Huron Signal.

WEEKLY EDITION.

W.T. COX, Editor and Proprietor. | The Greatest Possible Good to the Greatest Possible Number."

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Huron Signal.

GODERICH. C. W., OCT. 21, 1864

THE QUEBEC CONVENTION.

The results thus far achieved by the delegates assembled are not very important, excepting, of course, the rumored decision with regard to the composition of the Upper House. It has been determined, we understand, that the members of the Legislative Council shall be appointed by the Crown instead of being elected by the people, as at present. This change will, no doubt, bring about an important modification in the *personnel* of the Lords, but it is thought the functions of that august body will remain pretty much as before. The great struggle, and, we apprehend, the principal difficulty in the way of the Convention will be the satisfactory settlement upon which the various local legislatures are to be based. The whole country will look eagerly forward to see whether ample provision has been made for the practical working of the representation principle — whether any change is made in the franchise, (which we certainly think there is room for)—whether we are to receive intact a wholesome system of responsible government, and whether the reception of the North West Territories on favorable terms is provided for. As the Conference sits with closed doors, we shall have nothing but the crudest rumors to depend upon until the whole system is definitively arranged, provided nevertheless, no unforseen hitch takes place to nullify all that has been done and render further action impossible.

Grave as are the responsibilities resting upon the delegates, we see that those learned and wise ones are *human*, like the rest of us. They are not too far uplifted above the common herd to appreciate the good things of life. They know how to provide for the creation of lords temporal and also what should be done with boiled turkey and oyster sauce—the Intercolonial railway is discussed, and so are roast duck and deviled kidneys—the interests of our French Canadian brethren are not discarded, neither, we are wicked enough to hint, are certain cases of the (supposed) French ambrosia, yclept Champagne. In other words, the delegates are undergoing a process of eating, drinking and being merry. Well, why not? Man is a social animal—*being*, we mean, and if, in every-day life, friendships are formed and cemented across a well-laden table, why should not feasting and dancing on a large scale tend to "soften the clay," out of which a great nation is to be formed? The delegates, before returning home, are expected to visit Montreal, Kingston and Toronto. It will be too bad if they see nothing of our vast inland seas more than the little duck pond in front of Toronto. We wonder if they would not accept an invitation from that happy and most harmonious family, the Town Council, to pay Goderich a visit. Seriously, the sea-board and Central Canada men would be delighted if they could be induced to spend half a day up here, and we should be happy to shake hands with them, and point out the availability of Goderich as a naval station, should such a luxury be required. Will Councillor Leonard think the matter over and make a move at next meeting?

LATEST FROM QUEBEC.

THE CONFEDERATION CONFERENCE.

(*By Special Telegraph to the Globe.*)

QUEBEC, Oct. 18.

The Conference met this morning at 10 o'clock, sat until two, met again at half-past seven, and is still sitting while I write. Notwithstanding the strict secresy preserved, there seems no doubt that the last few days have been entirely confined to the consideration of the best mode of providing members for the Upper House. From the earnest discussions everywhere heard on the subject and judging from the tone of conversation, there are few delegates in favor of the election of members of the Legislative Council by the people. This is not surprising. Canada and Prince Edward Island are the only colonies in which the Council is elected. In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland, members of the Legislative Council are nominated by the Crown. The present Ministry of Prince Edward Island is, on the whole, Conservative. It may be, too, that the Conservative element in the Canadian Cabinet see little to admire in the change made a few years ago by their predecessors. The expense of contesting a division is enormous, and yearly increasing. The consequence is that there is great difficulty in getting fit candidates, and the tendency to seek corrupt aid from the Administration of the day is increased. Then there is ever present a fear that the whole machinery of the Government will be brought to a dead-lock by a collision between the two Houses, both elective and both equally representing the people; but the Upper House, owing to its constitution, possesses advantages denied to the lower branch. Considering then, the actual constitution of the Council in the several Provinces, the arguments against elective lords, and the temper manifested by the delegates, I think I am safe in saying that if the question has been brought to a vote, the Conference decided against an elective House as formed in Canada. The matter to Upper Canada is not so so important as may at first appear. In representation by population in the Assembly, she has her gurrantee. Lower Canada seeks in the Council to place a barrier against aggression by the West. It is thus a matter less important to us than to the French. Why should we not then let Lower Canada decide the question, and make her defensive powers as strong as she likes, so long as those powers are not converted into weapons of offence against ourselves? If she should think that the best made whereby to effect this will be to vest the nominations of members of the Legislative Council in the Crown, it would be no great stretch of liberality on our part to accord it to her.

The Speaker of the Upper House gives a great ball on Wednesday. The delegates have been invited, but in consequence of the necessity they feel themselves under of sticking closely to business they have declined. Their ladies, however, will attend. There is also some talk of a ball to be given by the Governor General. The bachelors of Quebec have also issued invitations for a ball on Friday at the Parliament House.

