

# LATEST NEWS NOTES.

QUEBEC.

Two or three horses have died with pink eye at Ayer's Flat, and others are coming down with the disease.

Six team of horses, engaged in the shanties, are reported to have been drowned recently up the Desert while crossing on bad ice.

According to the return of the dog tax collected, there are only thirty-three dogs in Waterloo fortunate enough to have owners. That leaves a hundred canines more or less that are homeless, friendless and disowned.

Mrs. Mary Hall, whose death occurred quite recently at the advanced age of eighty-nine, was the last survivor of the pioneer band of settlers of Eaton, having accompanied her parents, a little girl of seven, when they settled here in 1799 or 1800. She died while on a visit to her sister in the old house built by her father.

The amount of exports to the United States as exhibited by the books of the U. S. Consul at this port, for the three months ending 31st December, 1882, was \$132,275. The amount for the preceding quarter, ending September 30th, was \$137,406, making a total of \$269,681 for the six months. From the above we are led to believe that more goods are exported to the United States from the port of Sherbrooke than any other port in the Province, not excepting Montreal, the number of invoices exceeding that of the last mentioned port.—*Sherbrooke Gazette.*

ONTARIO.

A team owned by Mr. W. B. Allin, Newcastle, drew 144 bushels, 15 lbs. of wheat in one load from his farm to the harbor the other day.

Twenty-four persons of the name of Livingston dined together on Christmas day at the residence of Mr. James Livingston, Fullarton, near Mitchell.

The miners at the Bethlehem iron mines, Wilbur, have come to terms and will accept the reduction of 25 cents per day in their wages until the opening of navigation. The company have paid off the ringleaders and discharged them.

Mr. Glod Reaume, of Jeanette's Creek, delivered 3,420 muskrat skins, and 153 racoon and other furs, a few days ago, to a firm in Chatham. This young man (Mr. Reaume), is quite a successful trapper, and 300 of the muskrats were of his own trapping.

Five farmers of Westbrooke brought to Kingston as many loads of barley, which were bought by regular buyers. When the bags were emptied it was found the loads were decorated, No. 1 barley being put on top in each bag. The farmers were glad to get off with the price for No. 2.

Mr. Stablschmidt, of Preston, breeder of pure bred poultry, shipped ten white and brown Leghorn fowls to the late Chicago Poultry Show, and was awarded a prize for every bird—securing 92 to 95 points. This is another of the many honors Cannucks invariably carry off when they compete at Yankee shows.

A man named Piquan—one of the Gaspé emigrants—employed on the K. & P. Railway near Calabogie Lake, met with a serious accident a short time ago. He was carrying a dynamite cartridge from the box to the hole in which it was to be placed, when in some incompressible manner the cartridge exploded, blowing off two of his fingers and the thumb, a portion of which was blown into his nose.

The *St. Thomas Times* says: Complaint are made by farmers of the rapidity with which wild rabbits multiply in this section, and the nuisance bids fair to become serious in its effects than the presence of the English sparrows. Hundreds of the pests have been slaughtered this season, and have marketed so freely that quotations have ruled in St. Thomas market this year at less than one-half what they were a year or two since.

Thomas Tompkins and Archibald Bain were engaged "tamping" a blast on the Pacific Railway, Sharbot Lake. The dualine was struck by mistake, and it exploded with terrible force. Rock and sand flew in all directions. Bain was thrown over a ledge eight feet high, his little finger blown off, his hand split down the centre, and his face filled with sand and splinters of rock. Tompkins fared worse, for he received the full effects of the discharge in the face. Both eyes are injured. The doctor thinks one can be saved, but the sight of the other will be lost.

## The London Fire Brigade.

The London Fire Brigade has but fifty steam engines and 500 firemen. The estimated value of the property to be protected is \$6,000,000,000, and Londoners pay an insurance premium of 120th part of 1 per cent. Ten years ago Capt. Shaw asked in vain for an annual appropriation of \$600,000, which is only \$100,000 more than he gets to-day. Yet, this very insufficient fire service notwithstanding, the losses in London are comparatively very small against those here, and a chief reason is that a rigorous building law requires the party wall, dividing one house from another, to be carried up several feet above the roof. Consequently a house is frequently burned out without its neighbor being in any wise injured. The roofs are slate or tile, and usually entirely devoid of wood cornices.

