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#### NOTICE.

The public will please beware of a smooth-faced young man calling himself T. Dodd, as we understand from letters in our possession, that he has been canvassing for the 'Canadian Illustrated News.' Dodd canvassed a few days for us in Toronto, and not liking the gentleman's manner of doing business we discharged him. Without our knowledge or consent he has taken money from people in the country, representing himself sometimes as an agent, and at other times proprietor of the 'Canadian Illustrated News.'

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W. A. FERGUSON.

Hamilton, April 7th, 1863.

## THE CANADIAN Illustrated News.

HAMILTON, APRIL 18, 1863.

### OUR PUBLIC ROADS.

The press has at various times given admission to complaints about the condition of those roads for the privilege of travelling on which the public is called to pay tolls, yet the evil is growing instead of diminishing, and complaints grow more and more loud. As these roads form the principal lines of communication in the most settled parts of the Province, the public cannot avoid them, but are compelled to travel on them in whatever state they may be. These roads were originally built by the Province at a very heavy expense, and were afterwards sold by the government to joint stock companies at a price far below their cost. The condition of this sale was, that the roads should be kept in repair and that the companies should take a certain amount of toll to reimburse themselves. The Act which regulates this matter is like many other of our Provincial statutes, very loosely worded, and its provisions very inadequate to secure the accomplishment of the object in view.

When a road can be certified by twelve freeholders to be so out of repair that it retards travel and is dangerous to the traveller, then, and not until then, a petition may be presented to the County Judge, praying him to call upon the County Engineer to examine the road, and if it is as represented in the petition, to notify the company that it must be repaired within a given period, and if this is not done the said Engineer may warn the company not to collect tolls until the repairs are completed. Attempts have been made to get this provision of the act amended, and to authorize the Engineer to put a stop to the collection of tolls immediately the road is in bad condition, as the company would then be compelled to keep the road in good repair.

This reasonable proposition could not be carried through Parliament, owing to the political influence exercised by the Road Companies. The owners of these roads show a great want of sagacity in allowing them to get so out of repair as is frequently the case, for it is much more expensive to renew a macadamized road than to keep it in good condition. The principle on which this kind of road is constructed is, that its shape should be such that all water should run off its surface into ditches at the side, and not permeate the structure of the road; every rut, therefore, or hollow in which water can lodge and gradually soak into the road, injures it by keeping it soft, and every vehicle which passes over it in that state cuts more and more deeply into it, and the mischief rapidly increases. In Europe the plan adopted for keeping macadamized roads in repair keeps in view the principle in which they are constructed. No ruts are allowed to form, and no hollow or inequalities to remain after they are discovered by the lodging of water in them, but immediately stone is laid in them, perhaps only one or two shovelful, broken fine, which is speedily incorporated with the road, and prevents the injurious effect which a pool of water, ever so shallow, would produce. The comfort to be travelling public is very great, as you

have only small patches of fresh broken stone to pass over instead of miles continuously, after having for months ground and jolted through the same distance of ruts.

The large size of the broken stone laid on the roads in this neighborhood is another reason why they get so speedily out of repair. When the stone is broken to a proper size, (that is, will pass in any direction through a two inch ring,) the pressure of loads passing over it packs it, but when it is too large the wheels spread the pieces out on each side, thus forming the commencement of a rut.

Another cause of the bad condition of our roads, is the practice of carrying very heavy loads on wheels with narrow tires.—It is not an uncommon occurrence to see a string of eight or ten waggons loaded with lumber or fire-wood, each weighing from two to three tons, the tires of the wheels only two inches wide, and cutting into the wet road, and making the ruts deeper as the teams follow each other. The weight of draft would be less to the horses, and not only less injurious but perhaps beneficial, if tires four inches wide were used, as instead of cutting into the road they would compress it and act in some measure as rollers. The law as it is at present, enables the road companies to guard against this evil, as they can charge a half-penny on every 100 lbs over two tons, (including the weight of the waggon,) see Sec. 75, Chap. 49, Consolidated Statutes U. C. By charging the extra toll in all cases where the tire is narrow, and remitting it where wide (say four inches,) the use of narrow tire would be soon abandoned by the teamsters from saw-mills, at all events, and it is their loads which do the most injury to the roads, as they often reach as high as three tons and a half, including the waggon.

