

# THE WEEK'S NEWS.

CANADIAN.

This season 255 binders have been sold at Deloraine, Man.

Mr. Michael Davitt is in Winnipeg, and will shortly come east.

Ellis Hayden, aged eighteen, was drowned while bathing in the Thames at London.

A despatch from Quebec city says the crop of hay in that district will be fully up to the average.

James Mannes, Hamilton's oldest Orangeman, was found dead in bed the other day.

Louis Renaud, a prisoner in the Montreal gaol, committed suicide by hanging himself with a strap.

Robert Macdonald, the Hamilton letter carrier, charged with assaulting two young girls, has been committed for trial.

Reginald Curran, son of Rev. Canon Curran, Hamilton, has received a good appointment in the civil service of India.

All the farm hands who went from Ontario to Manitoba have been engaged, and many more are wanted.

The millmen's strike in New Brunswick is about ended, some of the mills having resumed operations.

Gus Brede, a Fort MacLeod teamster, was killed by lightning while smuggling Chinamen over the border from Canada.

Charles Lepage fell from the roof of the library of Parliament at Ottawa and his life is despaired of.

The M. C. R. station at McGregor was broken into Friday night, tickets and money being carried off.

The body of Corporal Morphy, of Toronto, who was drowned last fall in Lake Winnipeg, has been found.

The body of a man badly mangled, was found on the Grand Trunk track near Montreal yesterday morning. The corpse was taken to the city on the train from Toronto.

Lieut. Governor Nelson of British Columbia has become a vice-president of the Kingston Macdonald Memorial Committee.

So far this season the Toronto Fresh Air Fund has given twenty free excursions, in which 4,500 children and mothers have participated.

A subscription to the Macdonald memorial fund of Kingston has been received from Canadians now residing in Florence, Italy.

Hon. Charles Watters, judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court of New Brunswick, was found dead in his bedroom the other day. Heart disease.

Charles Mathews, formerly of Barrie, was burned to death on the steamer Glendevon, which burned to the water's edge on Lake Winnipeg on Saturday last.

A despatch from South Colchester states that bush fires are doing great damage in the vicinity. The crops, moreover, are suffering from want of rain.

Mr. H. S. Holt, railway contractor, now in Montreal, estimates that the surplus wheat crop for sale in the North-west this year will, on a basis of 75 cents per bushel, bring \$15,000,000 into the country.

A travelling correspondent says:—"The spring crops from Hamilton to London look excellent. There is no exception in any variety. Root crops promise an abundant yield, and there is a large root crop put in. Farmers in the west say that the potato bug has been less troublesome than for many years."

Robert King, a Hamilton man whose circumstances have not hitherto been opulent, has fallen heir to a large fortune by the death of an aunt in England.

Lieut. Col. Harwood, D. A. G., who for many years was a prominent figure in the social life of Montreal, died of dropsy the other day in that city.

The St. Clair tunnel was inspected last week by Sir Henry Tyler, president of the Grand Trunk Railway Company, and the work found to be in every way satisfactory.

Regular traffic on the Parry Sound Colonization railway from Scotia to Fern Lake, Summit and other points to Sprucedale, has been authorized by the Government inspector.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

Dean Eliot of Bristol, Eng., is dead.

A sensational law suit has been commenced in England in connection with the estate of the late Henry Pope Morely, brother of Arnold Morely, the Liberal whip.

Lord Harrington is suffering from a violent attack of neuralgia in the head.

The Duke of Cleveland is reported to be dying.

The London News states that without the help of America's wheat crop Europe would be on the verge of starvation before next harvest.

The statement is made on good authority that, owing to the critical condition of affairs in the East, England will add ten warships to her Mediterranean fleet.

Rudyard Kipling will soon leave London for New Zealand for the benefit of his health. He will visit Robert Louis Stevenson at Samoa, en route.

Mr. Dillon is to be formerly invested with the leadership of the Irish party when Parliament reassembles. Meanwhile Mr. McCarthy will be the nominal chief, though Mr. Dillon will be the virtual leader.

