

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 1883.

The Potato Bug.

We would call the attention of the HERALD readers to the letter of our Ottawa correspondent, and the valuable information therein contained. Farmers are much like other people, unwilling to realize a misfortune is present, because it is, as yet, shadowy and impalpable; but, as like causes produce like results, we cannot hope that the visit of the Colorado beetle is merely temporary, for that would be laboring under a delusion, which the agricultural history of the past ten years should warn us against. It is hardly necessary to point out that potatoes are among the principal articles of our export trade, and that, for our sake, we raise more of them than, perhaps, any other portion of the North American continent; and that, being so, we should be all the more energetic in combating the pest. Indeed, it is an absolute necessity. The experience of experts and entomologists teaches that the Colorado beetle does not become a source of positive danger until it has been domesticated three years in a district, it is in the third year it attains to its full power of mischief, for then it has had nine generations of the pest, with their arithmetical progressions, and are so formidable in number and voracity that it is next to impossible to destroy them. When farmers in the States and elsewhere allowed the insect to go unchecked until the third year, they gave up the cultivation of potatoes and allowed their ground to be untilled for years, as the only means of getting rid of them, whereas if they had strangled the infant Hercules in its cradle, they would have saved much labor and expense. Farmers have always to fight against some foe or other. When it is not the army worm it is the grasshopper, and when it is not the grasshopper it is the still more destructive potato bug. When, after every other known antidote had been tried against the bug, and Paris Green was found the most efficacious, it was objected that it was dangerous to life. It is, of course, quite true that Paris Green, composed as it is for the most part of arsenic, is a deadly poison, but then the more deadly, perhaps, the better, as the more caution will be exercised in its use. Considering the almost universal use of it, in the States and Canada, by farmers since 1872, it has done very little harm, and would have done none if the very plain advice of those who recommended it had been acted upon.

Steam Communication Again.

Now that the question of communication with the mainland is on the surface, the following information may be of interest. The Steam Navigation Company applied on March 26th, 1881, for a renewal of their charter for ten more years, at \$10,000 per annum, and for ten trips a week; or in case of twelve trips, then \$2,000 extra, or \$12,000 altogether. This offer was refused by the Government. In December of the same year, the Company made a second proposal to the Government. They offered to make a daily trip from Summerside to Shediac, and from Charlottetown to Pictou. They offered, besides, to provide a larger steamer to ply daily, when possible, between Georgetown and Pictou during the winter, say from December 10th to February 1st, and from, say, March 20th to April 20th, freight and fares to be fixed on the basis of that at present charged by the Government. The following were the subsidies asked for:— Summerside to New Brunswick, \$6,000; Charlottetown to Pictou, \$4,000; Georgetown to Pictou, \$2,000; Charlottetown to Summerside and Tormentine, \$6,000. Total, \$18,000. All the Government have consented to do is to extend the old contract until the end of 1884. They refused to accept either offer, as they are of opinion the present boats are not in a condition to endure or render efficient service for ten years more. The Dominion Government did not in any hurry accepting the offer of the Steam Navigation Company. Meanwhile, it might possibly occur to the managers of that line, that if they consult their own interests, they will keep on the right side of the public for the remainder of their term; and that by striving a little harder than they have hitherto to accommodate the freight and passenger traffic, they will stand a better chance of getting the new contract. They should bear in mind that the people of this Province do not exist for the sole purpose of enabling them to put money in their own pockets, but rather that they are paid to run their boats for the convenience of the public. Every day the steamers leaving here are loaded with horses and cattle, whose society is not always the most pleasant for passengers, whilst at the other side, they take their

THE POTATO BUG.

ITS HISTORY—DESTRUCTIVE POWERS—FERRIBLE REVENUE—ITS MEANS OF TRAVELLING—HOW THE PEST IS TO BE FOUGHT—PARIS GREEN THE ONLY REMEDY.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Ottawa, May 2.

Learning that the famous and infamous Colorado beetle has at length thrown his advance columns on the Island, and knowing that he goes there to stay out the usual three years, I thought some information concerning his mode of travelling, and his means of being foisted upon the country, would be of some value to the farmers, more particularly as Prince Edward Island is especially a potato growing country, and exports large quantities of that vegetable. The Steam Navigation Company has been very kind to send me a copy of the book in the Library bearing on the subject, but have drawn chiefly on the pamphlet published by Mr. Tache, a few years ago, *La Mouche des Patates*, pamphlet, I regret to say, of which there is no English translation, owing, it is alleged, to the unwillingness of the author to have his work appear in any other language. I have also condensed from the annual reports of the State Entomologist, compiled by Mr. Riley, a study letter by Mr. Todd, of the Library at Ottawa. And first, to describe the monster, which has marched majestically and victoriously across the continent, and many other valleys, and over lake and river, while its advance guard is in Prince Edward Island, advancing positively over the Atlantic Ocean for new markets to conquer, and to devastate in Europe, and devastate it, there can be little doubt, unless science shall be more successful in the next few years than it has been in the past.

THE POTATO BUG.

