

# THE WEEK'S NEWS.

HOME.

Mr. M. H. Gault, ex-M. P. for Montreal West, is dead.

A gas company has been formed in Owen Sound, and the town will be lighted with gas in two months.

The Master Bakers' Association of Hamilton has raised the price of bread from 10 to 12 cents per four pound loaf.

The Canadian Wimbledon team intend spending a week in Cambridge before taking up their quarters at Wimbledon for practice.

Three thousand men will be employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company this season constructing snow-sheds in the Rocky Mountains.

It is now stated that Mr. Chapleau has definitely decided to accept the Lieutenant-Governorship of Quebec at the close of the present session.

The total amount of the defalcation of Parent, the absconding cashier of the Hochelaga Bank, of Montreal, is \$15,000 so far as known at present.

A landslide has occurred on Spitzbergen Mountain, Switzerland, which killed and wounded a number of persons, besides destroying much property.

The value of the produce of the fisheries of the Dominion for 1886 was \$18,679,283, an increase in the value of the produce of \$956,000, compared with 1885.

A scheme for bonusing cheese factories has been formulated by the Manitoba Government, with the view of encouraging their maintenance in the province.

It is understood that important changes will be made in the position of officers of the Bank of Montreal in consequence of the election of Sir Donald Smith as president.

The first of the three Cunard steamers purchased by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for its trans-Pacific fleet has left Yokohama, Japan, for British Columbia direct.

It is stated that the principal transatlantic steamship companies contemplate bringing their passengers direct to Montreal instead of landing them at Quebec as heretofore.

Great indignation is expressed by the supporters of Mr. Scarth, M. P. for Winnipeg, at his action in the disallowance debate, and there is some talk of forcing him to resign.

A reduction of forty per cent. has been made by the Canadian Pacific authorities in freight rates between Winnipeg and Vancouver, Victoria, and New Westminster, British Columbia.

Hector McLeish, a Qu'Appelle settler, was shot and killed the other morning near Wolsley, N. W. T., by a party of four half-breed horse thieves whom he was endeavouring to arrest.

It is stated that Sir Donald Smith and Sir George Stephen are desirous of having a convalescent home established at Banff National Park in connection with the Royal Victoria Hospital, and will contribute another handsome sum for that purpose.

The work of digging the foundation of the new Canadian Pacific railway station in Montreal was commenced on Saturday, and tenders for the building will be called for immediately. The bridge at Lachine is expected to be completed by Dominion day.

There is great excitement in Mattawa over the alleged discovery of rich gold bearing quartz in the hills opposite Mattawa, close to the north shore of the Ottawa river. Prospectors are busy at work blasting rock, and the villagers are filled with the belief that they have struck it rich. Some of the rock already assayed shows an average of between \$30 and \$40 worth of gold to the ton.

A number of enthusiastic admirers of Henry George's land principles met at Toronto, the other night, and decided to form an anti-poverty society, after the manner of that recently formed in New York. A committee was appointed to draft a constitution and by-law, and a provisional chairman and secretary were also appointed. The main object of the society will be to disseminate intelligence in regard to the principles set forth by Henry George.

A variety of rumors are in circulation concerning the recent tragedy at St. Nicholas, Que. It is said that a number of fowls, after eating the food which the deceased Leggee had vomited immediately after eating, suddenly died. It is said that orders have been issued for disinfecting the dead poultry in order that the contents of their insides may be analyzed. Morin, the St. Nicholas suicide, was buried a short time after in unconsecrated ground and without religious ceremony of any kind.

In reply to a deputation on the subject of the railway to be constructed to the boundary by the Manitoba Government, Mr. Norquay said yesterday that his Government had been waiting till June 1st, the limit fixed for the announcement by the Federal Government of its intentions, and that no intimation having been received the work would be begun and pushed to completion at once. Mr. Norquay said everything was in readiness, satisfactory assurances and financial support had been received, and work would be commenced in at least three weeks.

AMERICAN.

It is understood that the decrease of the public debt during May is \$10,000,000.

A distinct earthquake shock was felt at Jamestown, N. Y., recently. The shock lasted only a moment and seemed like an underground explosion of great severity.

The United States Government intends to remove the Gros Ventres from the Milk River country, thus reducing the danger of collision with the Canadian Blood Indians.

It is estimated that the recent forest fires in the Northern peninsula of the State of Michigan have caused a total loss of seven million dollars. Eight lives are known to have been lost.

Twenty-seven miles of the Northern Pacific railway extension from Grand Forks to the Canadian boundary have already been graded, and Pembina will be reached by next November.

Advices received from Central America report a bad state of affairs in Salvador. President Merendez continues to grow unpopular. He has recently, for political reasons, imprisoned or pressed into the army the sons of some of the best Salvadorian families.