Imperial Parliament was prorogued last week to October 24.

Capt. Lawlor's dory Sea Serpent has arrived in England.

It is said Lord Salisbury and his wife will visit Ulster before the dissolution of the British Parliament.

Extensive preparations are being made among the English Roman Catholics to visit the Holy Coat of Treves.

The British steamer Wallarah, from London for Sydney, has been wrecked near Cape Town, and is a total loss.

Lord Tennyson appeals to the public not to forget Gen. Gordon's project for a boys' home, and says that funds are urgently needed.

It is stated Lord Salisbury has declined to grant the Porte's request for the evacuation of Egypt, on the ground that it would be inopportune to do so at present.

The Belfast Morning News, which has hitherto supported Mr. Parnell, now declares that public opinion is setting in the

direction of the policy of Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien.

Excitement has been caused in the White-chapel district of London by a report that "Jack the Ripper" has reappeared and committed another butchery.

## UNITED STATES.

The wheat yield of Minnesota this year is estimated at 60,000,000 bushels.

The total quantity of wheat which Wisconsin will contribute this year, will not fall short of 10,000,000 bushels.

A most disastrous storm visited the neighborhood of Indianapolis Monday evening doing incalculable damage to crops and property generally.

A Chicago despatch states that the first of the rain-producing experiments authorized by Congress were made in Texas the other day and proved a success.

The yacht Nellie C., of Toledo, with four young men and six young women on board, capsized at Toledo in a squall the other day. Lena Sandberg, Ellen Feeley and Clara Bourds were drowned.

Grasshoppers are doing much damage in the districts of Findlay, Ohio.

Saturday was the hottest day in Chicago this year. The thermometer registered 93 degrees at noon.

Crops, buildings and other property were greatly damaged by a tornado in the neighborhood of Ottumwa, Iowa, on Sunday.

The Masonic Savings Bank at Louisville, Ky., has assigned. Capital assets \$225,000, and deposits over a million.

May Crestor, a young lady of South Charleston, Ohio, is sneezing to death, and the local doctors are baffled by the strange complaint.

The extremely hot weather in the Dakotas is said to be causing great anxiety among farmers as to its effect on the wheat crop, which is in a critical state.

Forest fires are again devastating parts of northern Michigan. The sawmill at Batchelor's siding was destroyed, with a lot of lumber, causing a loss estimated at \$60,000.

Calvin Page arrived in Boston on Saturday from Dakota with his two daughters, having recovered them from the Chinte band of Indians, who captured them twelve years ago.

Mrs. Lizzie F. Dodge, of Lynn, Mass., who considered herself insulted by Dr. Andrews, followed him into a printing office in the town and kicked him out of the establishment.

Near Vinita, Indian territory, on Saturday lightning struck and demolished a small house belonging to Nat Skinner. Six men were in the house. Fox Bernard was killed and the other five badly injured.

Extreme heat is reported in South Dakota.

The wheat crop of Kansas is said to have been cornered by the Farmers' Alliance.

The Cincinnati Ice Machine Company has assigned. Liabilities, \$320,000; assets, \$600,000.

A big strike is in progress at Topeka, Kas., on the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway.

The Crawford county, Pa., Republican convention has declared for James G. Blaine as President.

Seventeen convicts in the State Asylum for Insane criminals at Auburn, N. Y., escaped recently. Four were recaptured.

The sloop Banwoodie, loaded with \$120,000 worth of railroad ties, was capsized and sunk while being towed up the North river, New York, the other day.

The failure of W. E. Schmetz, boot and shoe manufacturer, with the confessed judgments amounting to \$233,000, has created a sensation at Pittsburgh, Pa.

A despatch from Blunt, South Dakota, intimates that everything is as dry as tinder, and the people are in continued suspense, fearing prairie fires.

Thos. T. Boccock, for fourteen years a member of Congress from Virginia, and for four years Speaker of the Confederate Congress, is dead, aged 66.

At Sedalia, Mo., Samuel J. Williams was bitten by a tarantula, which came out of a box of pears received from Southern Texas. No hope is entertained of saving the man's life.

