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TEMPERATURE

as observed by HEARN & HARRISON, Thermometer and Barometer Makers, Notre Dame Street, Montreal.

THE WEEK ENDING

March 13th, 1881.			Corresponding week, 1880		
Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean
Mon.. 44°	28°	36°	Mon.. 28°	14°	21°
Tues.. 40°	28°	34°	Tues.. 26°	zero	13°
Wed.. 40°	24°	32°	Wed.. 15°	-6°	4° 5
Thur.. 38°	24°	31°	Thur.. 25°	9°	17°
Fri.. 36°	18°	27°	Fri.. 17°	-3°	6°
Sat.. 36°	21°	28° 5	Sat.. 25°	3°	14°
Sun.. 44°	26°	35°	Sun.. 19°	zero	9° 5

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, March 19, 1881.

THE WEEK

A TERRIBLE proof of the powerlessness of law as a protection against assassination has been afforded by the news of the Czar's death. For fourteen years, since the first attempt in 1866 the Emperor of Russia has been dogged by the relentless footsteps of a conspiracy, whose immediate purpose has been at last unhappily fulfilled. That the ultimate aim of the Nihilists is any nearer accomplishment we hope is far from being true. Strong though the republican party in Russia has grown during the past ten or fifteen years, the Nihilists themselves we may believe, are yet but few in number, and the death of the Czar will do more to estrange them from the real party of progress than all the claims of common interest can be looked to overcome. A horrible assassination is seldom a victory for the assassin. More often is it the dead man who wins the game for his own party. It was the political murder of Charles I. that saved the monarchy to England. It will be no wonder to us at least, if the death of the Czar put aside for an extended period the schemes of revolution, which in more moderate hands were making such gigantic strides. Alive, the Czar had many enemies, the Empire itself many more. Dying he has the sympathy of Europe, his sins and those of his Government are buried with him, and the world remembers only the emancipation of the serfs. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* The Empire gains all the prestige of martyrdom and the Nihilist party the execration of all creeds and parties alike.

It is to be hoped we have heard nearly the last of HANLAN receptions. Not that we would wish in any way to disparage our countryman's victory, for if one goes in for boat-racing it is well to win, and the winner in any race necessarily receiveth the prize. But there may be too much even of a good thing, and there are signs of a re-action against this over glorification of muscle and racing skill. Perhaps now it may be possible to think of other things less important, but still of interest to some benighted beings who know not a skiff from a dingey. The state of Ireland, the Czar's assassination, or the Presidential elections are comparatively insignificant of course, but still—

THE inauguration of General GARFIELD has passed, so far as we are able to judge, most auspiciously. The new President has evinced a disposition to satisfy so far

as in him lies, the reasonable men of both parties. In the difficult position of the negro suffrage question, his attitude towards the South was of course closely watched, although neither more or less could be expected from him than a general acknowledgment of the difficulties, and the expression of a hope that education will overcome the majority of them. This, with an unqualified endorsement of the suffrage itself is just what was expected. There is significance though in the educational remedy proposed, which we hope may bear good fruit.

ONE of the most charming accompaniments of election to the Presidential chair nowadays is the opportunity of helping one's friends. And it is astonishing how many friends a man has under such circumstances. General GARFIELD appears to be unusually fortunate in the number of those who from perfectly disinterested motives are anxious to assist in serving their country no matter in what capacity. We are reminded of the old story of the man who came to LINCOLN with the request for a Cabinet portfolio, and who after expressing his willingness to content himself with a Foreign Mission, or even a Government clerkship, eventually made a request for a left off suit of the President's, and went away happy in its possession. There is something of this he it said in other countries besides the United States. Not of course that in Canada we ever waste our time in besieging Minister's back-doors. Here even those who are most fitted for office shrink modestly into the background, and attend to their own business. At least so we have been told.

