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Workmen's Compensation.

IN consequence of the introduction of a bill in the Ontario Legislature last year, framed on the principles of the recent English Workmen's Compensation Act, Professor Mavor, of the University of Toronto, was commissioned to make enquiries upon the subject, when in England last summer, and present a report. The report, which is now ready, examines the working of laws relating to the subject in all the countries of Europe, and so far as any definite conclusion is suggested, points out the wisdom of waiting for some time "in order to ascertain more fully what has been the effect of the change of principle in the English laws, and to ascertain also whether further change in the direction of the German legislation or otherwise be not imminent in England." Amendments to the English act are already found to be indispensable. The new English act is based upon the old principle of employer's liability, with an "inversion of proof" which presses more heavily than before upon the employer. The presumption, which was formerly in favour of the employer, making it necessary for the workman to prove his claim for compensation, is now on the side of the workman; so that the mere fact of his having been injured while doing the employer's work, entitles him to compensation from the employer, unless the latter can prove that the injury was the consequence of "serious and wilful misconduct" on the part of the workman. The idea at the bottom of the original act was that by making accidents costly they would be prevented; but there is danger in making them too costly. The risk is too great to leave uninsured, and, if insured, the cost is already incurred and the motive to prevent accidents is gone. On the other hand, the