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TEMPERATURE

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

THE WEEK ENDING

Aug. 21st, 1881.			Corresponding week, 1880		
Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.
Mon.. 78°	60°	68°	Mon.. 80°	65°	72°
Tues.. 75°	58°	66°	Tues.. 69°	65°	67°
Wed.. 74°	54°	64°	Wed.. 76°	56°	66°
Thur.. 76°	56°	66°	Thur.. 77°	65°	71°
Fri.. 81°	65°	72°	Fri.. 76°	64°	70°
Sat.. 80°	63°	72°	Sat.. 75°	63°	69°
Sun.. 75°	60°	67°	Sun.. 79°	63°	71°

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, August 27th, 1881.

THE WEEK.

The summer season is drawing somewhat to a close. Though we have had little hot weather comparatively this year, that little even has almost gone from us, and the people who have fled to sea-side and country resorts to escape the heat of the dog days, are many of them regretting the wraps they left behind them, and thinking seriously of a return to the more sheltered joys of town. Albeit we have looked in vain for the fulfilment of Mr. VENNOR's prophecies as to the cold spell, which was replaced in fact by the only warm weather we have had. In the country around Quebec the complaint is "no fruit." The late frosts killed off the strawberries, and the rain, while it came too late to do much good to the grain, has washed away the blueberries and raspberries till they are scarcely worth picking. Of hay, too, the harvest has been poor, especially on the north side of the river, where farmers are well pleased if they manage to save one-half of their last year's crop. As a consequence, hay will probably command a high price this winter in Quebec and Montreal. For the more pleasure-seekers the weather has been most enjoyable. For those who do not mind an occasional shower, the cool refreshing breezes and cloudy skies have worked wonders in restoring health to the jaded workers in close cities. Often it is out of the frying-pan into the fire with those who fly from the roasting heat of Montreal, to find themselves grilled on the Saguenay or broiled at Cacouna, but this year it has been otherwise, and few people who are not salamanders will regret the change.

The Land Bill has passed through the House of Lords. A compromise has staved off the political crisis which seemed to be imminent. The fact is not without its significance, as showing on the one hand the reluctance of Mr. GLADSTONE to go to the country, and on the other the want of purpose in the Conservative ranks, which has made them too afraid to stake all upon the hazard of a die. That this will be the end of the difficulty we do not expect. So far, dissatisfaction at the result appears on every side. Both parties seem to have in a measure lost the confidence of their supporters in the country. There is nothing of which English people are less tolerant than the white feather, and it seems to have been shown freely on both sides. The Liberals have undone much of the work of conciliation,

which seems to have been the mainspring of the Bill from the first, while the Conservatives have lost a glorious chance, of which their late leader would not have been slow to avail himself. But the backbone is gone out of English Conservatism since Lord BEACONSFIELD's death.

THERE is a significant clause in the proposals for the revision of the Education Code recently laid on the table of the House of Commons by Mr. MUNDELLA. It refers to grants common to all schools, and runs as follows: "Music. The full grant will be paid if singing is satisfactorily taught from notes or according to the tonic sol-fa system. One-half only will be paid if singing is taught by ear." The meaning of this is of course a desire to encourage the teaching of music by a system of notation, whether by the ordinary staff with its lines and spaces or by the system of solfeggio syllables representing the diatonic scale. Singing is naturally the special form of music dealt with, since singing is the only form in which music is at present taught in the schools affected by the grants. The distinction apparent in the wording of the clause does not lie between any different systems of writing music. It lies really in the difference between teaching music as a science and a mental accomplishment, or giving children instruction in the art of producing more or less agreeable noise. The whole question, in fact, of whether music shall be taught to the rising generation or not lies in this distinction. The contention between the advocates of the varying systems need not be entered upon here. To wait until they had settled their differences before beginning to teach the children to sing would be like putting off teaching them to read till the whole system of spelling the English language had been reorganized and crystallized into unanimity. Literature must be got at even by the road of arbitrary spelling and pronunciation. Music must be taught, and music can only be taught, by some system of notation. The whole literature of music is shut out to those who have been taught only by ear. At present the ordinary way of writing is the high road to such music as is available, and the wisest course is to travel along it till a better is made clear. We are glad to find in the Revised Code a powerful inducement offered to instructors to take the fundamentally proper course, and we call the attention of those interested in the subject here to the practical form which elementary musical education is taking in England, of which Mr. MUNDELLA's motion is the outcome.

