

the same notions respecting it may be found among the effusions of most of the ancient poets; indeed, there is scarcely a poet, ancient or modern, who does not speak of the owl in this point of view.

Spenser, in the *Fairie Queene*, gives us:

"The ill-faced owle, death's dreadful messengere."

In Shakespeare's *Henry VI.* we find—

"The ominous and fearful owl of death."

And in the *Comedy of Errors* we have the owl associated with "goblins and evilish sprites."

The superstitious opinion that the owl is the harbinger of death, still prevails among the ignorant of modern Europe. In England, no village ghost, or fairy dance, no pigmy maze, or haunted house, is more common than a death foretold by the owl.

The striking and peculiar look of this bird, its loud and dismal cry, uttered often when all other birds are quiet, as well as its being the bird of night, are the circumstances which, aided by an occasional coincidence of events, have caused the owl to be regarded in the light of an evil omen.

The dread attached to owls seems to have been extended to other birds of the night, a circumstance which rather corroborates the idea that they were dreaded, in a great measure, from being companions of darkness and obscurity. The hollow booming of the bittern from a pool on a still evening, and the hoarse sound of the fern-fowl, are equally striking. "The hoarse night raven, trump of doleful drede," "the croaking in hell-bellowing for revenge," the hoarse raven that croaked the fatal entrance of Duncan under the battlements of Macbeth's Castle, at Inverness. The cornix of the Romans, whether the raven or the crow, was represented as ominous, who by his croaking prognosticated evil. The magpie, which in windy and stormy weather is garrulous and said to fly high in small flocks uttering its cry, which is feigned injurious to travellers, probably from the fact of the bird's garrulity before rain. The appearance also of vultures, who prey on carcases, and naturally follow armies and inhabit the field of battle after the conflict, is associated with death and destruction; and they become evil omens when following armies. Swallows at one time among the Greeks appear to have been regarded as an evil omen when a flock of them settled on a tent or ship.

It is an old observation that the appearance of a certain beetle, called *ten bris noctingus*, was a presage of death. The appearance of these insects did in some minds absolutely forebode the death of sick persons in the house where they were found, since the peculiarity of atmosphere suited to the beetle may be such an one as would produce the death of the patient.

Some of these superstitions, and others which have gained importance from their extensive prevalence, would form a curious history, if traced to their particular source and arranged according to the age or country in which they prevailed. The few cited may whet the appetite of some of our readers to investigate the subject; if so, our object is served in calling their attention to it.

SEASIDE VISITORS.

A noticeable feature in the visitors at the seaside is their good-tempered faces. They have left their sour speeches and petty cares at home, and have come into the sun with a similar feeling to that with which a butterfly fresh broken from its chrysalis moves amongst the flowers and bloom. They feel as if old things had passed away, and all had become new. Why should they not, if they remember to pay their bill at the hotel? Human beings, like the crabs in the rocks, require a change of shell and claw. I suppose that every seven years we are, physically, entirely changed beings to what we were before, not having—analysts tell us—a particle of the same matter which we had in our bodies at the beginning of the seventh year. Our moral nature is more rapid in changing itself. It throws its old self off as quickly as a lobster throws off its claws when put alive into a pan of boiling water. Even a new dress or new style of hair-looping will make a woman feel herself a totally different being to what she was before; and this metamorphosis extends to all classes. Servant-girlism, in its Sunday bonnet, whilst hanging on the arm of its young man, conceives itself to be a Lilliput lady. And how different a clergyman feels when ascending the Highlands in a shooting-coat to what he does when he has his surplice on, announcing the absolution, or baptizing a refractory baby. Even the cheap-trippers to the Spa become a little conscious of a higher nature when the strains of good music enter into their ears; but I believe, after all, they prefer Punch and Judy. The effects of the music on the beach are very various. I see that it makes lovers draw close, to one another, and put on an abandoned look, as if their present feelings would never change; and I see little children giving, under its sweet influences, fresh tokens of affection to their dolls; and old men stretch their legs in front of the benches, with a sigh that life is running so fast out of them; and young men take an extra strain and pull at their cigars. But the elevated feeling soon passes away; and in a quarter of an hour—barring the infants with their dolls—most of them will be drinking porter in the refreshment-room. But we ought to be thankful for anything in this naughty world which makes us feel good, even for a little while; and music has—as I hear a cheap-tripper say—"an elevating effect." A gentleman to my right hand looks as if it had made him pray, for his eyes and forehead are heavenwards, and his lips are trembling. There are a good number of gentlemen in white cravats listening to the music. I hope it will sweeten their sermons when they get back to their parsonages. Generally speaking, there is too much cayenne in them. I suppose they think what is good for the stomach must be good for the soul. There are also a few puppies in the crowd. I can tell them by the snobbish way in which they take off their hats to girls staying at the same hotel with them, and the slanting half-smoking look with which they puff the smoke out of their Grimaldi pipes. It is Sunday to-morrow, and I hope the whole lot of them—clergymen, young ladies, gentlemen and gents, lovers, snobs, and puppies—will go and hear the good clergyman who preaches at the parish church—*Once a Week*.