No one ever supposed the prairie dog towns to be of any value in the West until a Yankee besieged one and began to capture the animals for their skins, which, it is said, can be made into gloves that rival the finest kid.  
Mr. Bryne, Q. C., sat on the 27th December to investigate at Ballinrobe, Mayo, claims for compensation under the Crimes act. The Macdermott, Q. C., appeared for Lady Mount Morris, whose case was adjourned. The Macdermott, or more properly the Macdermott Roe, is one of the half dozen Irish chieftains who bear their ancient title. The others are the Knight of Kerry, the Knight of Glyn, the O'Conor Don, the Mac Gillicuddy of the Reeks, the O'Donoghue. The O'Gorman-Mahon's claim is denied in Clare.

## The Modified Instincts of a Blind Cat.

The family favorite whose misfortunes have afforded an opportunity to observe the workings of its instinct under difficulties is a noble specimen of the genus *Felis*. "Dido" is his name—given for simple eponymy, without regard to gender. During the four years of his life he has never known to do anything wrong, unless it be to fight most desperately against all feline intruders. In some one of his many encounters, Dido met with an injury to one of his feet that made a surgical operation necessary, from which he recovered, but shortly afterward went totally blind. A cataract was formed over each eye, by which, as repeated experiment proved, vision was thoroughly obscured.

This calamity came on suddenly, and placed the cat in circumstances not provided for by the ordinary gifts of instinct. What to do with himself was plainly a problem hard to be solved. He would sit and mew most piteously, as if bemoaning his condition; and when he attempted to move about, he met with all the mishaps that the reader will be likely to imagine. He ran against the walls, fell down stairs, stumbled over sticks, and when once on the top rail of the fence he would traverse its entire length seeking in vain for a safe jumping off place. On being called, he would run about bewildered, as if not knowing whence the voice came or whether he should go to find the one calling. In short, Dido's life seemed hardly worth living, and we were seriously plotting his death, when the cat himself clearly concluded that he must make his other senses atone for the loss of sight.

It was very curious to watch his experiments. One of the first of these was concerning the art of going down stairs. Instead of pawing the air, as he had been doing on reaching the top step, he went to one side till he felt the banisters touch his whiskers, and then, guided thus, he would descend safely and at full speed, turning into the hall on gaining the last step. One by one he made each familiar path a study, determined the exact location of each door, explored anew all his old haunts, and seemed bravely resolved to begin life over again. The result was so unexpectedly successful that we were deceived into the notion that sight had been restored. But by placing an obstacle in the path, and then calling him eagerly to his customary feeding place, it was evident that he was entirely blind, for he would run with full force against the box or other obstruction, and then, for some time afterward, he would proceed with renewed caution.

Dido's "voice is still for war," and his blindness does not make him any less successful in his duels with intruders. He even goes abroad in quest of adventures, and comes safely home again.

His value as a mouser does not seem to be in the least diminished. One of my experiments as to his capacity in this direction came near costing me dear. I had heard the gnawing of a rat in an old closet where there lay a quantity of newspapers. Here it was decided to leave Dido over night, and while arranging the papers for that purpose, my hand was suddenly caught by the claws and teeth of what at the moment seemed like a small tiger. Poor Dido! He really looked ashamed of his blunder in mistaking my hand for his anticipated victim. Fortunately the papers served as a shield, or the injury inflicted might have been more serious. I may add that, on opening the closet next morning, there was Dido mounting guard over a slain rat as big as ever spoiled good provisions or tried a housekeeper's temper.

It is well known that the house-cat will find its way back from distant places to which it has been carried blindfolded; and how it performs such feats naturalists have never satisfactorily explained. The theory accepted by some of them is that the animal takes note of the successive odors encountered on the way, that these leave as distinct a series of images as those we should receive by the sense of sight, and that, by taking them in the inverse order from that in which they were received, he traces his homeward route.