A passenger and a freight train collided at Port Byron, on the West Shore road, last week. Thirteen persons are known to have lost their lives, and a number are injured.

## IN GENERAL.

There is a yellow fever epidemic at Port du Prince, Hayti.

Influenza is again raging in Moscow. There are about 500 cases daily.

The recent flood in the Neisse district of Prussia caused damage estimated at 4,000,000 marks.

Cholera has appeared at Aleppo, Asia Minor.

The phylloxera has appeared in the champagne district of France.

The three baronesses Horvath sisters have been drowned while bathing in the river Nyarad at Madras.

Prince Bismarck says he considers the reduction of the German corn duty a disaster for the country.

It is stated that the Imperial Government is anxious to unite the West Indies to Canada by closer trade relations.

At Davidstaad, on the Finland railway, on Saturday a passenger train dashed into a military train. Two soldiers were killed and 48 persons wounded.

Monsieur Eiffel, designer of the Eiffel tower, is expected in Montreal shortly. He will confer with Premier Mercier in regard to the proposed Quebec bridge.

Despatches from Crete represent the island as in a condition approaching anarchy. The Christians and Mohammedan factions are engaged in constant warfare, and are killing one another off at a wholesale rate.

The maltreatment of Jews in Russia continues.

Bad weather is spoiling the crops in many districts in Austria and Hungary.

Many people have died from starvation in India, and all hopes of averting a famine in Madras Presidency have been abandoned.

Telegrams from Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, state that active preparations for war are being made by the military authorities of that State.

There is an unconfirmed rumour in Berlin that the Emperor has told United States Minister Phelps that he may visit the Chicago Exhibition.

The French Ambassador at St. Petersburg has handed to the Russian Foreign Minister two holy banners, which were captured by the French during the Crimean war.

The letter which Prince George of Greece has published regarding the attack upon the Czarewitch in Japan, in which he attributes cowardice to the Czarewitch, has given great offence in St. Petersburg.

The Italian Government has decided to dismiss 3,000 workmen from the Government dockyards this month. The decision has aroused widespread discontent, and the men to be thrown out are said to be ripe for mischief.

At the Swiss celebration in Berne last Sunday an Englishman, who assumed in argument with a Swiss to ridicule the story of William Tell, was slapped in the face and hustled about until he consented to apologize to the crowd and William Tell.

## USEFUL PLANTS.

Where They Come From and to What Use They are Put.

Among the most remarkable of the world's useful plants is the lace-bark tree of Jamaica, the inner bark of which is composed of many layers of fibers that interlace in all directions. Caps, ruffles, and even complete suits of lace are made from it. It bears washing with common soap, and when bleached in the sun acquires a degree of whiteness equal to the best artificial lace, with which this surprising natural product compares quite favorably as to beauty. Another curiosity is known in the tropics as the sand-bark tree and also as the monkey's dinner bell. It has a round, hard-shelled fruit about the size of an orange, which, when ripe and dry, bursts open with a sharp noise like the report of a pistol. Its juice is poisonous. The South American trumpet tree might furnish a band with musical instruments, inasmuch as its hollow branches are utilized for horns and also for drums.

From Travantore come a quaint plant called the "cerberus," which has a milky, poisonous juice. The unripe fruit is used by the natives to destroy dogs, as its action causes their teeth to loosen and fall out. The leaves of the so-called American aloe are made into razor straps and are also employed for cleaning and scouring pewter. Quite a wonderful tree is the calabash of the West Indies, which bears enormous fruits that resemble pumpkins and grow to be nearly two feet in diameter. With the pulp removed they serve various domestic purposes—for carrying water and even as kettles for cooking—having the great advantages of strength and lightness.