It is rumored that a Commission is about being issued to inquire into the Essex frauds at last election. Mr. David B. Read, it is reported, will be the Commissioner.

QUEBEC, Oct. 19.

The debate on representation in the Confederate legislature was continued to-day. There seems to be no difficulty apprehended with regard to it.

The Conference is likely to last longer than this week. Members, not knowing when they can get away, cannot name a time for acceptance of invitations to entertainments in the different places.

The Newfoundland delegates will not leave before the Conference is over. Hon Mr. Mitchell, of New Brunswick, left to-night.—[Leader.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The *Globe's* Quebec correspondent says: "I see it announced in several papers, "well-known for their reliability when "points of the kind are involved, that the "delegates generally accord the leading "position in the Convention to Messrs. "J. A. McDonald and Galt. The assertion is quite true. In fact, many of the "gentlemen heretofore accredited with "the possession of some 'Hairs,' are "nowhere. Sir E. P. Tache, Attorney-"General Cartier, Hon. G. Brown, Hon. "W. McDougall, and the Hon. Alex. "Campbell, are especial sufferers. It was "at one time seriously contemplated by "the delegates from the Lower Provinces "to turn them out of the Convention as "useless lumber. Courtesy to the Ca-"nadian people alone restained them."—We may well enquire what is meant by this extraordinary statement. Was the *Leader's* telegram received at the *Globe* office by mistake, or was the *Globe's* correspondent laboring under a severe headache caused by eating two much roast beef, at Mr. Tesser's dinner, when the paragraph was penned. An announcement in the *Globe* that Hon Geo. Brown was nearly kicked out of the Convention as useless lumber! What is the world coming to?

THE WAR.

While General Grant sits before Richmond thinking over the best means of advancing the election of his master, the Confederates are active at all points. It now appears that Sherman is pretty thoroughly cut off from his communications, and if Hood plays his cards well, the conqueror of Atlanta may suffer a disaster unheard of in the history of the war. Guerillas are at work in Missouri, Kentucky, Georgia, &c., cutting railways, capturing trains and playing the mischief generally. Gen. Sheridan still carries on his "glorious" work of devastating the Valleys of Virginia. In another column we give a detailed account of his terrible proceedings. And has war come to this, in a land that professes to enjoy the blessings of Christianity? Must the heart of humanity be compelled to bleed over cruelties such as red savages were alone thought capable of inflicting upon defenceless women and children?

The anxiety concerning the steamer *Roanoke* increased. It is confidently asserted that she has been captured by rebel passengers.

BURLINGTON, VT., Oct. 19.—A party of seventy-five armed men rode into St. Albans this afternoon and robbed the three banks there of $150,000. It is supposed they were Southerners from the border of Canada. Five citizens were shot—one, it is thought, fatally. Having accomplished their object, the band left immediately for Canada.

NEW YORK, Oct. 9.—The gold market is weak, the effect of the late extreme fluctuations, by which the "bears" and the "bulls" have successively become losers. The price opened at 210¼, sold as low as 207¼, and rose again to 209¼.

The *Commercial's* Washington special says:—Gen. Sheridan's operations have not ceased in the valley. He was still engaged in carrying out General Grant's order to render the country untenable for a rebel force.

The total number of emigrants arrived at New York this year, up to the 21st, amounted to 146,825.

From Mexico.

New York, Oct, 19th.—By the steamer Columbia we have Havana dates to the 15th. The revolution in Venezuela, so far as the States of Arigo and Guarico are concerned, is at an end—loyal citizens having driven the rebels out. The State of Guaxamas still holds cut, demanding to be recognized as an independent power. No news of interest has been received from San Domingo. The str. Florida arrived at Narcisse with two million francs, 1,500,000 for the French government—the first fruits of the invasion of Mexico.

San Francisco, Oct. 18.—The U. S. iron war steamer Wateree has arrived from Ocapulco; and the U S war steamer Shubrick, from Port Angelos. The Wateree relieves the Saranac as guardian of our harbour, and the latter vessel goes at once to Mazattan, to look after American interests on the Mexican coast. Business dull. Legal tenders, 49 cents.

THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE.—We have to thank Messrs. Chewett & Co., of Toronto, for the first number of this really excellent claimant upon popular favor. It is published in London, Eng., and edited by Thomas Guthrie, D. D., whose name alone is a guarantee for the successful carrying out of the platform laid down. The intention is to render this well-printed and elegantly-illustrated book a welcome visitor in every Christian family, a position to which its comprehensive list of contents and hearty catholicity of tone fully entitle it. We cordially recommend it to those of our readers who feel able to spend a few cents' monthly for the intellectual and moral benefit of their several families. Mr. Moorhouse has it for sale and will receive it regularly from month to month. Call for a copy before the supply is exhausted.

DUNGANNON.

