

If there is one winter sport of our country that we were wont to consider firmly fixed in the affections of Canadians it is tobogganing, but even that, it seems, is to be given up. Following on the refusal of Montreal to patronize the sport, it is announced that there will be little or no tobogganing in Ottawa this winter. The two most important clubs have decided not to open slides, and one of the smaller clubs will meet shortly to discuss the question of disbanding. What the reason of this revulsion of feeling is we do not know. A very few years ago tobogganing was celebrated in song and verse as the most exhilarating, exciting sport imaginable, and now nobody wants to take part in it. It has had its day.

A recent number of the *Toronto Week* contains a sketch of the life of Archbishop O'Brien, written by the Honorable I. G. Power of Halifax. It gives a comprehensive summary of the many good works initiated and carried to completion by His Grace, and also a list of his various literary achievements, which includes a drama in blank verse, an historical romance, a didactic poem, dealing with grave philosophical and theological questions, and several purely theological works. The *Week* has already published biographies of thirty-two prominent Canadians, in which several Maritime Province men are included. Of the Nova Scotians who have figured therein we notice the names of Principal Grant, Sir J. William Dawson and Hon. W. S. Fielding. These sketches contain valuable and interesting information about prominent men, and would, doubtless, if collected and published in book form, find a place in many libraries, and be a notable addition to the history and literature of Canada.

We have been accustomed to regard Brazil as far behind her lively neighbor Argentina in the construction of railways, but the fact is that Brazil deserves a great deal more credit than she gets for this kind of enterprise. The topographical features of the country are such as to make the construction of railways a much more difficult piece of work than it is in Argentina, and it is to the credit of Brazil that not only has she completed her roads through the coast region and made gateways from the sea to the interior, but she is constructing thousands of miles of railways to the north, west and south, and this without the aid of London financiers, which Argentina so readily took advantage of, to the present distress of the money market. Brazil's great enterprises are being carried out by native capital, engineers and contractors. The Mogyana Railway is to be the great central line of the country. It has now nearly reached the capital of the State of Goyaz, and will be rapidly extended to distant Cuyaba, a thousand miles from Rio de Janeiro. After their hard beginning in railroad work the Brazilians think they are having an easy time of it, for the table-land railways do not cost more than \$25,000 a mile, as against from \$125,000 to \$160,000 per mile on the coast. It is expected that this opening of the country by the extension of railroads will be followed by large immigration, and an era of great prosperity is looked forward to.

One of the nasty things most people do very often is giving the lick that is a necessary preliminary to the sticking of an envelope or a stamp. The flavor of the mucilage or gum is not always pleasant, and in these days of microbes and bacilli might be justly considered dangerous to apply the tongue to. There are a few ways of getting rid of the operation. One is, get the most obliging person near you to do it, but this is at best a mean proceeding, and only gives temporary relief. The use of a damp sponge is feasible, and if we once got in the habit of using it we would not on any account return to the present mode. When a lick must be given, the best way is to moisten the edge of the envelope that has no gum on it, and then close the gummed flap down upon it. In the case of the stamp the same thing can be done, and more easily. Just moisten the corner of the envelope and place the stamp on the wet spot and you will be spared the nauseous flavor of the mucilage. In this connection we notice that Postmaster-General Wanamaker, of the United States, will shortly issue postage stamps with mucilage of assorted flavors, including lemon, vanilla, strawberry, pineapple and sassafras, but whether this is true, or whether an extra charge is to be made for the flavor, we know not. No such little pleasantries will be perpetrated in Canada we feel sure. If we can only manage to get the letter rate reduced to two cents we shall be satisfied.

The enquiry sent out by Sir John Thompson, Minister of Justice, as to the advisability of abolishing the time-honored institution of the Grand Jury, has elicited much comment. The sweeping nature of the change proposed demands the fullest discussion, and will probably receive it, for every citizen is concerned in the matter. The functions of the Grand Jury, when properly and conscientiously performed, appear to us to hold a very important place in the administration of justice, but the question now being mooted is whether or not these functions can be better discharged by some other means, and if so, what? We cannot tell what the tenor of the answers of the judges and attorney-generals may be, but it is thought that many of them are in favor of retaining the ancient institution. If the Grand Jury has outlived its usefulness, and many people think it has, it should be abolished, and some method of discharging its duties more in keeping with the spirit of the times substituted for it. The fact that in Nova Scotia there has not been a full Grand Jury of twenty-three men impanelled for some years points to the conclusion that its decadence is far advanced. We repeat that where the duties are conscientiously performed according to law we believe in the retention of the Grand Jury, but the temptation and the opportunities for neglect of duty are so great, and have been apparently so taken advantage of, that we are inclined to side with those who would consign it to the limbo of things that have passed away. The question, however, is not to be settled without serious consideration on the part of those who are best calculated to deal with the matter.