Section 76 enacts that on loads carrying masts, spars, square or round timber, 50 cents extra shall be charged over two tons, if the wheels have five inch tires, and one dollar if under that width. How these loads could be weighed however, considering their length, it is difficult to understand. There is one part of the law regarding these Companies which we believe has never been enforced. It is enacted Section 114, That accounts shall be rendered annually in January to the Municipality through which the road passes, giving an account of the Revenue, cost of repairs, dividends, &c., for the past year, and Sections 115 and 116 require proper books to be kept by these Companies, and gives the Municipality authority to appoint persons to examine such accounts, and Section 117 requires the company to afford information to the person appointed for the purpose; and lastly, Sections 118 and 119 entitle the Municipality to purchase the road at the end of twenty-one years at the then current value of the stock, and if that is disputed, to have arbitrators appointed to decide that value. If these enactments were enforced by the Municipal Authorities, we should have the satisfaction of knowing what is expended on these roads, and how much the companies make, while the roads are not paid for, and we believe also that this supervision would wake up the proprietors, and compel them to keep the roads in better order.

**BRAZILIAN FORESTS.**—When we look at the beautiful rosewoods, I think we have hardly begun to see the specimens of the Brazilian forests. Ere long the railroads into the interior, which have been chartered, will bring to the seacoast those giants of the forest. I have been surprised, again and again, in looking at those beautiful trees, which are of the 'sensitive plant' character. When the sun goes down they fold their leaves and slumber, and are not aroused until by the morning sun and singing birds. I observed in some portions of the interior that rosewood was used for very common purposes. In Christian ox-carts the spokes would be made of rosewood. And I use the term Christian ox-carts in distinction from Roman ox-carts, where the axle and wheel turned together. Rosewood is used in carts made like our own. The teeth of cog wheels are often made of it. A gentleman showed me in his sugar-house a beam nearly forty feet in length, and three or four in diameter, which he told me was a violet-colored rosewood. He took me then to his pig-pen, and—would you believe it, ladies?—his pig-pen was made out of rose-wood! I would not have you understand that it looked like the legs of a piano-forte. Nothing of the kind; for when left rough and exposed to the weather, it becomes as plebeian in its appearance as our own aristocrat, the black walnut of the Mississippi. When I returned, I brought with me a box of mosaic, made up of perhaps a hundred pieces of Brazilian wood, from the purest white to ebony black.—J. O. Fletcher.

### Summary of News.

#### CANADIAN.

**CANADIAN FLAX** is now worth in England £30 sterling a ton. Here is a chance for our farmers.

**THE REV. MR. CAUCHEY** is holding a series of successful meetings in the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Quebec.

**THE bill to prevent the execution of the death penalty in public** passed the Lower House on Wednesday by a vote of 61 to 51. It has yet to pass the Upper House.

**THE Kingston News** states that, 'at a meeting of the Kingston Mechanics' Division No. 374, held on Monday evening last, at the Sons of Temperance Hall, the Hon. John A. Macdonald was unanimously elected Worthy Patriarch of the Division for the next term of office. The hon. gentleman will be installed into office on Saturday evening next.'

**THE proclamation reimposing tolls on the canals is prepared, and will be now issued.** On the Welland canal there will be no alteration in the tariff of charges imposed in 1859, except in the article of wheat, which will be reduced 5 cent; per ton. On the St. Lawrence canals the rates will be equalized up and down, and a new classification made. As compared with the tariff of 1859, there will be an average reduction in rates of about twenty per cent.

**SUFFERING AMONGST CATTLE.**—A Napanee paper states that in the northern parts of that and the adjoining counties great suffering is being experienced amongst all kinds of cattle, in consequence of the want of fodder. Hundreds of cattle have already died of starvation, and thousands are so weak that if winter weather continues much longer they must perish, as there is no feed left to sustain them.

**A BILL** has been introduced into the Assembly which proposes to give municipalities absolute power to prohibit the liquor traffic, and to enable two or more adjoining municipalities to come to a mutual agreement to prohibit, in which case neither is to have power to repeal without the consent of the other. It also makes tavern-keepers responsible for the consequences, if they sell to a drunkard after his friends have forbidden them to do so. Its provisions for punishing offenders seem to be quite sufficient.

#### AMERICAN.

It is stated that the choice of the Republican party for President in 1864 lies between Secretaries Seward and Chase, now of President Lincoln's cabinet.

**THE export of American specie** since July 1st, amounts to \$44,326,000, being an increase of \$35,793,000 over the corresponding period of last year.

**DURING the first three weeks of January** the sum of \$4,376,780 in gold dust was shipped from San Francisco, of which nearly \$3,000,000 were sent to England.

It is said that the recent order in regard to the granting of passports to foreign travelers, by the State Department, will be applied to those who go to Canada from the States which have not filled their quota under the last call for troops. New York is among the delinquents. If the law is rigidly enforced, citizens of this State, liable to draft, cannot go to Canada without executing a bond to furnish a substitute, or pay three hundred dollars in case he is drafted in his absence.