The Queen has sanctioned the admission into Woolwich Academy of a young gentleman belonging to the Royal Family of Japan, and it is stated that there are at the present time several students at certain of the Woolwich schools who have been sent to England from the East to receive a military education, among them being a Prince of Siam.

Our Illustrations.

POINT DU CHENE, N. B.

Point du Chêne is a village situated on the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, two miles from Shediac, of which it is the port. Though at present but a small place it will, no doubt, before long become a town of some importance, as it is the eastern terminus of the European and North American Railway, and the calling place of the steamers of the Quebec and Gulf Ports Steamship Co., the North Shore line, and the Prince Edward Island Steam Navigation Co. As yet the population is small, consisting mainly of employees of the railway and steamship companies. The village is not wholly destitute of attractions for the passing visitor, as there is excellent sea-bathing to be had, and the walks in the neighbourhood, though few in number, are exceedingly pretty.

THE ST. JOHN, N. B., Y. M. C. ASSOCIATION BUILDING.

During the terrific gale which prevailed at St. John on the morning of the 30th of November, (and which caused the wreck of the "Reward," illustrated in a recent number) a portion of the side walls of the new building of the Young Men's Christian Association was blown down. The building was, at the time of the accident, well advanced. The walls were finished and ready for the roof timbers, which were about to be put in position. The height of the walls was about fifty-one feet, and about half of this was blown down, leaving the back and front standing complete, and to all appearance, uninjured. The south wall fell inside the building crushing a portion of the floor to the basement; the other fell on the adjoining building, the property of Mr. Elias Flagler, crushing and destroying it, together with a quantity of goods belonging to the occupants. The damages occasioned by the accident are estimated at from \$3,000 to \$4,000. Although the loss was a serious one to the contractors they determined to complete their contract as quickly as possible.

MME. NINA PIZZOTTI.

Madame Alexandrina Isabella Margarita Nina Huerta Pizzotti was born in Brussels, and is the daughter of the celebrated guitarist and composer, Don Antonio Huerta, an officer in the Spanish army. Isabella, Infanta of Spain and ex-Queen, was sponsor for the young "Nina," who inherited her father's genius and musical ability, and has been received in London, Boston, and Montreal with great appreciation by the lovers of classical and artistic music. Her advent to Montreal was with the Mendelssohn Quintette Club, which has had so large a share of public favour in this city, and since her residence here she has exhibited her remarkable musical talent not only to the delight of her audiences, but with the marked approval of the press, and of the musical critics. Both as a vocalist and pianiste, Madame Pizzotti has few rivals and many friends, and her talents as a teacher have been proved by the successful appearance in public of her pupils. M. Pizzotti, her husband, is an accomplished professor of languages, especially of his native Italian.

THE MERRYWEATHER STEAM FIRE ENGINE.