It is reported that Garcia Golan, Governor of the State of Coahuila, Mexico, has been arrested and imprisoned by order of Diaz, pending an investigation into certain charges against him in relation to his alleged inaction regarding the killing of several soldiers by a band of smugglers.

Glowing accounts have been received at Fort Smith, Ark., of rich gold finds in the neighborhood of Golden City. Rich placer claims have been located, and are said to extend for six miles. Assays from the quartz mines show how from \$36 to \$59 per ton of free smelting gold. Large quantities of gray copper are also found in the mines.

A lamp explosion set fire to a small house at Oswego, N. Y., occupied by a Mrs. O'Brien and four children. Two aged five and seven of the children asleep, in an upper room, were burned to death. The third child was badly burned, but will recover. The father, who was President of the Longshoremen's Union, was drowned in a slip near his house three years ago.

At dawn on Monday, in Mexican territory, the refuge of about thirty desperate bandits, thieves and smugglers were raided by forces from both sides of the river. A sharp fight ensued in which Col. Hernandez was wounded in the hand, one of his men was killed, and another wounded. One bandit was killed, several were wounded and a number were captured, several of whom, well known murderers, were executed on the spot. A large amount of stolen stock was found, most of which was returned to its owners. A number of noted criminals escaped.

FOREIGN.

A strong protection movement is developing in Spain.

Prof. Wagner, the African traveller, committed suicide in Munich.

Twelve English people lost their lives in the burning of the Opera Comique, at Paris.

In the explosion in the Udstone coal pit, eight miles from Glasgow, about 80 miners were killed.

The floods in Hungary are subsiding, but the loss by the destruction of crops will be enormous.

The fund for the relief of the sufferers by the Paris Opera Comique fire now amounts to \$400,000.

The Bodyke evictions have been resumed and the sheriff is at work, protected by 600 policemen and troops.

One hundred and twelve persons have been reported missing in Paris since the fire in the Opera Comique.

A terrible plague of locusts has visited the central provinces of Spain, and the crops are fearfully ravished.

A petition from Nantes, signed by 5,000 ratepayers, prays President Grevy to restore Gen. Boulanger to the War Office.

A Calcutta despatch says there is now little doubt that a steamer with 750 persons on board was lost in the recent cyclone.

The Italian Chamber of Deputies have adopted a naval vote for \$5,000,000 lire, to be expended on ironclads, torpedoes and forts.

It is reported the Ghilzais have defeated a thousand of the Amer's regular troops, captured five guns and a considerable quantity of baggage.

The Austrian War Department has rejected the proposal to form a balloon corps, on the grounds that its expense would counterbalance its slight usefulness.

## English Sparrows.

A forthcoming report of the Department of Agriculture, we are told, will contain some interesting matter about the English sparrows, occupying 400 pages and presenting the views of 3,200 people as to the merits and demerits of this bird. The announcement says:

"It is doubtful if there is another bird in the world so unanimously condemned as a nuisance as this ally. Dr. Merriam, the ornithologist of the department, who has charge of the preparation of the report, says that the indictment against the sparrow is a terrible one. He has scarcely a friend in the whole country. In California he is hated as cordially as the Chinese; but while it is admitted that the Mongolian may be made a useful citizen there is not even a monopolistic employer of coolie labor who can see the slightest use in the sparrow. He is accused of doing frightful damage to the vineyards of the Pacific slope. He always selects the most luscious bunches of grapes and he invariably sticks his bill into the very best berries on the bunch. Farmers who devote their time to the cultivation of grain, report that the sparrow, wherever they are thick, do frightful damage to cereals. Gardeners and the raisers of small fruits, in the vicinity of cities, say that since the sparrows began to multiply the profits of market-gardening have almost vanished. The only known use for the pest is as a substitute for reed birds. One man in Albany, N. Y., reports that he sells hundreds of dozens of sparrows every month to the restaurants in that city where they are served up to the New York legislators as the toothsome little thief of the Southern rice fields. Sparrows make excellent table birds, and it is thought that the only effectual method of curtailing their increase will be to induce the small boys to catch them for food purposes."

We would like to add our testimony. The English sparrow is an unmitigated nuisance, without one redeeming quality. They are not insect destroyers, but lazy, luxurious, thieving pests, and before every building where they are permitted to congregate unmolested. For three years we have been overrun with them, but now a relentless warfare has begun, which is rapidly thinning them out and driving them away from our residence. They are generally fat, but their habits of living would prevent us from using their flesh as food. They are not dauntless, by any means. Our advice to everybody is to kill them off relentlessly. One of our native songsters is worth a cart load of them as insect destroyers, and as for beauty of plumage, or for song, there is no comparison. Kill them off wherever they can be found.

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