

especially the hall of audience and the banqueting rooms, and the wooden ceilings, with square panels decorated with paper and silk, on which flowers and animals had been beautifully worked, were unique of their kind. Costly as the estimate of the building and its decorations was reported to be—over a million sterling—one felt thankful that the new ideas of progress which rigidly put utility before beauty had not prevailed in this instance, and that a copy of Buckingham Palace had not been substituted for the old Japanese architecture.—*Lord Eustace Cecil, in the Nineteenth Century.*

### THE COBRA AND THE MOUSE.

I was visiting at a friend's house in Calcutta, and was on this evening sitting at dinner alone. The table had been some time waiting for the host; and I had at last received a note that he was not coming home, so I sat down alone. I had finished dinner and was still lingering at the table, when a little mouse ran up on the top of a bowl with a sort of basket work cover on it. I should not have thought that of itself very singular, for the "tribes on our frontier" made most unexpected incursions. But when he did get perched on the cover of the bowl, the little fellow rose on his hind legs, with his hands before him, and began to entertain me with the funniest little mouse song you can imagine. "Chit-chit, cheep-cheep-chit," he whistled, and kept it up before me in a most unembarrassed and self-possessed little way. I must have been a true audience, for I leaned back in my chair and roared with laughter. As I looked at the little performer I gradually became aware of a shadow, a something strange gliding out from behind a dish towards the mouse. Silently and slowly it neared the mouse, in another minute a beady snake's eye glittered in the lamplight. My hand stole softly for the carving knife. The snake reared his head level with the mouse, and the poor little fellow's song, which had never ceased, became piercingly shrill, though he sat up rigidly erect and motionless. The head of the snake drew back a little to strike, out flashed the carving knife. The spell was broken instantly, for the mouse dropped and scampered. The snake was wounded, for there were spots of blood on the tablecloth, and it was writhing about among the dishes and plates. I could not make a bold stroke at any part of it for fear of breaking the crockery, and whenever I made a dig with the point it was like pricking a garter. I would not have believed, until I had seen it, how much of himself a snake can stow away under the edge of a plate. At last I saw the end of his tail projecting out from under a dish. A snake held by the tail and swung rapidly round cannot turn back and bite. I grabbed the tail with my left thumb and finger, and drew him out until I judged the middle of his body to be under the knife; then I came down and cut him in two. He was a cobra—a little one about two feet long, but quite long enough to "gravel" a man.—*J. F. Keane.*

### INDUSTRIAL NOTES.

It is understood Mr. R. R. Dobell, of Quebec, is organizing a company with a capital of about two million dollars to lay a telegraph cable from Blanc Sablon, at the Straits of Belle Isle, to a point on the coast of Scotland or Ireland. The Dominion Government will, it is anticipated, agree to extend the present telegraph line on the south shore of the gulf from Mingan, the present terminus to Blanc Sablon, and hand the entire gulf and coast telegraph system over to the new company as a subsidy.

Robt. Hopper's Last and Peg Factory, Truro, N. S., was started in 1878, and the business has been increasing steadily year by year up to the present year, which has been the best of all. In the coming summer of next year Mr. Hopper will erect a larger and more commodious factory.

Messrs. John Lewis & Son's Last and Peg Factory, Truro, N. S., has lately been burnt out. Having started again, Messrs. Lewis find it almost impossible to fill the orders they receive.

A. A. Archibald, Carriage Maker and Builder, Truro, makes side-bar buggies, both top and open, cheaply, after the American pattern. Much of his work, however, is designed by himself, and he showed our representative two that took first prizes at the Truro Exhibition.

The law compelling saw mill owners to prevent sawdust from entering the streams is causing much comment among mill men in Nova Scotia. It is stated that as most of the mills in Nova Scotia are direct action, there will be waste in any attempt to stop the sawdust, and the effect must be to curtail the business. A stoppage of business has taken place until an understanding can be arrived at in the matter. The mill owners further claim that while they are compelled to close down their saw mills, owing to inability to prevent refuse from falling into the rivers, the law is not enforced with reference to lumbermen on the Ottawa, in Ontario, who carry on in utter defiance of the enactments of the Dominion Parliament.

From London, Eng., a more quiet trade in Walnut is reported, although there is a fair activity. The stocks are not out of keeping with the demand, and full prices are obtained with difficulty. Prime stock is not plentiful and prices have an upward tendency. There has been no falling off in the whitewood demand. Logs have sold well, but common and good lumber has gone of the best. Prices are well maintained. There is a moderate trade in American oak, and stocks are sufficient. The call is chiefly for lumber of good figure. Gum is quiet, but prices are steady and firm. Redwood is very quiet and low. There is a large stock of American hickory logs on hand, which are of slow sale.

