THE WEEK'S NEWS

CANADA.

Mr. Thomas McCrae, woollen manufacturer, of Guelph, died the other day.

Mr. T. L. Huffman, for 35 years a resident of Peterboro'. died last week, aged 74.

Mr. George Sleeman has been elected mayor of Guelph by acclamation.

Seals are said to be showing up in large numbers in the gulf of St Lawrence.

Peterboro Town Council has refused to reduce the humber of hotel licenses.

A little girl named Willison fell into a pail of boiling water at Napanee and died from her injuries.

Grip has carried off in Welland and vicinity during the past week 11 persons whose added ages make total of 758 years.

The death is announced of Dr. Dugdale who has been practising in Montreal for the past quarter of a century.

A pupil in Alma Ladies' College was poisoned from eating a banana. She recovered.

After an existence of eighty-five years, the Montreal Herald, insolvent, was sold at public auction last week for $11,350.

Mr. Josiah Wood, M. P., is dangerously ill of congestion of the lungs, at his residence in Sackville, N. B.

Mr. James Griffin, a well-known seed merchant of London, Ont, suicided the other day with strychnine.

Five brothers named Shoemaker live near Berlin, Ont., whose combined ages foot up to 437 years. The eldest is 92 and still hale and hearty.

Hon. William Rhodes, ex-Minister of Agricultural of Quebec, died last week. He had lived in Quebec since 1847, and was an Englishman 70 years old.

Mrs. Chippewa, perhaps the largest woman in the world, nearly six feet tall and weighing over 700 lbs., died on the Dog Lake Indian reserve in Manitoba, last Tuesday.

Dominion Statistician Johnson advises Canadians to have nothing to do with American silver until the free coinage question is settled by Congress.

The City of Hamilton failed to defend a suit brought because of injuries to Mrs. Webster in a coasting accident, and a verdict for the plaintiff of $5,000 was recorded.

The new building of the Northumberland Paper and Egg Case Company, at Campbellford, was opened on Monday. The building cost about $25,000, and is a credit to the campany and an ornament to the town.

A friend of the Canadian Institute, Toronto, offers $1,000 for the best workable measure which, if made law, would give the whole Canadian people equal representation in Parliament and each elector due weight in the Government through Parliament.

By the will of the late Dr. Sterry Hunt, the eminent chemist, the Seminary of Quebec, McGill College, and the Massachusetts Institution of Technology each receive forty shares of stock in Molsons Bank to establish scholarships in each of these institution.

A remarkable story comes from St. Cunegonde, one of Montreal's most prosperous suburbs. It appears that a man named Larose recently cremated his dead infant in the family cooking stove, and that previously he had buried two of his children in the cellar of the house. It does not seem clear to the authorities that in his eccentric method of disposing of his dead Larose violated any law.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Vice-Admiral C. T. Curme, commander-in-chief at Sheerness, died last Friday week.

Henry Edward Doyle, C. B., died the other day in London, Eng., aged 65.

The late Government leader in the British House of Commons, Mr. William Henry Smith, left an estate valued at £1,764,000.

C. A. Tiffin, the author and historian of Modern Europe is dead in London.

The Prince of Wales has given up his connection with the turf.

Princess Patricia, the 5-year-old daughter of the Duke of Connaught, is seriously ill with pneumonia.

Sir George Campbell, Liberal member of the English House of Commons for the Kirkcaldy district, is dead.

The Duke of Norfolk gives away more money to charities than any other member of the British peerage.

During the recent storms many vessels were wrecked on the English coast, and much less of life is reported.

Austin Bidwell, the famous American forger who was sentenced to life imprisonment for forgery on the Bank of England, has been released from prison.

Sir Henry Cotton, late Lord Justice of the English Court of Appeal, died on Tuesday.

The Ulster members of Imperial Parliament have imparted to Mr. Balfour their approval of the Irish Local Government bill.

Fifty-nine Conservatives, thirteen Unionists, eighteen Gladstonians, and seven Irish members of Imperial Parliament have intimated that they will not run again for seats in the House of Commons.

Gen. Roberts, who led the Candaharrelief army of 1879-80, has been raised to the peerage as Baron Roberts.

The Queen is greatly distressed by the suicide of a servant in the royal employ at Osborne palace, who held a responsible position in the plate-room.