**AN unsuccessful attempt** was made upon the Charleston forts on the 7th instant, by the Federal iron-clads. The engagement is described as 'terrific.' The monitors were hit from fifty to sixty times each, except the Keokuk, which received about ninety shots, and was penetrated at the water-mark no less than nineteen times. She was kept afloat till next morning, when she sunk on the bar, her colors flying and all on board saved. The Ironsides was hit about sixty times, but not damaged. There are eleven large holes in the side of Fort Sumter, apparently running through the wall. The entire firing amounted to only one hundred and fifty rounds. Our entire casualties, says the New York Tribune, amounted to thirteen, of whom but two or three were killed.

**THE New York Herald's account** says a rumor was in circulation, both at Port Royal and at Charleston bar, that our troops were rapidly gaining the rear of the city of Charleston.

It is said, by people from Dixie, that there is a large quantity of cotton hidden away by the country people, and as soon as the Government gets possession, much of the cotton which has been reported burned by the rebel Government, will come forth.

**THE capture of the whole Federal garrison** at Washington, N. C., is reported,—2,000 in number, including sick and wounded.

It is stated that an engagement near Suffolk is not improbable, and the result of the Confederates in such an event is regarded as certain.

#### EUROPEAN.

**LONDON, April 2d.**—Parliament is not in session, and political news generally unimportant.

It is reported that the Polish insurgent leaders are disbanding their forces and giving up the contest.

**THE Cunard Steamship Company** had announced their intention of running fortnightly an independent line of screw steamships to New York, commencing on the 16th instant.

**THE Great Ship Company** had entered a protest with the British Postmaster General against the renewal of the subsidy to the Galway Line of steamers.

**THE Greeks** seem at length to be in a fair way of getting a King. The National Assembly have elected Prince William of Denmark, or as he is better known, Prince William of Glucksburg, brother of the Princess of Wales, to the vacant throne. He will, probably, accept it.

**THE London Morning Post** regards the position of affairs as hopeful for the Confederates at home and abroad, and candidly expresses the hope that before a year their struggle will be crowned with success. It had been positively denied that the Confederates intended to seek any further loan in Europe.

**THE London Times** says, the latest American advices make it evident that the choice henceforth for the South is between victory and extermination, and for the North between peace and ruin.

**BRAIN WORK.**—No man after middle age, it he hopes to keep his mind clear, should think of working his brain after dinner, a season which should be given up to enjoyment. The immediate result of post-prandial labor is always inferior to that produced by the vigorous brain of the morning. When mental labor has become a habit, however, we know how weak are the words of warning to make a sufferer desist; and we are reminded of the answer made by Sir Walter Scott to his physicians, who in his last illness foresaw that his mind would break down unless he desisted from brain-work. "As for bidding me not work," said he, sadly, "Molly might as well put the kettle on the fire, and then say, 'Now don't boil.'" It must not be supposed, that we wish to depreciate even severe mental labor; on the contrary, a well organized brain demands exercise, and like the blacksmith's arms, flourishes on it. We believe that pleasurable productive brain-work can be carried on to an almost limitless extent without injury. A poet in the full swing of his fancy, a philosopher working out some scheme for the benefit of humanity, refreshes rather than weakens his brain. It will be found that the great majority of those who have gained high honors in our universities have also distinguished themselves greatly in after-life. It is the hard thankless taskwork which tears and frets the fine gray matter of the cerebrum; it is the strain and anxiety which accompanies the working-out of great monetary transactions which produces that silent and terrible *ramollissement* which gradually saps the mind of the strong man, and reduces him to the condition of an imbecile.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

**GHOSTS.**—The *Lancet* states that there has lately been exhibited in London, an admirable illustration of what science can do when it condescends to take the field against Imposture. It forms the subject of a lecture at the Polytechnic Institution, in the course of which is displayed a most ingenious contrivance wherewith any amount of very highly-finished ghosts can be procured to order. These Mr. Pepper, the lecturer, raises by the aid of strong light, a mirror, a few leuses, and some smoke. Even an audience such as in Aesop's time preferred the imitation of a pig to the genuine squeak of a pinched porker, could not refuse the merit of superior ghost-making to the scientific device at the "Polytechnic," which will do more to upset the lingering faith in the foolish and wicked superstitions about ghosts than a considerable amount of reasoning or argument.

Joseph Lyght, King street, Hamilton, has received the "Scientific American" for the present week.