

down the cost of the necessaries of life. It is obvious that such a tendency can only be attended with general benefit to the human race. It is this factor which has within a comparatively few years revolutionized the ancient economy of things throughout the world. The railway has been the potent factor in enabling the western farmers of the United States and Canada to prosper and multiply, by supplying their production to the more populous countries of Europe. It has enabled the Indian ryot who is within access of transportation facilities to get double the prices for his crops that are available to his brother ryot in a remote district. It has furnished the Russian peasant with a direct and important interest in the demands and requirements of western Europe. It has compelled the British farmer largely to discontinue the growing of cereals and has brought the agricultural interests of Great Britain to the verge of bankruptcy. Here in Canada it has conducted population along lines other than the original rivers, streams and lakes, and has thus widened beyond all calculation the area of productive labour. The vast expanse of this country has been brought all the year round under grip by means of railways, which have supplemented the exceptional facilities Canada possesses in her magnificent water-ways.

316. While Ruskin poetically described the passengers as souls rushing along the ridges of their own graves, the practical railway man points out that at all hours of the day and of the night, during every season of the year, in blinding snowstorm and in dense fogs, this movement of passengers is going on ; that it never wholly stops ; that it depends for its even action on every conceivable contingency, from the disciplined vigilance of thousands of employees to the condition of the atmosphere, the heat of an axle, the strength of a nail, or the honesty of a foundry man ; that the vast machine is in constant motion, and the derangement of a single one of a myriad of conditions may at any moment occasion one of those inequalities of movement known as accidents ; and that yet, notwithstanding all these combinations of possibilities, at the end of the year, of the hundreds of millions of passengers carried, fewer, proportionately, have lost their lives through these accidents than have been murdered in cold blood.

317. There were 0·81 killed in each million of persons carried by the railways of Canada in 1893. There were 4·4 murders charged in each million of the population in the same year.

Poetry and practical life look at some things from different points of view. Evidently railways are one of these things. But there is something very stirring in the railway—as stirring as any battle or Charge of Light Brigade. The immense proportions which the railway interest has attained are marvellous even in an age of marvels.

318. There are at present (Jany. 1895) 420,000 miles of railway in the world, not counting street railways or electric railways, distributed as follows :—

British Empire.....	72,944
Other European countries.....	127,551
Other American “.....	209,148
Other Asiatic “.....	5,643
Other African “.....	4,758