

Messenger and Visitor.

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A Talking Machine. A London newspaper—The Express—makes the statement that before long we may expect to have, as the result of an invention which is being perfected by a Dr. Marage, a machine that can really talk. Many persons would reply that we have that already in the phonograph, but as the Express explains, the phonograph is only a talking machine in the sense that it gives off a record which has already been made upon a cylinder by an actual human voice, while Dr. Marage's aim is to produce a machine which can pronounce words at first hand, and he has already succeeded in getting from it the five vowel sounds, a. e. i. o. u. distinctly uttered. The machine, we are told, has been constructed so as to reproduce the interior of a person's mouth in the shapes assumed by it while pronouncing the different vowels. These false mouths are made of plaster of paris and are fitted to sirens giving the appropriate combination of sounds. When the machine is set in operation the vowel sounds are produced synthetically. Dr. Marage proposes to modify the steam sirens used on ships, so that they will imitate the vowel sounds, thus obtaining phonetic syllables which may be used to form an international alphabet. There are believed to be greater possibilities for this invention than may appear at a first glance. Now that it is possible to make exact mechanical reproduction of the human mouth with pliable lips, perfect teeth and all the wonderful inner mechanism, it would be possible to use those mechanical word producers on a magnified scale on steamships at night and in fogs, and many disasters may thereby be averted.

President Roosevelt's Message.

The United States Congress was opened on Tuesday of last week. President Roosevelt's first presidential message had been looked for with something of special interest. The message appears however to follow pretty closely the conventional lines of such deliverances. It is of formidable length, occupying about two hours in delivery, and it deals with matters of public and national concern in the United States without adding largely to the world's stock of knowledge or projecting anything really new in the line of national policy. Naturally and properly the address opens with allusion to the lamented death of the late President and the causes of that tragic event. President Roosevelt connects it unhesitatingly with the anarchists and their teachings, and urgently calls the attention of Congress to the problems involved in the known presence of these enemies of order and government in the country. This is a matter with which Congress seems eager to deal, and resolutions upon the subject have already been submitted to the Senate. The address deals with the subject of trusts, but hardly in a definite way. The recommendation of the President in this connection is principally that there shall be the fullest publicity in respect to the workings of the great corporations engaged in inter-State business. The President stands firmly for the protective tariff, and deprecates any essential change therein, as detrimental to the industrial interests of the country. The value of reciprocity is recognized, but it is to be held subsidiary and ancillary to protection. It does not appear from the President's address, or from any other source that can be regarded as authoritative, that the United States is prepared for reciprocal trade with other countries on anything like generous lines. Doubtless the nation might do so with large advantage to its own interests as well as to those of other nations, but industries raised on the lap of protection never get old enough to be weaned, if they are to be consulted about it, and though they may not feel strong enough to walk alone, they feel quite competent to

exert a determining influence upon Congress. The President is able to congratulate Congress on the fact that Great Britain has given the United States all that even the Senate could make bold to ask for in the trans-isthmian canal. The Monroe Doctrine is again reaffirmed and the nation is congratulated on its general friendly relations with other powers, with special reference to the death of Queen Victoria and the Empress Frederick of Germany and the expressions of sympathy received from those nations by the United States when the President was assassinated.

Major Bond.

The sudden death of Major E. L. Bond last week, has removed one of the most highly respected and valuable citizens of Montreal. The manner of Major Bond's death was sad and tragical. He was spending the night of Tuesday alone at his summer home at Philipsburg, on Missisquoi Bay. Mr. F. B. Wells, manager of the Philipsburg Railway, had been with him until 10.30 in the evening. About 5 o'clock next morning the residents of the village discovered that the fine residence of Major Bond was all ablaze. When the flames subsided sufficiently for the examination of the premises to be made, his charred remains were found in the ruins. Major Bond was engaged in the insurance business. In earlier life he had taken a keen interest in military affairs, taking an active part in the defense of the Province in view of the threatened Fenian raid of 1866 and 1870, and was second in command of his regiment in the Northwest rebellion of 1885, after which he severed his connection with the military, retaining the rank of Major. It is said of Major Bond that, throughout his career, he has been on the side of every local movement looking to the elevation and well-being of his fellow men. For more than fifteen years he had been actively identified with the Dominion Temperance Alliance, occupying positions on the executive for several years, and during the last year was president of the provincial branch. He was an able advocate of the cause of prohibition, was one of the originators of the Law and Order League and the Good Government Association, and was a director and active worker in both Associations. He stood fearlessly for his principles and personally promoted the enforcement of the laws against illicit liquor selling and other social evils. The Montreal Witness says editorially of Major Bond that, "he daily took his life in his hand as the enemy of the corruptors of youth. The word on the street today is: Who is there that our moral and commercial interests could have worse spared, and who will take his place?"