The Ashfield and Wawanosh Agricultural Society held its Fall Exhibiton in the Village of Dungannon, on Wednesday the 12th inst. Although the morning was rather unfavorable the attendance was good. The Judges, Messrs. Salkeld, Houstin and Wilson, entered upon their duties about eleven o'clock.—The successful competitors were as follows—

For Stock—Best mare and foal, R Wilson, 2nd John Savage, 3rd Thos Anderson; best two years old filly, Thos Pentland, 2nd Wm Mallough; best two years old gelding, Thos ——; best milch cow, Wm Young, 2nd T Anderson, 3rd Wm Young; best heifer, Wm Young, 2nd do; best bull, Wm Young, 2nd P Carroll, 3rd Wm Mallough.

Best ram, John Savage, 2nd Wm Durnian; best year old ram, P Carroll, 2nd Wm Mallough; best ram lamb, P Carroll, 2nd Robt Wilson; best pair ewes; J Savage, 2nd do; best ewe lambs, Wm Young, 2nd P Carroll.

Best boar, Anthony Black, 2nd R Wilson; best sow, John Savage, 2nd R Wilson.

Grain—Best fall wheat, Wm Durnian, 2nd D. McIlwain, 3rd John Savage; best spring wheat, D McIlwain, 2nd John Pentland; best oats, P Carroll, 2nd D McIlwain; best peas, P Carroll, 2nd D McIlwain; best barley, D McIlwain 2nd J Savage; best butter, Mrs J Pentland, 2nd Mrs W Young, 3rd Mrs A Green; best cheese, Mrs A Green, 2nd Mrs T Anderson; best potatoes, Wm Mallough, 2nd Jas McKnight; best onions, Jas McKnight, 2nd Rev Mr Barr, best fulleloth, R Treleaven, 2nd W Mallough; best flannel, Thos Pentland, 2nd W Young; best union flannel, Wm Fowler, 2nd R Wilson; best blankets, T Anderson, 2nd Jas McKnight; best quilt, Mrs Anderson, 2nd Miss Fowler; best mitts, Mrs Anderson, 2nd Mrs Wilson; best set harness, H Bickle.

STANLEY FALL SHOW.

The fall Show of the Stanley Branch Agricultural Society took place in the Village of Varna, on Wednesday the 5th inst., when the various prizes were distributed as follows, viz:—

Brood mare and foal, John McQueen, 2nd Thos Wells; two years old filly, Wm Harbison, 2nd John Cochrane; two years old gelding, John McQueen, 2nd Jas Forrest; one yr old gelding, John Reid, 2nd John Reid; yearling filly, Duncan McEwan, 2nd J McQueen; span working horses, Mal McNaught m, 2nd Mal Campbell.

Thorough bred milch cow having calved in 1864, Geo Anderson, 2nd Geo Anderson; thorough bred yearling heifer, Geo Anderson; grade milch cow, having calved in 1864, A Ellcott, 2nd Wm Moffat; two years old heifer, Walter Moffat, 2nd Hugh McGregor; one yr old heifer, Appleton Ellcott, 2nd Wm Carney; spring bull calf, Hugh McGregor; spring heifer calf, Robt Reid; yoke working oxen, Jas Baird, 2nd Wm Harbison, yoke three yrs old steers, John Pollock, 2nd Duncan McEwan; yoke two years old steers, Wm Moffat, 2nd Hugh McGregor; yoke one yr old steers, H McGregor, 2nd Duncan McEwan; fatted ox, Joseph Calloway, 2nd D McEwan; fatted cow or heifer, John Cameron, 2nd David Youle.

Ram two shears and over, G Anderson, 2d Wm Wise; shearling Ram, And Duncan; ram lamb, A Ellcott, 2nd And Duncan; pair of ewes having lambed in 1864, two shears and over, A Ellcott, 2nd And Duncan; pair of shearling ewes, Mal Campbell, 2nd D McEwan; pair of ewe lambs, A Duncan, 2nd D McEwan; pair of fat sheep, M Campbell.

Boar, large breed, Alex Mitchell; boar, small breed, Jas Baird; sow having littered in 1864, large breed, Joseph Calloway; sow having littered in 1864, small breed, Joseph Calloway; boar under one yr old, Robt Reid; sow under one yr old, R Reid.

Half bush onions, Math Westlake; bush of appies not less than four varieties, Geo Bates, 2nd A Duncan; beets 12 roots, A McEwan; six heads cabbage, Hugh McGregor; half bus carrots, A Duncan.

Ten yards satinett, Thos Johnson, 2nd T Johnson; ten yards flannel, Wm Harbison, 2nd G Anderson; pair of woolen blankets, David Youle, 2nd John Cameron; pair of socks, H McGregor; pair woolen stockings, J Cameron; pair of woolen mitts, A Mitchell; quilt in patch work, Marg Elliott; gentleman's shirt, Mrs G Anderson.

Assortment of cooper work, Wm Armstrong; assortment of cabinet work, George Diehl.

Ten lbs butter, Thos Johnson, 2nd Thos Cooper; cheese 10 lbs or over, David Youle, 2nd Alex Mitchell.