THE American papers are considerably exercised about an incident of the election. As soon as President GARFIELD had taken the oath prescribed by the constitution, he turned and kissed his mother. Some irreverent reporters saw matter for a funny paragraph or two. Several stern members of the constitution have felt it their duty to rebuke the paragraphers. Whether General GARFIELD kissed his mother or as may seem to some weak-minded individuals to be a matter of small consequence. As MARK TWAIN said of FRANKLIN's entry into Philadelphia with fifty cents in his pocket, there was really nothing in it. Almost any one might have done it. There is an objection however which might be taken by a casuist to a public exhibition of filial affection on an important occasion. The French have a proverb expressly composed with a view to such performances, *Il faut laver son linge sale en famille.* People who went to Washington to participate in the installation of a nation's chieftain might possibly object to being made participators in the rehearsal of a domestic tableau. But this is captious.

MR. N. F. DAVIN has a somewhat remarkable article in the current number of the *Canadian Monthly* on "Great Speeches." As a contemporary remarks, Mr. DAVIN is nothing unless he is thorough, but we confess that we were somewhat unprepared for the statement that in his opinion three or four of our leading statesmen would, if their lot had been cast in the British instead of the Canadian Parliament, have attained the position of Prime Minister! Three or four, mark you! And this in spite of the fact that during upwards of twenty years only two English statesmen have been deemed worthy of the post. We believe with Mr. DAVIN that it is far too much the fashion to decry home produce of whatever kind, home oratory among other things, and cordially endorse his appeal on behalf of our leading men to rank amongst the orators and statesmen of the world. But there is always danger in instituting too lofty a comparison. There are grounds outside of politics upon which Mr. DISRAELI and Sir JOHN MACDONALD, Mr. BLAKE and Mr. GLADSTONE, might be

fairly compared on their merits. When Mr. DAVIN suggests that Sir JOHN in Lord BEACONSFIELD's place would have been as great or a greater man, he forgets that had Mr. DISRAELI never been Prime Minister of England the world would none the less heard of the author of "Ixion" and "Coningsby," he forgets that, if Mr. GLADSTONE had never entered the political arena, scholars would have crowned the author of "Juventus Mundi." These are facts not theories, and we should do well to pause before we make rash assertions as to the comparative merits of England's greatest statesmen and our own. Once more though we would say, all honour to our debaters and orators for what they have done and are doing, rather than for what they might have done could the world be turned upside down to give them a better chance.

APART from this pardonable enthusiasm, which is perhaps the more pardonable in an advocate, Mr. DAVIN's article is written with all his customary vigour and withal bears the evidence of care, in spite of the apology with which it opens. The comparison of the relative lengths of the great speeches of the world is new to us at least, and might read a lesson to many of our modern speakers who believe that whatever may be the case with wit, brevity is certainly not the soul of oratory. Is there not a little danger though under this head, lest Mr. DAVIN's diatribe against the reading of speeches in the House, which we thoroughly endorse, should be confounded with an attack upon the almost necessary art of writing them. Necessary, because there is no other way of making a short speech do the duty of a long one. It is far easier to speak at length than to make a minimum of words convey the maximum of information. Mr. WILKINSON, a noted London preacher, once apologized for the length of his sermon, by saying that he really had not had time to shorten it; and the reason if not the excuse lies at the bottom of many a wearying stream of linked—anything but sweetness—long drawn out. Demosthenes, it is related, used to write his speeches out in full, and after putting them away for a few days, reduce them by revision to about one-third of their former length, while we are told of Virgil (whose verses possessed at least one great quality of good oratory, in the absence of one superfluous word) that he used to write two hundred lines every morning and reduce them by night to eight or ten. More things than soap are brought to perfection only by a judicious "boiling down," and to "boil down" judiciously requires of course the committing of the matter to paper in the first instance. Sermons, essays, poems, even be it said editorials, for the last of which the excuse of want of time is perhaps most allowable, all want pruning after first committing to paper, and few of them, very few of them get it. *Verbum sup.*