Indian Rajahs must be a drug upon the matrimonial market, if we judge by the following advertisements from an Indian paper:—"A Rajah of Bengal Province, having an estate valued 15,000,000 rs., the yearly income of which is 99,000 rs after paying the Government revenue, wishes to correspond with a respectable European young lady in the view of matrimony. (Enclose photograph, which will be returned, and address, &c.)" "A respectable native gentleman, with a large estate of 13,000,000 rs., wishes to get married to a respectable European young lady. (Enclose address and photographs, which will be returned, to the manager, &c., for submission to advertiser.) The utmost secrecy assured."

Arabi Pasha has seldom been heard of lately. The *Daily News* correspondent, however, writing on October 7, says: In consequence of the frequent representations that have been made to the British Government regarding the unsuitability of the climate of Ceylon for the Egyptian exiles, instructions were received from home last week requesting the appointment of a medical board to report on the pashas. Accordingly a board, consisting of Dr. Kynsey, (principal civil medical officer,) Brigade Surgeon Robinson and Dr. Macdonald, examined all the seven exiles. The result of this medical examination of course will not be known until the home government has received the board's report.

Major-General Ivor John Caradoc Herbert, C.B., the new Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Militia, arrived at Ottawa on the 4th inst, accompanied by his wife, Hon. Mrs. Herbert, and two children. General Herbert while in Halifax was called upon by a number of military friends, and afterwards dined with General Sir John Ross. The new Commander-in-Chief is a fine soldierly-looking man, over six feet tall and generally of a pleasing appearance. He is still under forty years of age. General Herbert is a Colonel of the Grenadier Guards, his last appointment being at St. Petersburg as military attache, an experience that will probably be useful to him now, as the climate of Russia is somewhat similar to that of Canada. The active service seen by General Herbert consists of the campaign against Arabi Pasha, during which he took part in the battle of Tel el Kebir, where he was brigade major of the first brigade in division No. 1, in honor of which he wears a medal with a clasp, and has the fourth class of the Turkish medjidie. He also took part in the Sudan expedition for the relief of Gordon in 1884, and was in the action at Abu Klea. General Herbert comes of ancient family, his lineage being traced by Burke to Herbert Fitzherbert, son and heir of Adela, a daughter of William the Conqueror. Hon. Mrs. Herbert is a daughter of Lord Londesborough. After the unpleasantness attending the departure of General Middleton and the causes that led to it, it is satisfactory to find a feeling of cordiality prevailing in favor of the new commander. He has vast opportunities for usefulness before him, and we trust that in stepping into General Middleton's shoes he may win the confidence and respect of the citizen soldiers of the Dominion.

The Indian situation in the United States is critical. It appears that for over a year the religious craze that has taken hold of the Indians has been going on. They seem to have, like the Jews of old, a belief in a Messiah, who will restore to them their supremacy and bring back the buffaloes. With this belief, in which there is much pathos, they are keeping up a religious dance, and declare that they will shoot the soldiers if they attempt to stop them. "Torn Billy," one of the minor chiefs, says: "We do not want to fight, but this is our church; it is just the same as the white man's church, except that we don't pass around the hat." The Indians are cold and hungry, and it is little wonder that they become hostile. Once the most prosperous of all the tribes, the Sioux and Cheyennes, which are at the head of the present trouble, can now scarcely get a living. Corralled in reservations, the scanty rations they receive from the Government do not suffice them, and as there are no more buffaloes for them to hunt, they suffer with hunger. The Indians certainly committed terrible outrages during the last outbreak, and their inhumanity to white prisoners is well known; but, looking at affairs from the Indian point of view, we can scarcely wonder at it. Before the whites killed the buffaloes and took possession of the red man's home he lived in savage luxury, that is, he had plenty to eat and skins to make tepees of. When after the white man came in and possessed the land, and hunger and want overtook the former owners, it was but natural that they should resent it as their savage instincts dictated. Now that trouble is again imminent, the horrors of the last war are brought back to mind. It is to be hoped that another outbreak may mercifully be prevented, for the results would be serious to the white settlers. Many of the Indians have retreated to the Bad Lands, a region little known by the whites, but which the Indians know how to utilize as a place of hiding from which they may sally forth to make war. So far nothing serious has occurred, but the ghost dances are being kept up. These dances are exhausting exercises, but if the Indians survive the exertion the dances will at least assist in keeping them warm. Settlers are fleeing to the towns and cities for safety. The Indians are well armed and have quantities of ammunition, so that they will be dangerous foes to meet. The Sioux are about 43,000 strong, out of a total Indian population of about a quarter of a million, and they are the bravest and most determined of all. One pathetic thing about the Messiah craze is that the Indians say if they die now they will escape the winter, and will not be cold or hungry, and in the spring there will be a resurrection of all the Indian dead. Surely a people who can have such a pure and simple faith might be made something more of than they are at present. If the Indians are treated well they will give little trouble.