But, in the cat now described, the sense of smell is by no means acute, as has been proved by a variety of methods; and moreover, although, as one might say, perpetually blindfolded, he quite uniformly chooses the shortest road home, without reference to the path he may have taken on leaving the house. Curious to see how far this homing instinct would extend, I took advantage of a fall of snow that wrapped under its mantle every familiar object, concealed all the paths, and deadened every odor and sound. Taking Dido to a considerable distance from the house, and making a number of turns to bewilder him, I tossed him upon a drift and quietly awaited results. The poor creature turned his sightless orbs this way and that, and mewed piteously for help. Finding, at length, that he was thrown entirely on his own resources, he stood motionless for about one minute, and then, to my amazement, made his way directly through the untrodden snow to the house door—which, it is needless to add, was promptly opened for the shivering martyr to scientific investigation, to whom consolation was forthwith offered in a brimming bowl of new milk.

My conclusion, therefore, is that Wallace's ingenious theory of accounting for orientation by what he calls "brain registration," will not explain what has been described; but that the mysterious homing faculty is probably independent of such methods of gaining knowledge as have been ordinarily observed, and is analogous to the migratory instinct controlling the long flights of some species of birds.

## A Temperance Reformer.

Bishop Ireland of Minnesota is an ardent temperance reformer, but not of a kind to find favor with most total abstinence advocates. He is making earnest efforts on the platform, but condemns all laws which aim to regulate men's habits as to drink. He enjoins temperance because of its own great benefits, not only to individuals, but also to communities and the State. "Temperance is a religious obligation, due by all persons also, a social and moral obligation, from which no man can escape without injury to himself and others." As for total abstinence, which he personally practices, he recommends it as a safeguard for those who adhere to it and as a good example to those who do not. The Bishop is a notably eloquent speaker, and is drawing crowded audiences in the West.

## ON FIRE AT SEA.

The Imminent Peril of Those on Board the Steamer *Donau*, on Her recent Voyage from Southampton to New York.

The steamer *Donau*, of the Bremen line, reached New York Monday morning after a thirteen days' passage from Southampton. She had on board 356 passengers who had been exposed to imminent peril from a fire which broke out in the cargo on Wednesday last from some undiscovered cause, but which was extinguished with no damage to human life. The narrative of the occurrence, as gathered from the officers, takes the following shape:

It was near midnight on Wednesday and the passengers had nearly all retired to their berths when a smell of burning material began to pervade the cabin. The watch also noticed smoke curling up through the timbers, and by the time the carpenter had been summoned and set to work hunting up the cause of it a volume was rolling through the passages below deck. For a while it was difficult to locate the fire. The smoke was issuing from several vents, but soon it came pouring up through the ventilating shaft running to the steering deck, and then the carpenter found that it came from a compartment where the cargo was stored. The alarm was at once given, but extreme caution had to be used. There were 356 passengers on the vessel. Some were in the cabin, but the steerage was fairly filled with immigrants, mostly Hungarian peasants, unused to the sea, and liable to take fright and precipitate a panic. They were mostly asleep. But soon the smoke would fill their cabin, and in the alarm of their awakening no end of dreadful contingencies were to be anticipated. Capt. Ringk thought of them early and took precautions to preserve order and insure temporary safety. But first the fire had to be ferreted out and its extent ascertained. This was not easy. The funnel of the ventilating shaft, which indicated that it was on the steerage deck revealed no more. It was only after tumbling about through heaps of merchandise below, and in a stifling atmosphere, that it was found to be in the heart of the cargo itself that the fire was raging and that it was burning most fiercely at a point amidships. Several attempts were made to reach it, but they were soon shown to be impracticable, and it became evident that the upper decks must be torn away.

The smoke was now rolling in upon the startled immigrants, and measures to control them were put in operation. They were quietly aroused and conducted in squads to the deck. At first they had no intimation of the real nature of the danger. Unacquainted with the sea and its perils, they attributed the smoke and the hubbub to some of the ordinary incidents of the passage. But gradually the importance of what was going on forced itself upon them. The smoke became thicker below. The orders of officers and the scurrying of the crew were easily interpreted. Then the frightened people crowded together like sheep and looked with scared faces in the direction of the clamor. Whether it was that fear paralyzed them or the doubt of what was going on prevented them being fairly aware of the danger the officers do not know, but they agree that the whole throng behaved better than could be expected under the circumstances, and made no such demonstration as was to be feared. There was little uproar among them. The women even refrained from crying.