Two bush fall wheat, Thos Wells, 2nd A Mitchell; two bush spring wheat, J. Cameron, 2nd John Troyer; two bush barley, Ralph Stevenson; two bush oats, Joseph Calloway, 2nd A Duncan; two bush peas, Thos Cooper; bag of potatoes for table use, Thos Cooper.

Lumber wagon, iron axle, Alex Taylor, Clinton; iron plough, Runciman & Co., 2nd do.; wooden plough, Runciman & Co., 2nd do. Goderich; pair of barrows, Wm Purdy, Varna; two horse cultivator, Runciman & Co, 2nd do; set of horse shoes, Thos McClymont.

Discretionary prizes recommended—Quilt, bureau cover, and stand cover, in cotton twist netting, Margt Lyon, Varna; stand cover, picture in cloth, and picture in berlin wool, Janet Cameron, Stanley; silk embroidery, and fancy sachel, Margt Elliott, Goderich; gruber or drill cultivator, Runciman & Co., gang or iron harrows, Runciman & Co, horse rake, William Purdy, Varna.

The judges were, for stock and implements, Robt McCartney, Alex McLaren, and Arch'd McAllister, Esqs; for grain, &c., Wm Cooper, Wm Hall, and Wm McAllister, Esqrs.

GEO. LAING, Sec'y.

Interesting Items.

Late Paris fashions, represent the ladies wearing coat tails a yard long.

It appears from the published vital statistics of Ireland that in Connaught, the province in which decidedly the poorest people on the island reside, the longevity is the greatest.

An Irishman seeing an undertaker carrying a very small coffin, exclaimed, in the utmost surprise: 'By the Saint O'Dinnis o' Sligo! is it possible that that coffin can be intended for any living crather?'

A lady, in speaking of the gathering of lawyers to dedicate a new court house, said she supposed they had gone to view the ground where they must shortly lie.

Never flirt with a young widow who calls you by your Christian name the second time you meet her, unless you have quite made up your mind to the worst.

There is a girl in Maine 12 years old, who weighs 260 pounds, and measures 44 inches around her waist, and is only 45 inches in height. Her name is Bartlett.

On Sunday night last the Guelph Station of the Grand Trunk Railway was broken into by some person or persons, the ticket case forced open, and a considerable sum of money stolen. The burglars were, without doubt, well posted in Railway matters, as they did not disturb any of the tickets.

Native silver, in greater quantities than the general public is aware of, has for many years been found in the copper mines of Lake Superior.

At the ceremony of the beatification of a young man in Rome, lately, the expense of lights, pictures, flowers, &c., for the occasion, was $42,000.

A. T. Stewart is erecting a mansion in New York which is designed to be the most attractive residence in America. It has already cost $200,000.

A body of a new-born child, wrapped up in paper, was discovered on Tuesday at Hamilton in a shed on the corner of Wellington and Rebecca streets.

The Galt *Reporter* states that Mr. J. Ward, sen., has raised this year, on his premises at Branchton, the nice little crop of 1,900 lbs. weight of grapes—nearly a ton! He goes largely into the manufacturing of wine.

The Bishop of Natal.

MR. EDITOR: In the *Globe* of the 7th inst. there is an account of an attempt now being made by the clergy of Britain to procure the signatures of scientific men to a protest against the heresies of the Bishop of Natal. There is, also, a letter from Sir John Herschel, in which he refuses to sign the document and characterises the attempt as exceedingly arbitrary and unjust. It appears to me to be an attack upon the religious freedom which cost our fathers so much blood and treasure to establish, and plainly proves that the spirit which prompted the cruel persecution of old, is not yet quenched. I consider it the duty of every honest lover of his country to meet such a deadly threat at her liberties with the sternest opposition. I, therefore, offer no apology for the following remarks.

Our senses and our reason are the only avenues through which intelligent beings anything can come. Christ *reasoned* with the Pharisees, and our libraries are full of books professing to *prove* the truth of the various systems of religion now prevailing upon the earth. The time of miracles is past, and now a days we are forced to depend entirely upon our reason; and it require s a watchful use of that Divine gift to choose from among the mass of conflicting religious opinions in Christendom, something consistent, in some degree, with truth. The clergy of England seem to ignore the existence of *reason* when they attempt to convince the people of the fallacy of the Bishop's opinions, not by argument, but by laying before them a certain document, signed by a class of scientific men which amounts to nothing more than the collected assertions of such as are of the same belief as themselves. Imagine the effect of this proceeding upon an intelligent British workman who has perused the Bishop's works! Does it prove the falsity of those works? Will it cause the Bishop himself to change his views? I think not. This mode of argument has been resorted to before and, it may be said, has sometimes proved effectual. It is effectual thus far: if the man to whom it is applied be a moral coward, he may renounce his opinions with his lips, but he will still believe with his heart; or if he be ignorant of the subject, any profession which he may make amounts to nothing, and can have no effect upon his moral character; but if the person be both intelligent and honest, he will receive it with reverence as the opinion of great men, but he will scout the idea of admitting it as a argument against the truth of his belief.