Another queer plant belongs to the pea family and is called the "moving plant," on account of the manner in which its leaves pers the bark, which is composed of a great many layers not thicker than writing paper. The snake tree of Guiana is so called because the seed is twisted in a manner to resemble a coiled serpent. For this reason the Indians employ the nuts as an antidote for snake poison. Another curiosity is the papyrus of Asia, which yielded the substance used as paper by the ancient Egyptians. For this purpose the wood of the reed stem was cut in thin slices, which were placed side by side, according to the size of the sheet required. After being whetted and beaten with a wooden instrument until smooth they were pressed and dried in the sun. A queer plant is a native of Madagascar. Formerly its seeds, which are very poisonous, were administered to persons accused of crime. If the individual was innocent the dose excited vomiting and his recovery was looked upon as a satisfactory vindication; but, when retained in the stomach, it quickly proved fatal, and guilt was thus established. The vegetable ivory plant of South America is a well-known commercial article. Its seeds at first contain a clear, insipid liquid, which changes by degrees until it becomes as hard as ivory, for which it is used as a substitute in many manufactures. From eastern Asia comes a plant the flowers of which contain a quantity of juice that rapidly turns black or deep purple. It is used by Chinese ladies for dyeing their hair and eyebrows, and in Java for blacking shoes. Decidedly remarkable is the camphor tree, from which camphor is prepared by boiling the chopped branches in water. It is mainly produced in the Island of Formosa. Inasmuch as it grows well in the southern states there is reason to believe that the preparation of camphor will some day become a profitable industry in this country. The arnotta plant has seeds coated with a red, waxy pulp, which is dried and made into cakes. It is much employed by the South American Caribs for painting their bodies, paint being almost their only article of clothing. As a coloring for cheese, butter and inferior chocolates. From India comes the khuskhus grass, the fibrous roots of which yield a very peculiar and pleasing perfume. In India the leaves are manufactured into screens for doors and windows, which when wet diffuse a refreshing scent.

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## LIFE IN A STAGNANT POOL.

A World Filled With Countless Kinds of Beings, from Infusoria to Frogs.

To the naturalist a slimy, stagnant pool in the woods, filled with nastiness and disgusting of smell, is a world replete with fascinating interest, the home of countless kinds of beings, strange and wonderful.

To begin with, the water teems with myriads of the very minute animals called infusoria, creatures of varied and curious shapes, some naked and others protected by limy shells. Of these there are hundreds of sorts, resembling, when seen under the microscope, coins, boats, stars, trumpets, pitchers, and wheels. Many appear also in the forms of fruits, necklaces, flasks, funnels, fans, and so forth, ad infinitum. A very common one is called the "flower cup," being in the likeness of a crystal vase containing what looks like the blossom of a plant. So small is this specimen that 13,000,000 of them may be comprised within a single drop of water.

## THESE LITTLE BEINGS

have eyes, muscular structure, and even nervous systems of their own, as it is believed. They move swiftly in pursuit of prey by means of oars, and a few of them actually have claws with which to grasp. Some of them lay eggs, others bring forth their young alive, while others still are propagated by division, each one separating into two. A few species are big enough to be seen with the naked eye, and one such, called the Stentor because of its trumpet shape, is particularly ferocious, devouring great quantities of its smaller cousins.

More interesting even than these are the swarms of minute diatoms—creatures of a vegetable nature, which are chiefly remarkable for the elaborate beauty of their shells. The latter are bivalvular, like those of a mussel. Some are like little boxes exquisitely made; others resemble boats, hearts, dominoes, &c. There is one sort that has been called the "Shield of Achilles," because each half of its disk-shaped shell is cut in concentric circles, with a complicated tracery of designs. In many varieties the valves seem ornamented with so fine a lace work that to distinguish the patterns is considered the best possible test of the power of a microscope. Inasmuch as the biggest ones can hardly be seen

## WITH THE UNAIDED EYE,

one kind is separated from another for purposes of study by pouring the water containing them from one beaker into another, then into still another, and so on, each time allowing a brief time for them to settle partly. Those which are heavier reach the bottom of the vessel before the lighter sorts, and thus the different species are separated by weight for mounting finally upon glass object slides. To obtain the clean shells they are boiled in nitric acid and treated with caustic potash.