Mrs. Anna Margaret Montagu, of Coleraine, daughter of Lord Robert Montagu, was committed for trial last week charged with the murder of her three-year-old daughter. It appears that the governess locked the child up in a dark closet for some affence, and that the mother, to increase the punishment, fastened her arms behind her back with cords and secured her to a ring in the wall, in such a position that her feet barely touched the floor. After three hours, when Mrs. Montagu opened the door of the closet, she found that the child was dead.

UNITED STATES.

Louisville, Ky., had several slight shocks of earthquake last week.

Several large dry goods establishments valued at over $2,000,000 were destroyed by fire at New Orleans the other day.

John Gilmary Shea, the Catholic scholar and historian, of Elizabeth, N.J., died last week, aged 69 years.

One Hungarian was killed and seven injured by a dynamite explosion at Altoona, Pa., last week.

Miss Mary Reed, an Ohio missionary to India, is slowly dying of leprosy in a village of lepers located in the Himalaya mountains.

Three men were killed in an accident at the Nelson mine, near Plattsburg, N. Y., the other day.

Mrs. Hearst, the widow of Senator Hearst, of California, carries a life insurance of $400,000.

Lillie Lehmann, the celebrated prima donna, who sang at the Toronto musical festival in 1886, is dangerously ill in New York from grip and heart affection.

The 700 employes of the East Lebanon, Pa., rolling mills, having refused to accept a reduction in wages, the works have been shut down indefinitely.

The captain and four seamen of the sealing schooner Oscar were drowned at Newport, Oregon, the other day, while attempting to land in a small boat.

On Sunday afternoon Michael Disher, only twelve years of age, committed suicide by hanging himself in the barn at his home near Freeland, Mich.

There are now 90 cases of typhus fever among Russian Hebrew emigrants in New York. The first death there from the disease occurred on Monday.

Edward B. Turpin shot and killed William Carter, son of John T. Carter, a well-known farmer and horse-breeder, at Gallatin, Tenn., on Tuesday evening.

James Duffy, an old soldier, has just died at Hope, Idaho, of consumption. Duffy was the first man who ever died a natural death in that town.

Serious trouble took place on Monday between the different classes at Wabash College, Ind., which culminated at midnight in blowing up some of the buildings with dynamite.

A move has been made in the New York State Senate looking to the suppression of an alleged combine between the coal companies and railroad companies to advance prices of coal.

At New Albany, Indiana, on Tuesday, John Kaiser, photographer, shot and seriously wounded his wife because she refused to live with him. He was chased, and on being cornered shot himself dead.

A dance was recently given at Sand Point, Idaho, at which a little disturbance took place, resulting in the serious wounding of Cucumber Pete, Irish Mollie, and Iolanthe, and the killing of Steamboat Johnny.

United States Consul Moore, of St. Hyacinthe, Que., has been appointed consul in Germany at a salary of $1,750. The fortunate gentleman is a cousin of Mr. Blaine, secretary of state.

Judge Thomas, at Deadwood, S. D., has granted a decree of divorce to Mrs. James G. Blaine, jr., with custody of her child and $1,000 to pay expenses of the suit and $100 a month as permanent alimony.

Three families of 28 persons have been poisoned at Mount Chase, Maine, probably by the use of cooking soda, which had been kept a long time in a box. One death ensued and others are seriously ill.

The man who attempted to rob the American Express Company's New York Central train on Saturday night near Lyons, N. Y., has been fully identified as Oliver Curtis Perry, who also committed the Utica train robbery last October.

William Toliner and Minnie E. Stackhouse, rode up to the door of Squire Hudelson at Paoli, Indiana, the other day in a rainstorm, called the squire out and were married while sitting on their horses. Then they turned and rode home.

Simmons, the man who was recently tried in Hamilton for bigamy, has been arrested in Buffalo charged with swindling nickel-in-the-slot insurance companies. He had a scheme by which he could make his wrist or ankle appear inflamed, and would thus secure insurance money.

IN GENERAL.

Smallpox has been prevalent in Bombay for some time, and has now become epidemic.

Snow is from 12 to 16 feet deep in Alpine passes, and great alarm is caused by the danger of floods in case of a thaw.