Colorado Beetle, *Doryphora Decemlineata*. Ten lined Spinyhorn, by its name, marks and many other characteristics, insect known to scientists, is when of full age and size, half an inch long, and about one-third broad, has a small head, and sometimes on other plates, with a convex back, of bright brown, with green stripes and spots, the stripes running from across the body. Mr. Tache describes the pest more minutely, but any one who sees a light-looking, though ugly animal loading around a potato patch, or trying to conceal itself under the vine, can, without being a classical scholar, be fully convinced he is gazing upon the monster which has invaded the potato bug. It travels along to its destination slowly, but surely, never deviates from its path, and climbs fences and walls sooner than you can get your eye upon it. It is a very voracious creature, and feeds on the large jar one pound of white arsenic and two pounds of saleratus, or pearl ash, in 14 lbs. of hot water, stirring well till thoroughly dissolved. These articles, costing about a dollar, will make five pounds of Paris Green, costing in the store \$2.50. It is usual to keep them in solution, and mix it in proper proportions, in a part of the water, and use the latter, then the arsenic, and the Paris Green, immediately to precipitate in a fine powder, and is much more effective than the arsenic alone. The Paris Green, when used in this way, is much more effective than the arsenic alone. The Paris Green, when used in this way, is much more effective than the arsenic alone.

THE HISTORY.

The history of the potato bug is important and interesting. It was seen as far back as 1829, on the Rocky Mountains, chiefly in Colorado, where it fed upon *Solanum tuberosum* (as species of wild potato), and was content with it, and did not spread itself until 1859, when mining was begun in Colorado, and potatoes were cultivated. Then it was this bug found its way into Michigan, and did not spread itself until 1861, when it was discovered that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and he abandoned his lucrative profession to become a humble religious, who was destined to edify the whole world by his writings and his virtues. There is not a town, or village, or hamlet, in Europe, but has reaped the benefits of the missions of the Redemptorists. The Fathers are now becoming very numerous in the United States, and are looked upon as the most successful missionaries in that country. A little over a year ago, they gave a series of Missions in Halifax, N. S. Their work there was stamped with the Divine favor of Heaven in many a way. The Cathedral was crowded morning and evening, with vast concourses of people. From the streets, lanes, and highways, they came—the poor, the lame, and the blind, mingled with the rich and the great, crowded to hear the good Fathers, and to heal the infirmities of their souls. At the termination of the grandest Mission ever preached in Halifax, the venerable Archbishop Hannan finished his course, and entered into the joys of his Lord. The Cathedral was packed at the time. Father Wisel, the Superior, was preaching the closing sermon of the Mission. In a solemn voice he asked for five Paters and Aves for the dying Archbishop, and amid the tears and prayers of his people, the spirit of the noble prelate departed this life. What a beautiful death! The crowning work of his useful life was that grand Mission that was just closing in his Cathedral. *Frais Coronat Opus*. The good Archbishop is now after receiving the Crown of Justice, but we like to dwell on his memory, for a true friend never lived, a nobler heart never throbbd in human bosom.

OUR OWN GOOD BISHOP.

Our own good Bishop, watchful of the spiritual interests of his people in Charlottetown, has determined to give a Mission in the Cathedral, which will commence on Sunday, the 17th June, next, and will continue over a week. There will also be Missions given in several of the outlying districts, such as Souris, St. Andrew's, St. Peter's Bay, Alberton, &c. We expect a grand and lasting result from these Missions. We hope that all Catholics will attend—that they will strain every point to be present at all the services. His R. M. O'Connell, member of the Legislative Council of Nova Scotia, died recently, aged 90 years.

Green, profit by the experience acquired by your brothers of the south, and do not allow the voracious beetle to destroy your potatoes, when you have in your hands so simple and so cheap a remedy.

As regards the danger attendant on Paris Green, Mr. Tache asserts that there can be none, if ordinary care be used. Keep it away from children and domestic animals, and all will be well in the application of the liquid method which has been adopted, greatly to the exclusion of all others, it is only necessary to place a teaspoonful (1 ounce) of a superior quality in a bucket containing two gallons of water, on the scale that a quart of Paris Green is sufficient for 140 gallons, but if the article be of inferior quality, more of it must be used. The quantity used must depend in a great measure on the number and state of the insect, as they show themselves on the stalks. From two to eight buckets of water, in which a table-spoonful of Paris Green has been placed, will answer for an acre of land. The number of applications must also be regulated by the state of the crop, the proprietor taking care to apply it after each rain, but not so often, if it rains, as nature would lead him to do, to allow the bugs time to devour the leaves. This is the manner of operating. The Paris Green being measured with a spoon, better still, divided into small paper parcels, containing the spoonful of the poison, in advance, they are thrown into the water, paper and all, so that all other manipulations are avoided. It should not be used in the morning, as the dew is still on the leaves, and the Paris Green is not to be taken during, and after the operation, to stir up the water, for Paris Green not being soluble, ought to be kept in a continuous agitation.

THE NUMBER OF ENEMIES.

Among insects, among birds, among reptiles, and even among small animals (petits quadrupèdes), some of which attack its eggs, others its larvae, and others again the pest itself, but, by far, the most dangerous enemy of the potato bug, is the Colorado beetle, which, in a certain place, they may be said to have taken complete possession, after which the measure of their multiplication depends upon the vigor of the potato, which the bug would destroy all the potato fields in the conquered territory. Up to this point this state of things shall be modified, if it does not rain, or otherwise, no one knows, but such is to-day the problem which offers itself for solution. The bug has a great

NOTES FROM THE CAPITAL.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Ottawa, May 2. The season is drawing to a close. Every thing denotes this, but the weather more than anything else. When the snow lies on the ground, the sun, and the wind manage to gain access to the interior, and whittle through the corridors, honorable members of the House of Commons, and the noble and noble, when the spring comes, and the buds begin to show, and the air, honorable members whittle themselves away, and even the sternest of Opposition leaders is willing to sink at the feet of the Government, and to be mercifully about in March, in order to get home all the sooner. And talking of the Government, and of the noble and noble, when the spring comes, and the buds begin to show, and the air, honorable members whittle themselves away, and even the sternest of Opposition leaders is willing to sink at the feet of the Government, and to be mercifully about in March, in order to get home all the sooner. 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