There are plenty of creatures in the stagnant pool, however, which may be seen without the aid of a microscope. For example, there are polyps, animals about a quarter of an inch in length, which look like little tubes of jelly as thick as a bristle, with thread-like arms for seizing their prey. They are incredibly fierce and naturalists believe that they possess the power to paralyze their victims by electric shocks in the manner of the torpedo fish and the electric eel. In this way only can the fact be explained that their slender tentacles are able to secure game comparatively so large and powerful. A specimen has been seen to grasp two large worms at the same time, and yet the latter, though

## STRUGGLING DESPERATELY

for their lives, were unable to break away, and in a moment lost all power of motion. Now and then a swelling appears on one part or another of the polyp's body, and from each such protuberance finally appears a young polyp, which separates from its parents when it is sufficiently grown to take care of itself. If any portion of the animal is cut off it soon grows again. One that is chopped in two quickly becomes two perfect individuals. Furthermore, if turned inside out like a glove it accommodates itself to the new arrangement, the original outer skin performing as a lining of the interior, the office of digestion.

Among the most curious of the pool's inhabitants are the larva of various insects. Most conspicuous of these is the mosquito in its aquatic stage, when it is fed upon voraciously by the larva of the dragon fly, or darned needle, as it is often called, which resembles a fierce-looking worm. It is well known that the dragon fly is an equally dangerous foe to the mosquito when both have acquired wings. To illustrate this the writer will venture to tell a true mosquito story. On Cape Cod there is a great freshwater pond, formed originally by an advance of the ocean, which gave such alarm a few years ago that a dyke was constructed along the shore line to keep back the waves. Inside the dyke the water which had formed a sort of lake, gradually became fresh, coarse grass grew thickly in it, and it was transformed into an ideal breeding place for mosquitoes. As the latter rise in swarms from this morass,

## MYRIADS OF DRAGON FLIES

hover to leeward in wait to capture their favorite prey. So enormous are the numbers that on a summer's day in the wind ripples made in the sand one may easily sweep together within a few minutes more than a bushel of dead mosquitoes, only the shells of the insect being left by the dragon flies after sucking out the juices.

Among the most numerous of the visible occupants of the stagnant pool are the larva of the May fly, which in seasons unusually favorable to their production sometimes visits towns in such numbers, being blown before the wind, as to litter the streets, many cart loads of them being on occasion swept up and carried to the dumps. Another remarkable insect found in the slimy water is called the "monoculus" and is covered with a delicate shell marked with so fine a network as to prevent the appearance of mosaic. This valve is perfectly elastic to permit the animal to open it at pleasure. It affords protection not only to its occupant but also to the young of the latter, which swim into it

## WHEN DANGER THREATENS,

the shell opening for their reception and closing as soon as they have entered. Mention could not be neglected of many kinds of water beetles which are very voracious, and are armed with strong claws for grasping their prey and tearing it to pieces. If a few are put in the same

vessel together, they will fight with the utmost ferocity. At the bottom, among the weeds and leaves, are found certain water-pillar-like animals, which are nearly transparent. This species is called the "Turco," or "glutton," its entire body being occupied by a series of stomachs.

Ever so many kinds of aquatic worms find their home in the pool, being often so numerous in the shallows as to color the mud red. Leeches are plentiful in such places, as every boy knows. There are several species of crustaceans, most conspicuous among them being the "cyclops," so called because it has but one eye, of a crimson hue, with two pairs of horns on each side of it. The body of this "water flea," as it is sometimes designated, is covered with plates of armor, the shell-like material being usually transparent, like crystal, though sometimes adorned with beautiful tints. Turtles, also, there are of several varieties; likewise newts, polliwogs, frogs, snakes of more or less aquatic habits, and plenty of other animals too well known to speak of here.

Not least important, in point of numbers or otherwise, of the organisms inhabiting the slimy, stagnant pool are bacteria of endless varieties. Most of them are harmless, but some are the germs of frightful diseases. To prove it, let any one try to drink the water, in which lurk malaria, typhoid fever, bowel disorders, and other horrors besides.