The Merryweather steam fire engine, the property of the Town of Whitby, and of which we give an illustration, has been fortunate enough, although but a short time in the country, to distinguish itself by saving the business portion of the Town of Oshawa from destruction by fire on the night of Sunday, the 8th inst. The engine is a single cylinder one, and classes No. 5 on the list of the six different sizes of double and single cylinder engines manufactured by the eminent engineering firm of Messrs. Merryweather & Sons, London, England. It is the pioneer engine to Canada, and is a splendid specimen of the engines manufactured specially for Canadian service by Messrs. Merryweather & Sons, and as it is absolutely necessary for use in this climate it is frost proof in every part. In fact it is similar to those supplied by the same firm to Russia, and which are frequently used when the thermometer is far below zero. It is also adapted for the Merryweather engines that they are very simple in construction, durable, light of weight, and specially adapted for pumping through long lines of hose, the latter being a very necessary qualification in this country where water has often to be forced a long way to be of service in case of fire in numerous towns and villages. The trial of the engine we illustrate in this city, and the splendid work it did, throwing one stream through 800 feet of hose and another through 160 feet, both at the same time, over the Court House, is yet fresh in the memory of the public. From this city the engine was taken to Kingston, at the trial in which place the engine was put at the fish market, taking suction through 24 feet of suction hose from the lake. As the trial was to thoroughly test the long line power of the engine, 900 feet of hose was laid up one of the main streets running from the lake, and water was thrown with ease over the flagstaffs of the buildings on either side of the street. This was regarded as very satisfactory, particularly as the street was an incline from the lake. Streams were also thrown through two lines of 100 feet each with equal success. The result of the trial was that the Kingston authorities ordered a large double cylinder engine with iron wheels, and the small engine was bought on the spot by a deputation from Whitby. At its trial in Whitby the engine was still more successful, having actually sent a jet to a height of 123 feet through 880 feet of hose laid up an incline, suction being taken from water at a depth of 22 feet. Through 200 feet of hose a stream was thrown 15 to 20 feet higher than the vane of the Episcopal Church, which is 133 feet high, and through 80 feet of hose a vertical jet was sent to the extraordinary height of 180 feet. As may reasonably be supposed the Whitby people since the good work done by their engine at Oshawa are more than ever satisfied with it. They are certainly to be congratulated in having so superior a means of protection against fire. The agent in this country for Messrs. Merryweather & Sons is Mr. A. G. Gilbert, who for a number of years past has been connected with the press of Canada, and to whose exertions the introduction of the Merryweather engines to Canada is due.

THE RECENT FIRES IN HAMILTON.

During the afternoon of Monday, the 16th ult., a fire broke out in the wool warehouse of Mr. John Harvey, King Street, Hamilton, which at one time seriously threatened the safety of the surrounding buildings. About four o'clock flames were seen issuing from the second floor rear windows of the premises, which formed the centre of a block of three buildings situated on the south side of the Gore. Upon examination it was discovered that some bales of Chinese grass were on fire, among a large quantity of wool. The alarm was immediately given, but by the time the fire brigade arrived on the spot the fire had made such headway that it was evident the building was doomed. By dint of great exertions, and often at the peril of their lives, the firemen succeeded in preventing the spread of the flames, but not before the warehouse was completely gutted. About seven a portion of the building fell in, and four of the men narrowly escaped being buried in the ruins. During the night and the greater part of the following day the debris continued to burn, notwithstanding the constant efforts made to quench the embers. All day on Tuesday ominous volumes of smoke rolled from the ruins, and fears were entertained for the

safety of the adjoining buildings. About half-past five in the afternoon they were realized. At that time the cellar of the adjoining warehouse, occupied by Messrs. J. H. Davis & Co., wool merchants, was discovered to be on fire, and before many minutes the flames were raging through the building, which burned until the roof and floors of the rear had fallen and the front was almost gutted. The premises of Messrs. Turner & Co., wholesale grocers, and of the Bank of Commerce, were only saved by the exertions of the firemen, aided by the employees of the two establishments. The loss caused by the two fires is placed at about \$200,000. At the time of the outbreak of the second fire, a warehouseman in the employ of Messrs. T. C. Kerr & Co., while passing Davis & Co.'s building, was struck by a large bale of wool thrown out of a window above. The blow took effect on the back of the neck, producing a severe contusion of the spine. In consequence of certain complaints having been made of the deficiency of the fire brigade organization the Hamilton Board of Trade have appointed a committee to investigate and report upon the condition of the facilities and apparatus possessed by the city for the extinction of fires.

Miscellaneous.

Mlle. Marguerite Bellanger, who played such a conspicuous rôle in the private affairs of the Second Empire, is reported dead.

A mass of gold weighing 3 lbs. has been found by some sappers at Chatham. It is thought to have formed part of a sceptre, and has been presented to the Queen by the colonel in command.

Two Japanese priests are now at Berlin, upon a special mission of inquiry as to the Christian religion. The Rev. Dr. Isaco is engaged in explaining to them the distinguishing features of the various Christian creeds.