"Indeed," said the first officer, speaking of it afterwards, "I only noticed one person making any hubbub at all, and that was a little fellow of about fourteen."

Care was taken to hurry these immigrants above at once. Their berths were on the same deck as the fire, and it had to be fought in that quarter while an attempt would be made to reach it from overhead. The men went to work to smash in the confining timbers. The crew were recruited by the more available of the passengers. But it was slow work. The iron sheathing of the decks, ordinarily a precaution for safety, was now an obstacle to it. It turned the blows of axes. Saws were useless on it. The pumps were rigged and ready, but the water was spilled at random. In this dilemma a heavy assault was ordered on the unyielding metal by utensils rarely called into use on shipboard. Big mallets were hauled out, bars of iron were procured, and with might and main all hands pounded at the decks till they yielded in places and then sank in and opened a way to the burning cargo. The berths in the immigrants' compartment had, meantime, been demolished and a way broken into the place where the merchandise was stored. Then, while the pumps flooded it from above, the men tumbled barrels and boxes out into the vacant place and struggled bravely to reach the flames. The immigrants here rendered good service, working well and obeying orders more or less, which were unintelligible to them.

At this point another danger had to be considered. Running as the vessel was, the wind would be violent and likely to fan the fire wherever it appeared; so she was put about and the danger was averted at an expenditure of time, which accounts for the length of her passage. Soon the efforts of all were repaid. The volume of smoke rising from below lessened. The flames were less frequently visible. The burning packages hauled out from among the cargo and thrown overboard became fewer. But all night long till after sunrise the excitement lasted. It was seven o'clock before an examination made it clear that the fire was fairly out. From the cargo some of the debris was cleared away and then the immigrants' quarters were refitted and they were turned in. Such an investigation as could be made revealed no apparent cause for the fire. It began amidships in the heart of a great heap of merchandise, which was quite inaccessible. The spontaneous combustion of some material stowed away there is the only theory advanced to account for it. What the damage to property is has not been ascertained. The cargo was of a miscellaneous nature, and will first have to be removed and examined. The *Donau* reached the bar yesterday morning at 5 o'clock and came up to the company's docks at Hoboken, where the passengers landed and the unloading began. Beyond the smashing of the decks the ships sustained no injury.—*New York Herald.*

A strike among the printers of Montreal newspaper offices is said to be on the tapis.

## NORTHWEST NOTES.

Incidents of Interest in the Northwest Territories.

Battleford, Edmonton, Prince Albert, and Broadview.

BATTLEFORD.

The work of removing the bridge was begun on the 26th ult., the river having become sufficiently strong to bear the traffic. The bridge will be replaced in the spring when the ice has run out.

News has been received by the Indian Department of the destruction by fire at the Piegan reservation, near Fort Macleod, of the building in which the Indian supplies were stored, with a loss of seven hundred sacks of flour. The Indians will not suffer seriously, as they have surplus potatoes equivalent to the flour destroyed.

Most of the disaffected Indians who returned from Qu'Appelle to Fort Walsh last fall, concluded on reaching there to accept their annuities. "Long Lodge," with ten lodges of his band, got on their dignity and went to Fort Belknap, Montana, where they arrived in a state of starvation and ten others were expected to die from the same cause.

An application has been made for a license for a ferry to be put on the South Branch at the Elbow. When established, this will open a new route for freight between this place and the railway, which will probably be struck somewhere about Old Wives' Lake. The distance between these places by this route will be less than two hundred miles, and when once opened will prove a strong competing line to the steamers. The round trip with carts will only take from three to four weeks.

Quite an extensive business is being done here in gathering saw logs that broke away from the upper country and lodged on the sandbars and islands.