## Wheat for Australia.

Wheat is being bought in California for shipment to Australia. This has only happened two or three times before in the past ten or fifteen years, and must be regarded as an accident. Of the seven colonies constituting the Australian Confederation three—Victoria, South Australia and New Zealand—produce a surplus of wheat, while the other four—New South Wales, Queensland, West Australia and Tasmania—consume more wheat than they produce, and are dependent upon the sister colonies and foreign nations for their supply. The total product of the seven colonies is estimated this year at 43,244,000 bushels, and the total consumption, including the requirement for seed, is about 31,000,000 bushels. But this is so unevenly divided, and the foreign demand for particular brands of New Zealand and Victoria wheat is so peremptory, that the confederation figures simultaneously as an exporter and importer of wheat. New South Wales, for instance, will require this year to import 4,000,000 bushels of wheat, while its nearest neighbor—Victoria—will have 7,800,000 bushels available for export. It would seem the most natural thing in the world that Victoria should supply her neighbor's deficiency. She does so, in effect, to some extent; but no small proportion of the wants of New South Wales is going to be supplied from New York, and a small proportion from San Francisco, while Melbourne is loading ships with wheat for Liverpool. New Zealand raises this year 7,656,000 bushels and consumes 4,172,000 bushels, leaving 3,484,000 bushels available for export. But the bulk of the surplus, instead of being carried 2000 miles to Sydney, takes the long ocean trip to Cork or Liverpool.

Whether Australasia will ever become a great wheat-exporting country is doubtful. In New Zealand the soil is especially adapted to the growth of cereals; the average wheat product is over twenty-four bushels to the acre. But in Australia proper it is less than eleven bushels. Victoria raises some fine wheat, but the average yield is only a trifle over ten bushels to the acre, and that of South Australia just 6.59 bushels. Queensland, whose surface is largely tableland, with a good depth of alluvium, does not show up much better. Of course, with a larger population, Australasia would contribute more than her present proportion of the world's wheat supply, which may be given as 2 per cent of the whole; but the indications are that the tide of European migration to that part of the globe has ceased to flow, for the present, and the Asiatic migration has been stopped by law. If we call the present population of the new confederation four millions, it may be many years before it contains as many souls as in four provinces of Canada. Men do not move to the Antipodes without very good reasons.

Still, the Australians are a thorough people. Whatever they undertake they do well. They have beaten the world in wool-growing; there are no finer, cleaner, brighter fleeces shown in Leicestershire than in parts of Australia. They have reduced the business to an exact science. The flocks are raised, nursed, fed and shepherded for the sole purpose of producing a fine grade of wool and they produce it. An Australian is amazed when he witnesses the hap-hazard, happy-go-lucky way in which our sheep are handled. The Australian irrigation systems are a triumph of science, skill and experience. In Victoria there is an agricultural department of the Colonial Government which does real work. In its last report it enumerates twenty-nine kinds of wheat seed which are known to have succeeded in that province, and twenty-six kinds of manure which have been employed with satisfactory results. In New Zealand the product of frozen mutton is reaching prodigious figures and realizing handsome profits. Last year over 1,500,000 frozen carcasses were shipped from the two islands and reached England in perfect condition. This was accomplished in the face of scientific predictions that the frozen meat trade could not succeed, as the flavour of the meat would be destroyed by the process of freezing.

## Reflections.

Bread cast upon the water purely as a business speculation is liable to sink before reaching port.

Don't worry your brain about the man in the moon, but study the man in your own overcoat.

The true prince will find it easier to disguise himself than the world would have him believe.

There are plenty of good fish always in the sea, but thousands of worthy inland people can never get to the seashore.

The dog that bays the moon is wiser than the one that bays a bigger dog that is viciously inclined.

Both courage and fear owe much to the armed neutrality of prudence.

When impudence dons the mask of repartee, it is time for the company to disperse for the night.

The seeming length of a sermon is generally proportioned to its need.

It is expensive economy to make a part of the truth suffice for the whole.

A man cannot be truly eloquent if he knows not how to listen.

Beware of the vicious man who proposes to reform his life on the installment plan.