive. Moreover, the same reasoning is applicable, and the same questions are pertinent, *mutatis mutandis*, in reference to such services as those performed by the telegraph and telephone companies. In all such services, now becoming necessities of the business and social life of almost the whole