Everybody has heard of the persecution of Galileo for his belief of the earth's revolution, and his renuncation of that belief on the 28th June, 1633, which ran as follows: "I, Galileo, in the seventieth year of my age, on bended knees before your eminences, having before my eyes and holding in my hands the Holy Gospels, curse and detest the error of the earth's movement!" Is it surprising that, when he left the court, he stamped upon the earth and exclaimed, "it does move after all"? Thus the great and venerable Galileo, weary with the burthen of seventy years, was trodden under foot by the bigots of the 17th century. If the Bishop of Natal had lived at that time and as honestly spoken his opinion, two alternatives would have been presented to him: that of going through the same process as Galileo and getting his moral dignity crushed out, or of being made a sacrifice to the sanguinary god of persecution—the image of man's own cruelty and ignorance. It is a happy circumstance for the Bishop that he speaks to the people of the 19th century, for, though he will suffer persecution to a certain extent, he will not experience personal violence; because the power has slipped from the unwilling fingers of the oppressor. The burning desire which some men show to force their opinions upon others, without allowing the privilege of enquiring into their truth, can be accounted for only in one of two ways: They either have not formed their own opinions upon *reason*, but believe, simply because they have been taught to do so, and, consequently, think it unnecessary to give *proof* to others, or else they wish to become intellectual despots, and to drive men with a lash, as if they were a herd of unreasoning animals. I think that in the latter case their estimation of mankind is rather too low; still, it is too true that the *majority* bow their heads to the yoke, and tremble at the uplifted lash. It is too true that they are ready to follow the hue and cry raised by their leaders against the man who, by his outspoken liberality of soul, has become obnoxious to them. They thus appeal to the very passions that prompted the Jewish rabble of old to cry out, "Crucify him! crucify him!" That this state of things is no chimera, can be proved by Herschel's letter, before-mentioned, in which he is driven to the expedient of protesting against his refusal to sign the inquisitorial document being denounced as an avowal of Atheism.

Everything in nature is subject to the one grand law of progression, and, if we look into the history of the Church, we shall find that religion is no exception to that law. Follow the track of Christianity from its source at the auspicious birth of our Savior, and you will meet with wars, murders, faggot-fires, witch-craft, bloody persecution, desolating crusades, and every grim and horrible monster that can be imagined, with gory limbs dressed in the white robes of religion. The Gospel itself has not changed, but the religions ostensibly founded upon it have risen from cruelty and superstition up to their present state. In older times the pronagators of religion went forth in armed bands—in one hand the uplifted glove, and in the other the Gospel of love. In our day the missionary goes to the degraded heathen and offers to him with his right hand the same Gospel, and with his left, the knowledge and comforts of civilized life. Has there been no change for the better? But where will this improvement stop? There is no reason to believe that religion has attained perfection, on the contrary, there are indications, at the present time, of such deep and prevailing excitement in the Christian world, as would lead to the conclusion that we are upon the eve of another religious reformation like that inaugurated by the Monk of Erfurt. Our charter of religious freedom is about to be extended, but let not the "rigidly righteous" think that *truth* will suffer, for, although their own *opinions* may sink, *truth* will survive. There is a certain party in the world who oppose every reform until they are borne down by the march of improvement; but after the point is gained, and the reform established, they immediately take possession of it, and attempt to monopolize the glory of the victory. Our high st rights and privileges were first preached by men who were called by very hard names. John Milton was an Infidel in his day, because he entertained and expressed the following sentiment: "The liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely, I prize above all liberties." Until all men entertain the same glorious sentiment, and become willing to submit all things to the arbitrament of reason, and not force, the world will still be filled with wars and rumors of war, with intolerance and persecution, with needless misery and woe; on our national flags we shall still see lions rampant and double headed eagles, and up to the ear of an insulted Deity will still arise the discordant cries of contending sectaries; but when that time shall arrive, the shouts of war shall be heard no more, persecution will give place to universal brotherhood, our ministers will preach amity and love, and the world will present the picture of one common family—then, and not till then, will Christ's glorious mission be accomplished—*peace on earth, and good will towards men.*

That time will yet arrive, for surely we have not been made in the image of God for naught. But, in the meantime, there is work for the true-hearted one the dawning of that glorious day:—

"Once the welcome light has broken,
Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
Of the day!
What the evils that shall perish
In its ray!
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of high and men;
Aid it paper, and it type:
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
And our earnest must not slacken
Into play,
Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way.

—CHAS. MACKAY.

A NOVELTY.