As every dog is allowed his first bite, so an English bull permitted once to gore. In an English jury have recently been investigating the question whether a bull belonging to a Mr. ROLFE had not exceeded his privilege. This animal was alleged to have ungallantly charged two women, and knocked them into a ditch. The husband of one of them brought his action, and it became necessary for him to show, before he could succeed, that Mr. ROLFE knew his bull to be savage. Testimony to the opposite effect was forthcoming in the shape of a statement that the beast was accustomed to graze on a cricket-ground, and that he rather liked being hit by a cricket-ball than otherwise. To the contrary effect there was positively no evidence, except an unlucky remark attributed to the defendant. Mr. BANKS, the plaintiff, swore that when he called on Mr. ROLFE the next morning to complain, the latter observed, "That's my old bull again." Mr. ROLFE was further said to have applied to his bull what commentators call an *epitheton ornans*, but that is neither here nor there. The Judge held that the use of the word "again" precluded him from taking the case out of the hands of the jury. This really seemed a little hard on Mr. ROLFE. For if he had simply said, "That's my old bull," he might have seemed to be expressing a brutal sympathy with its ferocious ex-

plot. It is fair to add, however, that he denied having said anything of the sort, and that the jury, not being satisfied that he knew that his bull was accustomed to assault mankind, gave him a verdict. The moral seems to be that owners of dangerous animals should abstain, when commenting on the present, from all reference to the past.

LEO HARTMANN, THE NIHILIST.

Leo Hartmann, a young Russian, who was prominently engaged in the attempt to take the life of the Czar in November, 1879, is on this continent. He is a member of the chief committee of the extreme wing of the Nihilist party in his own country, and he is commissioned by the leaders of the party to enlighten the people of Europe and the United States in regard to the purposes, the methods, and the motives of the Nihilists, and to ask aid for them. For that purpose he has published in the *Herald* a long and minute account of the attempted assassination of the Czar, accompanied by a statement of the facts which, he considers, justify the policy to which he has committed himself. This remarkable document is very fairly written, in a style of considerable simplicity and force, with but little attempt at eloquence, and indicates more than an ordinary intelligence, clearness of mind and self-possession. With the personal narrative we do not propose to deal. It has an air of truthfulness about it which will win it general credence. It certainly does not soften the features of the plot which betrays most clearly the great cruelty of the plotters.

There is no question as to the existence of a most cruel, arbitrary and oppressive despotism in Russia. Whatever may have been the motives which inspired the late Emperor in his experiments of reform, the experiments themselves have almost wholly failed. The emancipation of the serfs from the control of their masters is an accomplished fact; but they have passed to another servitude, which is all the more galling because they are no longer protected from it by the interposition of their lords. This is servitude to the government and to its corrupt, oppressive, and all-powerful agents. It dominates the life of the common people from two points: the imposition of onerous taxes, with the fearful penalties which attach to failure to pay them; the arbitrary control of the liberties, the person, and the property of the Russian subject through the inefficiency or the corruption of the institutions of justice. From these two points the despotism is absolute in its power. Whether that power is exercised as completely without restraint or compunction as Hartmann says that it is, it is impossible to say, but that it is exercised in a way to give rise to horrible injustice, to many instances of the most poignant distress, to numerous abominations of cruelty which are almost without name, there is no doubt. Its force may be fairly measured by the resistance which it arouses. Nihilism could not exist in its actual form without a strong support among the people. That support would not be given to a movement so openly desperate and violent as this is acknowledged by its leaders to be, unless there were very serious and extensive and just discontent among the people.

But with a clear perception of these facts it is impossible for Americans to give their approval to the Nihilists and to Hartmann as their representative. Their method is wild and wicked. It is avowed terrorism. They seek to "disorganize" the Government by the murder of its head and by that of the more prominent agents. By tyranny is not easily disarmed by fear, least of all by bodily fear, while it is hardened by the resentment which violence awakes, and the sympathy of a large proportion of mankind is challenged for rulers whose lives are passed amid perpetual dangers. The response to the cruel murder of the late Czar was one of almost uniform indignation and sorrow. It was regarded not as the deserved punishment of a despot, but as the slaying of a man weak rather than wicked. The sympathy of the civilized world was not with the revolutionists so much as with their victim, and the sympathy of the civilized world can not be dismissed with a sneer as wholly wrong or misguided.

ICE-YACHTING ON THE HUDSON.