Traffic has been suspended in Rome on account of the intensely cold weather and heavy snowstorms.

Port Sadon, in Upper Burmah, garrisoned by British troops, is besieged by Kachuns, a tribe of natives.

The Austrian Reichsrath has voted 360,000, florins for the relief of sufferers in certain distressed districts of the country.

It is rumored that the reciprocity negotiations between the United States and Mexico have been broken off.

A German non-commissioned officer at Ulm has been sentenced to two years imprisonment for drilling recruits clothed only in their shirts.

The feet and mouth disease has spread to 19 districts in Schleswig-Holstein. It is presumed the disease was propagated by manure.

Archduchess Maria Valerid, the youngest daughter of Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria, is seriously ill with inflammation of the lungs.

There is considerable excitement in France over the recent resignation of the Cabinet. M. Ribot has agreed to undertake the formation of a new Ministry.

A despatch from Upper Burmah says:—Capt. Davies' column after sharp fighting expelled the Nachyens from their stockade positions and relieved Sadone.

Count Tolstoi, who has been engaged in the work of relieving the distress in the famine district, has been ordered back to his estate, on the grounds of having written an unpatriotic letter describing the suffering of the peasants.

Six recruits of the Corps de Garde, stationed at Potsdam, have committed suicide during the current month on account of the tyranny and harsh treatment to which they were subjected by non-commissioned officers.

An English governess is hereafter to educate the daughters of the King of Siam, and she will be rewarded therefor with a salary of £700 a year and a residence in the royal palace.

"Frank Hewitt, steward, Toronto," appears in the death list of the oil ship Tamerlane, of New Bedford, Mass., which was wrecked near the Hawaiian islands recently. Twenty out of a crew of 38 were drowned.

A BAGGAGE-MASTER'S STORY.

It was one of those peculiar nights when a mist shrouds everything.

Though the moon was up, you could scarcely see it, and would not know there was a moon, were it not for the brilliancy of the mist, that looked like a silvery cloud.

No. 5, a through train, had been delayed. We were waiting for her to pass, at the station, when my ear caught the clicking of the telegraph. Mechanically I listened, and realized that the conductor was sending word to us from a station up the road.

I went to the operator and in a few moments had the dispatch.

Train delayed by mist. Baggage-master sick. Give us a man.

This run on No. 5 was an important one and needed a practised man. There was nothing to do but go myself. So, making the necessary arrangements, I stepped out on the platform to await the train.

The air was raw as well as damp, and seemed to eat its way through my clothing. Perhaps it was the effect of the weather, but I felt very much depressed in spirits.

I didn't have long to wait, for the locomotive was whistling at the long curve as I walked down the platform. Then came the glare of the headlight and she had arrived.

In a moment more I was helping the baggage-master alight. He looked very bad.

As we stood together he said, in a voice that was quite tremulous:

"You know the long cut before X Junction?"

I nodded.

"My mother lives on the hill just beyond that cut. When I go by I wave my lantern three times from the door of the car, to show her I am all right. Will you do that for me to-night?"

As he finished speaking he leaned against the railing for support. I thought how considerate it was of him to save his mother worry, and I promised to do as he wished.

In a moment more the signal to start was passed from brakeman to brakeman. As the conductor raised his lantern he shouted to me. "We don't stop at X Junction to-night."

The engine took a few deep breaths, the wheels began to revolve and the train slowly rolled out of the station.

As we gained speed I looked back. To my astonishment I thought I saw the man who just before had been in charge of the car try to signal me, then cover his face with his hands. The mist was so dense, however, I might have been mistaken, and concluded that I was.

The car was one of those long ones with plenty of room. There were not many trunks and I started to check them off by the list. The one lantern, I had gave a very dim light, so most of the car was in shadow.

Besides the trunks there was an emigrant's case which seemed to be almost large enough to hold a house.

Being so busy with the trunks made time fly. So it seemed only a short while before we made the first stop.

As I slid back the door to see if there was any baggage I noticed how wet everything was. There was only a letter handed in. As I was about to shut the door, after the train had started, I noticed that the brakeman had jumped on the forward platform of my car. The doors on both ends of an express car shut with a snap lock; so, though easy to open from within, it is impossible to open the door from the platform. I went forward and let him in. As he entered he said.