A bold and novel scheme, involving a revolution in the construction of vessels of war, has lately been submitted to the Admiralty by Mr. A. M'Laine, a naval architect of Belfast. Its main feature is the abandonment of broadside guns and even of revolving turrets, and the substitution of fore-and-aft guns, "to fire only on the line of the keel." The advantage alleged to be gained by the adoption of this experiment is two fold. In the first place, a ship thus armed and carried into action would present to the enemy her breadth only instead of her length—that is a front of fifty feet instead of a front of some two hundred and fifty. She would thus become, as Mr. McLaine contends, "five times more difficult to hit," (owing to the difference in the angle of impact) "perhaps five times more difficult of penetration." In the second place, her aggressive power would be proportionably increased by the enormous weight that might be given to guns mounted on the new new principle. The practical limit to the calibre of broadside batteries is the range of their "lateral training," but Mr. McLaine proposes that his guns should have no training at all, in the ordinary sense. They would be incapable of firing except in one direction, and while the elevation of each would still be regulated by the captain of the guns, it would be virtually pointed by the steersman. Mr. McLaine advocates the universal employment of twin screws in ships of war, which would "enable them to be turned on their keels and kept in the strongest position for defence." Mr. McLaine has designed a vessel of war on this theory, the estimated speed of which is fifteen knots an hour. It is obvious that the value of such a proposal as this turns wholly and solely on practical considerations. It may be granted that if a ship could concentrate her armament in her bow, and keep the bow constantly turned towards an enemy whose broadside was exposed, she would make short work of the engagement; but then the very same thing might be said of a steam ram. The difficulty is to force the game in which, according to the rules, you must infallibly win. It is simply impossible for one vessel to keep her head to a for one vessel to keep her head to a number of antagonists at the same time, and, while she was pointing her invulnerably prow to one, another would be firing shells into her vulnerable sides.—Suppose the steering apparatus of Mr. McLaine's vessel were knocked out of gear by a shot, what would be her position? Certainly not as good as that of a vessel similarly disabled, but armed with broadside batteries, for her guns would be pointing the wrong way if an attempt were made to board her. We are quite aware that Mr. McLaine, fertile in resources, maintains that, thanks to the centrifugal pump, she would still be "quite under command with both rudders shot away." It may be so, but this is just the sort of assumption that requires to be rigorously verified by actual experiment. No one can study Mr. McLaine's elaborate diagrams and his explanations without perceiving that, like most other "simple" inventions, it depends for its success on a variety of complicated details.—*Abridged from the London Times September 20th.*

THE END OF THE WAR.—The Richmond *Dispatch* thus facetously gives its ideas of when the end of the war will arrive: "We are asked fifty times a day, more or less, when we think the war will end. As we have no right to think, in the absence of data to think upon, we are sometimes at a loss for an answer. However, for the information of those who are particularly inquisitive and anxious upon the subject, we will relate a dream that a friend of ours had on the duration of the war, which may throw some light upon the subject. He dreamed that he awoke from a sleep of fifty years, and found himself upon the south bank of the Rapidan. He saw, at a little distance from the spot where he awoke, a corporal with seventeen men and a wheelbarrow. He approached and asked what this little gathering meant. 'This,' replied the corporal, 'is the army of Northern Virginia.' 'Where are the Yankees?' inquired our friend. 'They are on the other side of the river,' replied the corporal.' They have the advantage of numbers and transportation, as they have twenty-one men and two wheelbarrows, but we expect to get the advantage of them in position, will whip them, and then the war will end.'"

Merciless Destruction of Property in the Shenandoah Valley.

VANDALISM OF THE FEDERAL SOLDIERY—HEART-RENDING SCENES OF PRIVATION.

Special Correspondence of the New York World.

Desolation—desolation everywhere! For the past three days the Army of the Shenandoah has been falling back from Harrisonburg, destroying everything along the valley in the shape of forage and provisions, as it had previously destroyed that between Harrisonburg and Staunton. From Staunton back to Strasburg, a distance of —miles, that once-magnificent, blooming "garden of Virginia" is almost a desert.

Of all the horrors of war, this horror is the greatest. *I shall find it* impossible even to indicate what frightful wrath and suffering have descended upon these people and these lands.

As was remarked in a former letter, it became a serious question, after the army reached Harrisonburg, how long the hundred and twenty miles of communication betwen that place and its base of supplies could be preserved intact. Every train that passed to and fro had to be guarded by a force unusually large, and of late scarcely an escort sent from General Sheridan's headquarters to Harper's Ferry, or sent in return, escaped without attack and loss. Some parties were captured entire, and although they were in some instances forty or sixty strong, they were at times met by more than equal numbers. There was scarcely a doubt that as soon as the guerilla bands in our rear should become more perfectly organized, they would interfere so seriously with the supplies as to render our trains, however largely guarded, quite insecure.

Dispatches captured from General Early, and now in the possession of Gen. Sheridan, showed that all the forage and supplies in the country, between Staunton and Lexington, had been sent to Richmond. Those existing between Staunton and Strasburg were returned, and were to be retained for the support of Early's army during the coming winter. The destruction of these supplies would be, consequently, one of the severest blows struck at the fortunes of the rebellion in this region. It would at once relieve us of the necessity of occupying the Valley, and prevent the rebel army from using it as a thoroughfare to Pennsylvania, by rendering it almost uninhabitable.