Fancy! The Marquis of Westminster has just been furnished with a ceiling costing the large sum of \$110,000. It consists of the best Spanish mahogany, which is two feet in thickness, a foot deep of which is elaborately carved around with the letters W. G. The cornice to the ceiling is of polished ebony of the finest description, and is three feet wide. Upon this are magnificent paintings, copies from the great masters.

The portrait in verse of Mr. Lowe, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, given in a recent English paper, has three neat couplets:

"With equal calm, impartially severe,
He snubs a pupil-teacher or a peer.
Howe'er to merit cold, that feline mind
Was never yet to fault or blunder blind.
Red-tape experience he delights to spurn,
Too quick to listen and too proud to learn."

German princesses marrying into the Russian Imperial family have always heretofore had to join the Greek Church. At the recent Imperial meeting at Berlin there was a question, as the *Journal de Bruxelles* learns from St. Petersburg, of the betrothal of the Grand Duke Vladimir of Russia to a daughter of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. A new line of conduct seems, however, to have been adopted by the Emperor William, as he is said to have peremptorily declared that henceforth German Protestant princesses marrying into the Russian Imperial family must be allowed to continue in the Protestant faith.

The sum to be returned to the Orleans Princes—from 35 to 40 millions—will be divided into eight parts—1, for the Count de Paris and Duke de Chartres, on the title of their father, the Duke of Orleans; 2, Duke de Nemours; 3, Prince de Joinville; 4, Duke de Montpensier; 5, Duke d'Aumale; 6, King of the Belgians, Count de Flandre, Princess Charlotte, ex-Empress of Mexico, from their mother, the Princess Louise of Orleans; 7, Prince Philippe of Wurtemberg, from his mother, the Princess Marie of Orleans; and 8, the Princess of Saxe-Coburg, née Princess Clementina of Orleans. The descendants of Louis Philippe consist at this moment of 52 persons.

The editor of the *Turf, Field, and Farm* has been shown a newly-invented implement which he thinks will become indispensable to owners of breech-loading guns. He says:—"This instrument, about the size of a pocket knife, and strong as it is simple in structure, caps and uncaps cartridges with great facility, and it crimps the shell and extracts pin or central-fire cartridges with equal ease. Another new invention is a brass shell for breech-loaders, which is considered an improvement on any yet devised. We saw also, for the first time, the Good-enough oil can, a very convenient affair, costing a mere trifle, and which should be in every gun case."

ITALIAN SPORTSMEN.—The Pugliese are great sportsmen, but more especially with those birds, such as duck and curlew, which possess an extraordinary amount of cunning. Various are their means of gaining a near approach to these wary fowl, and ruses are adopted which could not but surprise a British or American sportsman. One trick we will, however, mention. They construct a cow of paper or pasteboard, and two men get inside the body with their guns. A hole is cut in each side of the animal out of which the muzzles protrude and the shots are fired, and to make the deception more complete a bell is hung round the neck of the animal, which is generally the case with oxen when they are grazing in the swamps or coverts.

Dean Stanley and the Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, have agreed to surrender their estates to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on the following terms: That the commission give them £18,000 per annum—£6,000 for themselves, £2,000 to the dean, and £1,000 for each of the canons. The archdeacon gives one-third of his income to his co-archdeacon. The remaining £12,000 will go to pay the different officers of the Cathedral, and the maintaining the service of the Church in efficiency; £30,000 is to be set aside, the interest of which, at only three per cent., the Chapter are to receive, making £900 a year for repairing and maintaining the fabric. According to these figures St. Paul's, London, is far from being so wealthy a corporation as either Trinity Parish or the Collegiate Reformed Church of this city.

The American Palestine Exploration Society is about sending off an expedition for the purpose of carrying out the objects of that body. According to the *Independent*, it is to be under the direction of Lieut. E. Steever, U. S. A., who will have special charge of the topographical survey, and of the preparation of a reliable map. He will be accompanied by Professor John A. Payne, late of Robert College, Constantinople, who will superintend the archaeological department, and make what collections he can in natural history and geology; but being himself especially a botanist, he will devote his principal attention to that branch. Mr. Van Dyke and other gentlemen will probably accompany the party to the field, and among them will be an artist of considerable reputation. This labour is one, of course, that will require some time for its completion, and, according to the *Independent*, at least six years will be necessary to accomplish its objects thoroughly, even allowing for the assistance of a British society organized for a similar purpose) in doing its share of the work.