It is a difficult thing to make a rebellion without breaking the law. The *London Daily News* compares Mr. PARNELL's action at the present time to the attempts of one THOMAS FLAMMOCK, whose efforts at law-abiding revolution are related in Lord BACON's History of Henry VII. But FLAMMOCK found the task too much for him and expiated his fault after the sanguinary fashion of those days. We do not look to see Mr. PARNELL either beheaded or hanged, but unless we mistake the signs of the times he is putting his head into the lion's mouth. Hitherto he has been fortunate in law as in Parliament in evading the consequences of what have seemed to many to be illegal and unparliamentary actions. But in his late counsel to the farmers of Clara, he has shown that if he is indifferent to his own fate, he is anxious not to mislead his followers. Subsequently to advising evicted tenants to plough up their land so as to render it useless to the now-comers, he feels compelled to re-advise them, that such action would bring them within the provisions of the cruel and unjust laws of

their oppressors. Mr. PARNELL should take a lesson for himself from his misadventure. It is probable that his withdrawal of his former advice will have decided Government to leave him alone in the matter, but it is just as certain that the giving of such advice did in fact bring Mr. PARNELL within the reach of the cruel and oppressive legislation which he so denounces, and we cannot but think that he is well out of it this time.

THE first step towards a satisfactory settlement of the Cape difficulty has been reached by the truce agreed to between the Boers and Sir EVELYN WOOD. The report of the latter's defeat and death seems to have been totally without foundation, and we may hope for good results from a more pacific policy towards a people who have at least shown us that they can be worthy antagonists in the field, and, therefore, in all probability, staunch friends in time of peace. Meanwhile the prospects of a second Ashantee campaign seem to promise anything but a easy time for the Home Government.

AN amusing termination of a duel is that of which we are reminded amongst the latest theatrical news from Paris. DARCIER, the singer, was playing in a melodrama at Belleville, where it fell to his lot to shoot the villain of the play in a duel. Unfortunately for the villain the property man had provided DARCIER with a loaded pistol. One would have thought the villain was the party most injured by this inadvertence as he received DARCIER's bullet (in what part of the person is not specified). However the hero apparently thought himself equally aggrieved, and proceeded to inflict summary punishment upon the property man. The manager came out in defence of his property, or his man, or his property man, the story is not quite accurate in its details, but DARCIER "cared for none of these things," and kicked the manager *à boot.* The not unnatural result of this mistaken freedom was the request of the latter for an early interview on the *Bois de Boulogne.* DARCIER, who had studied the art of fencing under M. BOULET, chose this gentleman as his second, but contrary to his natural expectations, the fencing master had scruples as to allowing his pupil to fight with swords, alleging that the affair might occasion him, BOULET, the inconvenience of an introduction to the Bureau of the *Police Correctionnel.* But the singer was obstinate, and so BOULET, with the swords under his arm, marched off to confer with the other seconds. It is *de rigueur* with principals not to speak to each other under these circumstances, but after waiting a considerable time, no seconds re-appeared. "Sir," at length inquired DARCIER, "where are your seconds?" "If you come to that sir," replied the manager, "where are yours?" Investigation on the part of the principals disclosed the fact that their friends had thought better of the whole thing, and vanished, carrying with them the munitions of war in the shape of the swords. Disappointed of shedding each other's blood, the principals came to the conclusion that "duelling is a barbarous practice," and returned home arm in arm, the best of friends.

AMUSEMENTS.

The pupils of Mr. H. J. Lyell gave a performance on Tuesday night in the Mechanics' Hall, which was well attended, and, like all similar entertainments, thoroughly appreciated by an audience naturally prejudiced in favour of the performers. It was, however, a most creditable affair. The old farce of "Slasher and Trasher," which opened the evening, lost none of its funniness by reason of some incidents not included in the original "stage plot." But the piece of the evening was a clever adaptation of the "Forty Thieves" to an operatic sketch, for which we were indebted to the Rev. F. English, who presided at the piano. The dresses were resplendent, and the "gallant forty" have seldom appeared to better advantage.

Next week we are to have the concert of the Philharmonic Society, of which I hope to send you a full account. MUSICUS.