The beginning of the work was recorded in what you have already received. It has been continued during the three days' march from Harrisonburg to Strasburg, where the army is tonight encamped. Through all the air resplendent from horizon to horizon has been black with the smoke of a hundred conflagrations, and at night a gleam, brighter and more lurid than sunset, has shot from every verge. The orders have been to destroy all forage in stacks and barns, and to drive the stock before for the subsistence of the army. The execution of these orders has been thorough, and in some instances, where barns near dwelling houses have been fired, has resulted in the destruction of the latter. In no instance, except in that of the burning of dwellings within five miles, in retaliation for the murder of Lieut. Meigs, have orders been issued for the burning of houses, or have such orders been sanctioned by General Sheridan. Such wholesale incendiarism could not be pursued, however, without undue license being taken by the worst class of soldiers, and there have been frequent instances of rascality and pillage.

Indiscriminating (for with such swift work discrimination is impracticable), relentless, merciless, the torch has done its terrible business in the centre and on each side of the Valley. Few barns and stables have escaped. The gardens and corn-fields have been desolated. The cattle, hogs, sheep, cows, oxen—nearly five thousand head in all—have been driven from every farm. The poor, alike with the rich, have suffered. Some have lost their all. The wailing of women and children mingling with the crackling of flames, has sounded from scores of dwellings. I have seen mothers weeping over the loss of that which was necessary to their children's lives, sitting beside their own, their last bit of flour pilfered by stragglers, the last morsel they had in the world to eat or drink. Young girls with flushed cheeks, and pale with tearful or tearless eyes, have pleaded with and cursed the men whom the necessities of war have forced to burn the buildings reared by their fathers, and turn them into paupers in a day.

A fine brick house this side of New Market was in imminent danger yesterday from the flames of a barn burning near. The men who fired the latter had passed on, leaving the house to what seemed, at one time, the same fate. Some officers passing by stopped, heeding the entreaties of women standing in the yard, and assisted in pulling down the fences between, thus preventing the fire from communicating with the house. The women were overjoyed. Wild and hysterical, they thanked the officers with frank hands and sobs, and broken words.

When the army left Woodstock this morning, some unauthorized person set a barn on fire, the flames of which communicated to several buildings, endangering the village. Gen. Merritt sent in a regiment of cavalry, who finally succeeded in stopping the conflagration, after pulling down some buildings near. A young lady, with a very flashing eye, appearing at the gate of her burning home, cried for assistance.

'Look,' she cried to an officer, who instantly sprang from his horse and began assisting the family in removing their goods; 'look what you vile Yankees have done. Gen. Sheridan is a brute; you are all brutes.'

Madam,' returned the officer, still energetically pursuing his labor, 'is not this rather strange language to me under the present circumstances?'

'Yes! O, I didn't mean it,' she cried, bursting into tears, 'but. God knows, one cannot choose words at such a time.'

Scenes like this (these words do not half express the piteousness of the reality) were constantly transpiring as the army marched by singing its songs, cracking its jokes, leaving its occasional serious word upon the suffering around. The completeness of the desolation is awful. Hundreds of nearly starving people are going north. Our trains are crowded with them. They line the wayside. Hundreds more are coming—not half the inhabitants of the valley can subsist on it in its present condition. Absolute want is in mansions used in other days to extravagant luxury. A family, consisting of an old man and lady, two girls and a boy, only a short distance from where I am writing, had to night only a little bread and a little sugar which they had purchased of one of our soldiers, in their abode. Scores are in like, and worse condition.

The rebel cavalry, four or five thousand strong, have followed us closely on the march, and this afternoon struck our rear guard—Gen. Merritt's cavalry division near Fisher's Hill. The attacked vigorously, with artillery and musketry, but were repulsed. They will probably be attacked in the morning if they remain.

McNiel the famous guerilla is dying, having been severely wounded in a fight with our cavalry near Mount Jackson. He lies in a house past which we marched on the way thither.

Humors of the Draft.

The following announcement is made in a New York paper, and is probably as correct as any that has been published in relation to the draft:

The draft will come off on Monday week if nothing else happens.

Of course there hadn't ought to be any draft. Nobody wants it. The Aldermen and Supervisors are trying like good fellows to save our bacon by hunting up all the sailors and getting them credited.

I think if we had credit for all the sailors enlisted since 1821, and the volunteers who went to the Mexican war, our quota would be filled and a few over.

But I don't think we shall get so much credit.

The government don't give credit; but it takes a good deal.

For the information of many inquiring readers I have obtained some

IMPORTANT DECISIONS

on the subject of the draft.

"A man who payed $300 commutation under the first draft, and has since died, is not liable."

"A man who has furnished an alien substitute, and over forty five years of age, is not liable."

"Females of all sexes are exempt."

"Young men who have postponed their 20th birthday on account of the draft are liable—if they are found out."