There can be no better proof of the commercial greatness of Halifax than the fact that in our midst we have the largest dry goods house in Canada. The firm of Messrs. Murdock's Nephews occupy the five story building on Hollis Street, lately occupied by Messrs. Doull & Miller. The building is one of the handsomest in the city, and has a frontage on Hollis of 100 feet, extending 60 feet west on Prince St. On entering the handsome front entrance of this spacious edifice we find ourselves on the ground floor, in which are stored the immense stock of cloths of every description for tailoring purposes. Having noted the quality and designs of the various fabrics, we ascend a wide and commodious staircase to the first floor above, where the finest stock of fancy goods in the Maritime Provinces, are to be seen. The second floor is devoted to general staples and dress goods, stocked enough, one would think, to supply the entire Dominion. One noteworthy feature of this department is the excellent light afforded from each side, the extensive room being exceptionally well lighted. Continuing our explorations, we are ushered into room after room, over flooring with every description of dry goods, hosiery, linens, dress goods, ladies' wear, carpets, house furnishing goods, etc. An able and competent staff preside over the various departments, headed by Mr. Boak and Mr. Jenkins, and customers visiting the city will find every attention and the utmost courtesy shown them. A new elevator on the latest improved hydraulic principles is being added, and visitors will be carried from flat to flat without the slightest inconvenience to themselves. In its completeness in every department, it is safe to say there is not another establishment to compare with it in the Dominion of Canada.

In the British Parliament a grievance was made of the fact that three farthings is demanded for a half-penny postal card.

The English shareholders' memorial to the directors of the Canadian Pacific and the Grand Trunk is attracting attention in the London press. The *Times* declares that the present war of rates between the two companies is ruinous. The *Standard* urges the formation of a powerful combination to resist wanton building of competing lines, and stop the equally wanton fight for traffic at ruinous rates. The *Daily News* says that a friendly traffic agreement should be made.

### MR. GLADSTONE ON THE FUTURE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING RACES.

Mr. Gladstone has found time, amongst his many other labours, to write an article in an American contemporary upon "The Future of the English Speaking races." The whole question, in the opinion of the ex Premier, is one of population. Mr. Gladstone argues upon this point from the past to the present and from the present to the future, saying that a century ago these who spoke the English language were less than 15,000,000, and that within 100 years they have multiplied sevenfold. He is therefore perfectly convinced in his own mind that about 1980 the whole English-speaking people will, at the present rate of increase, number 1,000,000,000. This estimate, if accurate, will leave at the end of the next century speakers of English far in excess of any other nationality. Having satisfied himself upon this all important point, Mr. Gladstone at once goes on to consider some minor matters relative and connected with the increase of population. He first of all says that the very increase of numbers will draw the English in speech and in instincts together; or, to put it in his own words, "will augment their stock of common interests and feelings; and will render them as to each collective ego, each territory or country, less egotistical, and will involve and consolidate throughout the mass a stronger sense of moral oneness."

Mr Gladstone subsequently deals with the subject which is of singular interest to politicians of many schools of thought in all parts of the British Empire. We, of course, refer to Imperial Federation, and the ex-Premier says, in answer to the question, Will the Dependencies continue to own the supremacy of the British Crown? that he knows of no reason whatever why the various parts of the Empire should not be as closely connected in the future as they are at present. It may be as well to quote his own words:—"I hope they may; I know of no reason why they should not; why the elastic relations which now happily subsist should not continue to find room and verge enough for including and adjusting such novelties as may arise." Mr. Gladstone further thinks that even if the silken thread which binds the Mother Country and her Colonies so closely together is broken, even if the political ties are sundered, still the great English-speaking people will practically remain one nation undivided by community of language, the essential and governing unity of races, together with the conscious instincts of kindred prospects and a common inheritance. We see most strikingly of late how the Americans and the British are gradually drawing together by inter-marriage, and even the untoward Sackville incident shows what a powerful influence British opinion has in the United States. The ex-Premier thoroughly believes in the great future before a combined English race; but he impresses upon his readers that this future is entirely dependent, not so much upon intellectual and material progress, but upon a social or moral, as it were, girding of the loins.

We conclude with Mr. Gladstone's own words with reference to this point, upon which largely depends even the question of population itself: "In short, if the great future prophesied is to be a truthful forecast, we must each, as an individual and Imperial unit, alike reverence the great traditions of mankind. We must even renew the severity of those traditions, and live a braced and watchful—not a remiss and sluggish—life, every man doing his duty day by day in common zeal for the nation's good."