"No tramps on the front platform tonight."

We made but one more stop before X Junction, so I would have little to do save giving the signal I had promised.

Sitting on my chair and looking about the car, I fell to wandering if the iron bar, which ran through the centre of the car above my head, would really be of much service in case of accident to protect me from the flying trunks. It was placed there to cling to in case of a smash-up.

From that my eyes wandered to the trunks and especially to one trunk. It was a small one, but nevertheless when I looked that way my eyes would surely fall on that one.

Out of pure, idle curiosity I went over and looked at it closely. It was quite heavy and in charge of an express company, as I could see by the label.

As I was examining it, I felt the train slowing up and knew it was the next stop. Though I was pretty sure there would be no baggage, I went to my door as a matter of course. We had hardly stopped before we were off again, and I knew by the speed we began to develop, the engineer was making up lost time.

I turned to go back to my chair, when to my amazement I saw the front door of my car swinging open.

I was sure I had shut it securely, and it could not have been opened from the outside.

For a moment or two I felt nervous, as I realized there might be some one in the car with me. Then I thought I might possibly have left it unlatched, though that seemed improbable.

Every moment our speed increased. Suddenly we dashed into a long cut. As we did so I seized my lantern, and prepared to give the signal I had promised.

With the lantern in my right hand, and gripping the iron bar over the door with my left, I waited till we should leave the cut.

As we swung out in the valley, I lifted the lantern and waved it three times. My signal was answered. Far up on the mountain came the flash of a lantern waved in a circle

As I saw it a great dread came over me.. Why should the baggage-master's mother answer by any such a signal as that?

I felt there was something wrong. Instinctively I reached for the bell cord. As I seized it, it came down on my head. I ran to the end of it. It had been cut, severed as smooth as a knife could do it,

And then my mind lighted up, as if by a white light. I saw all the circumstances that had occurred in the last few hours.

The sickness of the baggage-master, his peculiar actions, the open door, the cut bell-cord. Then all at once the sentence rang in my ears, "we don't stop at X Junction to-night."

I realized, as plainly as if it had been told me, that beyond this junction we would be in danger. That was the place he would have left the train, had it stopped as usual, after giving the signal I had just given.

As the train was ordered not to stop tonight I had been trapped into some horrible scheme, had given probably the signal for the train's destruction.

These thoughts passed through my mind in a moment. Still even a moment added danger. I ran to the front door of the car and tore it open. The air rushed through in a perfect torrent.

We were going at great speed; the swaying of the cars was frightful. I managed to climb from the car platform to the tender.

Now every moment we were in danger. I crawled along the coal on the tender. Once I came near losing my balance and being swept off.

As I crawled and crept along my hand came in contact with a cord. I knew it was the other end of the bell cord, and pulled it with all my might. In the glow from the furnace I saw the engineer begin working with the engine. I felt the speed slacken. We had almost stopped when there came an explosion that seemed to lift the forward part of the engine off the track.

I was landed into the marshes, where I lay stunned for a few moments. It was more the force of the explosion than anything else, however, for we were going so slowly that none of the cars were injured.

My first thought was for the baggage-car. I ran back to it and climbed aboard. A brakeman was standing there with drawn revolver. When he saw me he said he guessed everything was safe.

I left him in charge and went forward. The trainmen were grouped round the locomotive. There was a big hole knocked in her made by a dynamite cartridge. A little further down the track we found another cartridge. Had we been going fast nothing could have saved the train from being hurled down the embankment a total wreck.

We saw no one, as is generally the case in such instances. The wreckers who would have preyed upon our mangled bodies did dare show their faces, even when they only had a few armed men to deal with. Their courage was not sufficient to hold up a train.

My story was soon told, and in a few hours the telegraph was being used to headquarters.

We soon had a relief engine. By rare good chance the baggagemaster whom I relieved was caught that very night. He broke down and confessed, but we were only able to get one of the others.

It seemed the heavy trunk I had examined contained money. The idea was for the baggage master to signal some one on the hill if the trunk was abroad all right, and he was to signal the man down the valley, so he could place the cartridges. It was a very narrow escape.

Out of curiosity I went one day up on the mountain where I had seen the signal. There was nothing there but an old rock-bound pasture. As I looked over it my eye fell upon a broken lantern, lying half hidden under a bush. The lantern without doubt that had signaled our destruction.