"Any man that has not been enrolled can have his name put on the list on application at the Provost Marshal's office. And such person shall be entitled to all the privileges of the draft, in the same manner as though his name had been originally enrolled by the proper officer."

"Going to Canada for a few months to see a relative does not debar a citizen from his right to be enrolled and drafted."

"Because a man's father had a wooden leg his son is not exempted, unless he has inherited the same infirmity."

"If a man is mustered into service for one year, and gets killed within three months, his executors are not bound to furnish a substitute for the balance of the term."

These details are not by Fry. Consequently they may be relied upon.

A ROMANCE OF THE WAR—CUPID INCITES A SON OF MARS TO TREASON—The Memphis *Argus* tells the following story:—"We learn from a gentleman lately from Morganzia, Louisiana, that there is now on trial at that place, by court martial, a young officer, attached as adjutant to a New York Regiment, charged with having attempted to betray his men into an ambuscade. It seems that the unfortunate young man became enamored of a young lady, the daughter of a wealthy planter residing not far from the coast, and that desiring to make her his wife, he proposed and was accepted, on condition that he would betray his command to a Confederate force to be conveniently ambushed. In an ill-starred moment he accepted the proposition. Accordingly, plans were laid, and the commander of the Confederate forces near was communicated with. A proper pretext given, on the day appointed, the whole force at Morganzia was marched up in search of the enemy, who, it had been asserted, had been depredating upon the neighboring plantations. Before they had gone far the Colonel commanding, from the awkwardness of the traitor, suspecting that all was not right, halted the column, and posting pickets securely, immediately commenced an investigation, which resulted in the confession of a sergeant of one of the companies, who had been entrusted with the secret by the adjutant. The Colonel thereupon marched his men back to quarters, and promptly ordered a court martial for the trial of the officer, who, there is little doubt, will be convicted. If this does not smack of the romance of war, nothing that we have heard of in the past four years can be so accounted."

THE "SATURDAY REVIEW" ON MR. SPURGEON.—We may as well be honest about it, and make a virtue of necessity. If there were anything better than Mr. Spurgeon to write about, we should select another subject. But in the dull afternoon of the year in the dark abysm of time, when bees and wasps and apocalyptic frogs and the sorrows of curates occupy leading journals, Mr. Spurgeon is not unnaturally the town's talk. Very possibly a waning popularity, and the ugly necessity which is laid upon popular preachers, religious as well as political, of keeping them before the public, is at the bottom of Mr. Spurgeon's last convulsive grasp at popularity. The fact, however, is that a sermon which he has lately preached furnishes a lively subject for autumnal prosing in the height of the silly season. The *Review* then remarks at length on the views held by Mr. Spurgeon and expressed in his celebrated sermon on baptismal regeneration, and concludes:—"The moral of the case is, to use the vulgar proverb, that, as it is impossible to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, so it is absurd to expect from a person like Mr. Spurgeon either the information of a scholar or the manners of a gentleman, the language of refinement in controversy or the humanities of Christianity in personal intercourse."

THIRD RAIL ON THE GREAT WESTERN.

The *Globe* says, the annual meeting of the shareholders of the Great Western has authorized the Directors to provide funds for laying down a third rail on the track, to enable freight carried by the New York Central and Michigan Central to be brought through Canada without transhipment. This is expected to increase materially the through business of the line.

Poetry.

For the "Signal."

On the Return of a Much Esteemed Minister.

Thou art come once more among us
With thy kindly, gentle smile;
Thou art back from that far country—
The beauteous Emerald Isle.

As we hail the sun's glad presence
After dark and cloudy days;
So we welcome thee to Goderich,
Once again to preach and pray.

We with horror heard of danger
As thou crossed the trench'rous deep;
Now we offer praise to Heaven,
And our joyful thanks repeat.

For the love of God our Father,
For His ever watchful care—
For His hand outstretched to save thee,
And his answering of prayer.

When we prayed that thou might safely
Meet us in our Church once more,
Blest with health and strength and vigor,
As in happy days before.

Now may all thy years be peaceful—
Calm and still as summer wind;
And may blessing pure and holy
Ever round thy pathway shine. M.

Goderich, October 19, 1864.

HORRIBLE DEATH.—On Thursday morning, the 29th ult., between the hours of 7 and 8 one of the most dreadful accidents, resulting in death, occurred in a busy metropolitan thoroughfare. It appears that a respectable women named Lane, keeper of a coffee shop in Leader street, Chelsea, while waiting upon her customers, caught fire from the shop stove and the terrified woman instantly ran out into the street and across the road into an opposite man's shop. Thence in a sheet of flame, and shrieking piteously, she bounded back again into her own premises, where she set fire to the parlor. Men and women in pursuit endeavored to throw her down on the floor, but the affrighted creature eluded the despatch worthy efforts, and appeared gifted with supernatural powers, for she literally flew away from her would-be preservers into the garden, where a Mrs. Lewis enveloped the sufferer in a carpet and stifled the flames. It was now found that the steel bands of her crinoline were red