A steam saw mill is in course of erection on Turtle River, about twelve miles from Battleford, and a grist mill will also be built during the next summer.

One day last week Messrs. Wyld and Bourke captured four wolves that had come to feast on the carcass of a calf that had met with an untimely end. Correlus Pruden also killed one with an axe.

An Indian named Victoria a week or two ago came on a band of five moose and shot them all within half an hour, killing three without moving from his tracks. Another Indian came across a band of ten and killed two of them.

Mr. Norris passed for Edmonton on the 21st with sixteen sleighs laden with general merchandise. This consignment was shipped from Qu'Appelle last summer and abandoned at Eagle Hills by the freighters who had it in hand. Mr. Norris brought horses from Edmonton to take it home.

The experiment of sheep raising in the Edmonton District has proved highly successful, the animals standing both summer and winter well. S. Taber, of Fort Saskatchewan, is wintering eighteen ewes and proposes bringing in a large flock from Montana in the spring. There is nothing to hinder their doing well here.

What has gone wrong with the weather? The winter so far has not been as severe as usual, the thermometer frequently ranging as high as forty degrees above zero, and on the 10th and 22nd ult. smart showers of rain fell. One venerable missionary of thirty-five years' residence in the country says he never saw this phenomena before. During the past week the prevailing warm winds cut away the snow considerably, and by barring the hill side overcame the disadvantage to running stock caused by the crust on the snow. A couple of weeks ago there were wild ducks on the open creeks running into Turtle Lake, and during the present week frogs have been sporting in the open springs along the bottom of the hills near town.

EDMONTON.

There are indications of a limestone quarry at Fort Saskatchewan.

About 30,000 bushels of grain have been threshed out so far this season.

The Hudson Bay Company are having a coal limit laid out on the Saskatchewan.

Word from the various fishing reserves in the district state that the catch will be very much under the average, and fears of destitution among the Indians are entertained.

The cut of saw-logs this winter will be very small as compared with last year's operations. Jobbers cannot get permits from the timber officer without reference to Ottawa, and this is impossible, owing to the slow mail service.

The surveys of the different town plots in this district have been finished and the lot placed on the market. Prices range from \$25 to \$250. A great many have been sold, and the balance will be placed on the Winnipeg market at once.

The *Edmonton Bulletin* of 2nd again says that the telegraph line is down between Battleford and Grizzly Bear, and only works when the weather is very cold. It also states that the poles are burned down at Willow Hills, where the wire is bedded in ice.

Two years ago Ketowayo, the Cree chief at Carlton, went south to hunt buffalo, and in his travels had his best horses and rifles taken from him; and not getting any satisfaction from the authorities on either side of the line he determined to go to stealing horses on his own account, but before he had time to do anything every horse he had was taken from him.

PRINCE ALBERT.

The Hudson's Bay Company's mill is running night and day.

Over 100 buildings have been put up during the past season in Prince Albert.

A subscription amounting to \$1,000 has been raised towards paying for the telegraph poles between Humboldt and Prince Albert.

Several ptarmigan, or white geese, as they are called in the north of Scotland, have been recently shot in this neighborhood. They are but rarely found in this district, although plentiful further to the north, and their presence here is an indication of a severe winter.

The fall of snow this winter has been unprecedented in the annals of Prince Albert. Between three and four feet has fallen on

the average, and every other day or so more is added to it. This comes hard on the cattle, and there are already several instances of their dying of starvation.

Notwithstanding the delays and inconvenience caused by the early closing of the navigation of the river last autumn, there is a larger stock and greater variety of goods in Prince Albert this winter than ever known before. Some of the stocks are very valuable, ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

The curlers have been taking advantage of the fine weather and good ice the last few days, to indulge in their favorite sport. The rinks have been cleared of snow on the Saskatchewan, opposite Mr. Johnston's, and every fine day the knights of the broom may be seen enjoying themselves in the mystic of the "roarin' game."

In reply to a circular from the Post Office Department, the postmaster here returns the following statistics, as regards the town of Prince Albert:—Population of town, 1,500; number of churches of all denominations, 4; schools, 3, and Emmanuel College saw mills, 2, steam; flour mills, 3, 2 steam and 1 water; stores, 23; hotels, 6, including boarding house; value of real and personal estate, about \$2,600,000.