I picked it up and brought it away as a memento, and it hangs to-day in one of the rooms of my house.

Political Affairs in France.

The resignation of the French Ministry is a misfortune because it has been an exceptionally capable one, and has governed the country with lucidity of political intelligence. When the Left is divided into two factions of conservative and radical tendencies, with the Right constituting a powerful minority recruited from elements which are not reconciled with republican institutions, political government is largely a matter of compromise and manœuvre. For directing a Ministry under these conditions M. de Freycinet has possessed remarkable qualifications. A statesman of progressive ideas and liberal tendencies, he is also a practical tactician with a keen discernment of political forces and the flexibility required for adapting himself to existing conditions. He has often been accused of being a political trimmer, but so long as there are three parties in France it is impracticable for a successful Premier to be anything else. He has the kind of dexterity required for driving three horses, one of which pulls hard, another is always balking, while the middle one is not strong enough to make the pace. The defeat of the Ministry was caused by the revelation of his caution and conservatism in dealing with religious associations, which were regaining their power under various disguises and in violation of the drastic laws of Jules Ferry. The Radicals had demanded measures of repression and M. de Freycinet, in order to conciliate them, had brought forward the Associations bill. Having cracked the whip in order to intimidate the Clericalists and inspirit the Radicals, the driver with his cautious instinct held the horses under tight rein. The Radicals, suspecting that he did not intend to press the measure, attempted to force him to quicken his pace. M. de Freycinet at once disclosed a brave front in advocating the bill and in assenting to the demand for urgency, but refused to interpret it in the Radical way as a system of reprisals against Clericalism, and confirmed the impression that he was only half in earnest in securing its passage. The result was a coalition between the Right and a large body of Radicals, by which the Government was placed in minority and compelled to resign office. The result is the overthrow of a Ministry by a combination which cannot unite in supporting its successors. A large majority of those who voted against it were opposed to the Associations bill as iniquitous in principle. The minority who joined them approved of the measure, but were exasperated because the Government was slow in its method of procedure and conservative in interpreting the provisions. The result does not involve in an intelligible way disavowal either of the measure or of the Ministerial policy. The Government is overthrown without a sharp and decisive divison of party opinion on a public measure. Cabinet crises of this nature have been of frequent occurrence in France, and will be likely to be repeated so long as there are three political groups represented in the Chambers.

The Sex in Eggs.

In olden times it was generally believed to be possible to distinguish the sex of eggs by their shape, and that cocks would be produced from eggs of elongated form, and hens from those that were short or round. Others have imagined that they could discern the future sex of the chicken by the position of the air-bubble at the large end of the egg. Though, of course, it would happen at times that results as thus foretold might happen in many cases, yet these and other similar tests have proved hundreds of times to be erroneous. Breeders of prize poultry would be very glad to give a considerable sum of money for any certain knowledge which would thenceforth enable them to breed no more cockerells than they really wanted; but the secret has never been discovered, and probably never will. It is even impossible to tell before the egg has been sat upon for a short time whether it has been fecundated, and therefore whether it will produce anything. The latest belief on the point by those who think they can foretell the sex is that the distinction lies in the eggs being even or rough, and that even-ended eggs contain pullets, while the rough ones will produce male birds.

AGRICULTURAL WONDERS.

Flowers Developed by Electricity Bacteria Make Tobacco Good.

Electricity is about to find a new employment in horticulture. Spring vegetables are already being forced by its aid for market. There is no doubt that roses and other flowers can be made to bloom more plentifully and more profitably with its assistance In short, the discovery affords promise of possibilities not yet estimated.

The Department of Agriculture at Washing has been experimenting in this direction for some time past. It has been found that lettuce is particularly susceptible to the influence of the electric light, by means of which it can be grown for market in two thirds the usual time. Other vegetables respond likewise in varying degrees. But everything depends upon the proper regulation of the light, and how to do this can only be learned by careful study of the results produced under all sorts of conditions. The effect of the electricity being to hasten maturity, too much of it causes lettuce to run to seed before the edible leaves are formed.