This exciting sport is described and illustrated in the *Midsummer Scribner*, from which we quote:

"You go on down the river now with a good wind on the beam. The playful breeze freshens in flaws, as if trying to escape you; but still you follow its wayward motions: you start when it starts, flit over the ice with its own speed, turn and glide with the lightness and the grace of its own whirling dance. The ice-yachts darting about look like white-winged swallows skimming over the ice: as they cross and recross your course, you hope that every captain knows his business and will avoid collisions. The ice-yachts have anticipated your wish, and flown away to various points of the horizon while your thought drew its slow length along. The ice seems to be running under you with great speed, and you sometimes feel that you might easily drop off the open, spider-like frame of the yacht. By such rapid motion, the bubbles, crystals, and lines of the ice are all woven

into a silky web of prismatic hues. You distinguish only the cracks that run with the course; and, when they deviate from it, they seem to jump from side to side without connecting angles or curves. The mounds and the wind-rows seem to come up at you suddenly, and dodge past. You begin to hold on to the hand-rail, and lie close down in the box. If you are steering, you feel that your hand is the hand of fate; and the keen excitement nerves you to extraordinary alertness. The breeze sings in the rigging; the runners hum on the ice with a crunching sound, and a slight ringing and crackling; and a little spurt of crushed ice, flies up behind each runner and flashes like a spray of gems. The yacht seems more and more a thing of the air,—her motions are so fitful, wayward and sudden. The speed with which you approach a distant scene makes it grow distinct while you wink with wonder. Things grow larger, as if under the illusions of magic; you feel the perspective almost as a sensation. You turn toward a brown patch of woods; it quickly assumes the form of headlands; these are pushed apart, and a gorge appears between them; while you stare, a stream starts down the rocks, behind the trees; a mill suddenly grows up; the rocks are now all coated with ice; statues of winter's sculpture are modeled before your eyes, and decked with flashing crystals, just as you turn away to some other point of the horizon. So you seem to be continually arriving at distant places.

"A regatta is to be sailed over this course, and you arrive in time to see the start. The yachts all stand in a row, head to the wind. At the word, the first in the line swings stern around till her sails fill; she moves off at once, and the crew jump aboard,—one man standing or lying on the windward runner plank and holding on to the shrouds, and the helmsman and another man lying in the box. Then the other yachts successively swing around; and, in a moment, the whole fleet is under way, gliding in zig-zig courses among the windrows and mounds. They all diminish in apparent size with astonishing rapidity; they seem actually to contract in a moment to a mere white speck, skimming about the river miles away. You join the crowd of men and boys stamping and slapping to keep warm; you exchange a few words with a friend, and when you turn around again, behold the yachts sweeping down upon you! They grow as they come, flying at you with a wayward, erratic course, and you feel the wonder of embodied speed. The ten-mile race of the ice-yachts is lost and won in as many minutes. But for those who sailed it, these minutes were filled with more excitement than is found in many a long life-time."

BEN-SABA, THE OLD ASSASSIN.

At Nishapoor, in Persia, there was a great teacher of the law, the Imam Mowaffek. "I found there," writes one of his pupils, Nizamool-moolk, "two other pupils of my own age newly arrived, Hakem Omar Khayyam and the ill-fortuned Ben-Saba. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit, and the highest natural powers, and we three formed a close friendship. One day Hassan-Ben-Saba said to us, 'It is a universal belief that the pupils of Mowaffek attain to fortune. If we all do not attain thereto, one of us surely will. What shall be our mutual pledge?' We answered, 'What you please.' 'Well,' he said, 'let us make a vow that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it with the rest equally.' 'Be it so,' I replied. I went from Khorassan to Ghuznee and Cabool, and rose to be the Vizier of the Sultan Alp Arslan." The poems of Omar give indications of the thoughts that filled the breasts of the three youths. He was a profound mathematician as well as a poet, and has, not undeservedly, been called the Lucretius of the East. He revolted from the religion of his country, and flung his genius and learning into the abyss of general ruin. He writes, "I came like water, and like wind I go." To him life is

"A moment's halt, a momentary taste
Of being from the well amid the waste,
And then the phantom caravan has reached
The Nothing it set out from."

He questioned the universe as to its secret; but earth gave no answer, nor the soiling "that mourns in flowing purple, nor the rolling heavens." There was a door to which he could find no key, a veil which his eyes could not penetrate.

"Oh threats of hell, and hopes of paradise!
One thing at least is certain—this life flies;
One thing is certain, and the rest is lies:
The flower that once has blown forever dies."

His political sentiments, if he had any, are not expressed in the verses in which he has embodied his Epicurean philosophy. He says, indeed,

"I sometimes think that never blows so red
The roses as where some buried Cæsar lies."

But the glories of the world had as little attraction for him as the Prophet's paradise. He rejected the offers of his old school-fellow. With far different spirit, Hassan demanded, in the tone of neglected virtue, his share of office and of power. His claims were admitted; but he used his high place only to intrigue against his benefactor. He was driven from the court of Bagdad, and fled to Isbahan, a moody and disappointed man. His religious opinions became unsettled; his belief in human friendship had experienced a shock. "Oh, that I had," he exclaimed, "but two faithful friends at my devotion!" Finally, like Augustine, like Ignatius, Loyola, like Westley, like Newman, like Mills, he