BROADVIEW.

Business keeps brisk, and buildings are being proceeded with. Lots are selling freely, and the outlook promises well for the spring.

A strong effort is being made to raise the needful amount required to build a school and church. Already half the amount is subscribed, and fortnightly entertainments are projected, to consist of music, readings, and so forth, for the purpose of providing the balance.

The cold stormy weather lately has been hard on engines, and sundry dead horses have been picked up east and west. The foreman is making great efforts to get out half the round house fitted up to repair engines, as it is a cold and profitless job to clean and put life into the frozen muzzles out in the open air.

Strange to say, though there are over two hundred people residing in Broadview, no Sunday services have been held since September last.

Bret Harte.

Francis Bret Harte was born in Albany, N. Y., in 1839. From his parents he inherited English, German, and Hebrew blood. His father, a man of some culture and ability, was a Professor in the Albany Female College. Some years after his birth his father died, and in 1854 the family moved to California. Living in the rude mining settlements of the interior, and mingling with the rough characters that peopled them, the boy absorbed from actual experience many of the incidents which afterward grew into his magic touch into the now familiar legends of the embattled diggings, the lawless life, and the immortal bar.

The first three years of his life in California he had all the misfortunes of a pioneer, and tried his hand at many means of livelihood. For a time he was a compositor in a newspaper office at Eureka; then he mined for himself with largely increasing his fortune. As a school teacher he was able to indulge more liberally the literary taste awakened by his work as a printer. These latter experiences afterward grew, with all their natural color and textures, into the delicate study called "M'liss." A year's work as express messenger gave him the clear cut pictures of Yuba Bill and other knights of the range. In 1857 Mr. Harte came to San Francisco, taking his place as a compositor in the office of the *Golden Era*. A few Bohemian sketches written as copy brought him under the favorable notice of the editor, and he was once translated from the case to the desk. Those were busy days, and much of the matter ground out in that time of probation as he was diligent with genius and bright wit as any he has seen fit to retain in his complete edition. It was in 1863 that the first sketch appeared in the *Overland Monthly*, Boston Fremont, in those days one of the most cultivated women in California, and a great interest in the young author, who was on her recommendation that the *Overland* published the "Legend of Monte Diablo," a piece of work that shows what Bret Harte might have accomplished as a reporter. His tastes had not carried him into fiction.

The *Overland Monthly*.

## Mohammedans in India.

The Mohammedans in India comprise about one-fifth of the whole population, and have a full share of whatever pertains to capacity, or vivacity may pertain to the people at large. They certainly have religious convictions of the most determined character. They believe in God, in a state, in a judgment for blessing or for condemnation, in Mohammed as the Prophet of God, in the Koran as a divine revelation, the Caliphs as successors of the Prophet, and in many saints. They believe in the coming of an earthly Messiah in the person of the Iman Mehadi, who is to be the seventh and last of the Imams, six of whom already appeared in historic times. Iman Mehadi is to inaugurate an era of Islam now militant is to be finally triumphant, not only in India, but in other parts besides. This belief is an active principle, and allusion is made to it periodically, ever any trouble is in the air. It is abroad explicitly on the average once in a month twice in every decade, and in a more explicit manner it is mentioned frequently. According to that religious conviction, Indian Mohammedans would be the masters and would be lords of the land to live in.—*The Fortnightly Review.*

Explosive mixtures are often prepared by doctors not well informed in medical science. Chlorate of potash, permanent of potash, and glycerine is one of the most common. Chlorate of lime, sulphur, and other substances will detonate when mixed in a mortar. Hippophosphite of lime, when triturated alone, sometimes explodes. Pills of oxide of silver are apt to detonate with a tremendous explosion. Trinitroiodine and ammonia form the iodide of nitrogen—a violently explosive substance, which, agitated with water, is nearly certain to detonate. Chlorate of potash and sulphur are likely to act in the same way. A mixture containing chlorate of potash and sulphur has been known to explode a month.

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