It must not be imagined that electricity is employed for such purposes as a substitute for sunlight. It is merely used in a supplementary fashion. The greenhouse that has the sun in the daytime is illuminated at night with arc lights, toward which the plants incline their leaves and flowers, accepting quite innocently these artificial counterfeits of the orb of day. It was supposed hitherto that vegetables required intervals of darkness for their healthy development, just as animals need sleep; but it has been shown that, supplied with electric rays, they will go on growing thriftly between sunset and daybreak. Staying up all night seems to do them no harm so long as the dissipation is properly regulated.

On the same principle that beer is selected by the prudent as a less demoralizing beverage than whisky, the electric gardener employs opal globes to diminish the intensity of the light. When it is left bare and permitted to shed its unfiltered rays upon the plants, the latter grow pale, run up quickly in sickly stalks, and soon die. It remains to be discovered exactly how much electricity is beneficial, and during precisely what period of the development of the vegetables it ought to be applied.

The influence of electricity upon the color and productiveness of flowers has been shown to be extraordinary. Tulips exposed to its light have deeper and richer tints, flowering more freely, and developing longer stems and bigger leaves. Fuschias bloom earlier under like conditions. Petunias also bloom earlier and more profusely, growing taller and more slender. It is the same way with many other flowers. In fact, there is every reason for believing that the electric light will be very profitably used in future as an adjunct to forcing establishments for both flowers and garden vegetables. Already one market gardener in New Jersey is employing it with a success which he reports as marvelous.

Another surprising investigation which the U.S. Department of Agriculture is conducting has to do with tobacco.

An important part of the curing of tobacco is its fermentation, which occurs during the process known as "bulking." The leaves are packed closely together in large piles, and after a while the mass heats, the tobacco being said to "sweat," and the aromatic compounds which contribute to its taste and odor are formed. These phenomena of fermentation are caused by bacteria.

Now, each sort of tobacco has its own kind of bacteria, which gives it aroma and flavor incidentally to feeding upon it. Here comes in a wonderful discovery, for it has been ascertained by experiment that poor tobacco, when innoculated with the bacteria naturally belonging to fine tobacco, obtains the taste and quality of the later. Thus by a simple operation it is easy to transform inferior leaves into first-class material for cigars, which the consumer may readily be led to believe are from the Vuelta Abajo.

Thus far the matter has not passed beyond the experimental stage. The trials were performed by propagating colonies of bacteria belonging to first quality tobacco in beef tea, and then sprinkling the latter upon the inferior leaves. After these leaves had been packed together and permitted to ferment, they were found to have all the bouquet and other desirable qualities of the fine brand. So complete were the results that expert judges were unable to tell the difference. They can undoubtedly be secured on a large scale at a small cost, perhaps by merely spraying the poor tobacco with a decoction of a superior quality, transferring by this means the vegetable organisms whose assistance is desired.

Mr. Twombly's Mistake.

Mr. Thomas Twombley had drunk but six glasses of brandy and water, when, being a man of discretion, he returned home at the seasonable hour of one a. m., and went soberly to bed. Mrs. Thomas Twombley was too well accustomed to the comings and goings of the said Thomas to be much disturbed by the trifling noise he made on retiring, but when she discovered that he had his boots on, she requested him to remove them or keep his feet out of the bed.

"My dear," said Mr. Twombley, in an apolegetic tone, "'scuse me! How I came to forget the boots, I can't conceive, for I'm jest as sober as I ever was in my life."

Mr. Twombley sat on his side of the bed, and made an effort to pull off his right boot. The attempt was successful, though it brought him to the floor. On regaining his feet, Mr. Twombley thought he saw the door open. As he was sure he shut the door on coming in he was astonished; and dark as it was in the room, he couldn't be mistaken, he felt certain. Mr. Twombley staggered towards the door, to close it, when, to his still greater surprise, he saw a figure approach from beyond. Twombley stopped: the figure stopped. Twombley advanced again, and the figure did the same. Twombley raised his right hand—the figure raised its left.

"Who's there!" roared Twombley, beginning to be frightened. The object made no reply. Twombley raised his boot in a menacing attitude—the figure defied him by shaking a similar object.

Cried Twombley: "I'll find out who you be, you sneak!" He hurled the boot full at the head of his mysterious object, when—crash went the big looking-glass which Twombley had mistaken for the door!