Services at the Coronation.

It is said that nearly sixty claims for service to be performed at the King's coronation have been submitted for the consideration of the Court of Claims, which met in the Privy Council Chamber, Whitehall, last week. Among other curious claims is that of the Duke of Norfolk, as Lord of Workshop to present a pair of gloves to the Sovereign and to hold the sceptre with the cross while the peers do homage. Besides this special claim the Duke, in his right to the earldom of Arundel, claims the office of butler at the banquet. It is said that no one is now living who was present at the proceedings of the last court, which sat in 1838, but precedents as revealed by the records will be strictly followed.

Ontario and Prohibition.

A largely attended meeting of the executive of the Ontario branch of the Dominion Alliance was held in Toronto last week. In view of the recent decision of the Imperial Privy Council in the

Manitoba case and the promise given by Sir Oliver Mowatt, when Premier of Ontario, of improved legislation in the line of prohibition, it was resolved to "authorize a delegation to wait on the Provincial Government, to remind the Government of the Premier's assurance, given to a similar deputation, when the Manitoba case was sub judice; to express the views of the Alliance as to the great importance of the decision given, as settling the question of Provincial jurisdiction; to repeat the request for effective and enforced prohibition to the full measure of the Provincial power, and that such legislation be introduced at the next session; and to ask the Government for an early intimation of the plans and methods by which such prohibition is to be secured and established in the Province." What course the Ontario Government will take in the matter is not known. But Premier Ross is a pronounced temperance man, and we believe a declared prohibitionist. It is believed in some quarters that a prohibitory law may be passed by the Ontario Legislature at its next session, subject to the popular approval through a referendum.

Drowned in the Ottawa.

The fatalities which result from skating upon thin ice yearly bring trouble to many homes. The accidents of this kind the present season have not been perhaps more numerous than usual, but a good many have been reported. Among these who have suffered sad loss from this cause is the family of Hon. A. G. Blair, Minister of Railways for Canada, whose daughter, Miss Bessie Blair, was drowned by skating into an open place on the Ottawa river in the dusk of the evening on Friday last. A young man, named Creelman, who was skating in company with Miss Blair, was rescued in an exhausted condition, but another young man, named Harper, who went to the assistance of Miss Blair and her companion, was drowned. Mr. Harper, who was assistant editor of the Labor Gazette, is spoken of as a very promising young man and a great favorite with all who knew him. Miss Blair was a bright young lady, who had been pursuing her studies in Europe, and much is said in praise of her amiable qualities. Deep sympathy is felt in St. John as well as in Ottawa for the afflicted family and especially for Mrs. Blair who is in poor health and who, with Mr. Blair, was at Clifton Springs, N. Y., when the sad accident occurred. It is stated that the telegram sent to Mr. Blair on Friday evening conveying the sad news was not delivered, and the first intimation which the bereaved parents had of the terrible blow was received through the papers the next morning.

McMaster keeps McKay.

McMaster University is rejoicing over the fact that, after all, it is not to lose Professor McKay. Mr. McKay had been offered, and had intimated his acceptance of, the Principalship of the Toronto Technical School. The Canadian Baptist of last week gave expression to the deep and general regret felt at the loss which McMaster would necessarily suffer in Prof. McKay's removal. On more mature consideration, however, Mr. McKay found that the University had so strong a hold upon his heart that he could not reconcile it with his sense of duty to sever his relations therewith, especially in view of the warm expressions of esteem from professors and students, and the manifest unwillingness of all connected with the College to lose his services. He accordingly reconsidered his decision, withdrew his letter of acceptance to the Technical School Board, and, on Wednesday morning last, caused great joy in McMaster by announcing these facts to the assembled Faculty and students of the University. That McMaster is able to hold such a man as Prof. McKay in the face of an attractive position and a much larger salary, says much for her, and we trust the Professor will have no reason to regret any present sacrifices which he may be making on account of the denomination and its educational work. The Faculty and students of McMaster further showed their appreciation of the Professor's action by a complimentary banquet given to Mr. and Mrs. McKay on Thursday evening. This expression of regard was accompanied by the presentation of a silver tea service to Mrs. McKay.