

The first Japanese Parliamentary elections are to be held on July 1st, so Canada's national holiday will become a red-letter day in the history of the flowery kingdom.

Women are rapidly coming to the front in Russia. A royal ukase has just been issued permitting the employment of women on railways, and they are now employed on the Trans-Caspian line as station masters, traffic managers, signal women and point women. This is indeed an age of progress.

It is a striking sign of the times that out of 213 Presbyteries represented at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, which lately held its session at Saratoga, more than two-thirds have voted for revision of and a change in the fundamental doctrines of foreordination and predestination as laid down in the Westminster Confession.

It is a sad but a true fact that suicide and death from poison and other causes are on the increase in the Maritime Provinces. We cannot help thinking that the press must share in the responsibility of these calamities, as our papers are daily filled with the minutest details of horrors which must have an unwholesome effect upon weak minds, and as men are creatures of imitation they are influenced by what they read without themselves knowing it. We believe that the publication of much that is printed is a sin against our common humanity and a direct public evil.

As an outcome of the recent labor conference in Berlin a new labor bill has been introduced in the German Reichstag. Its main features are the prohibition of labor on Sundays and holidays, and of the employment of children under thirteen in factories. Women will not be allowed to work at night or after half past five o'clock on Saturday evenings, or on the eve of holidays. The hours of work for women are limited to eleven. Provision is made for the protection of the life and health of workers, and for punishment for breach of contract by master or man by a fine paid to the injured party.

Those who have read Lew Wallace's "Ben Hur" will well remember the terrible affliction which befell the hero's mother and sister, but we are too apt to think that leprosy is a disease peculiar to by-gone ages. It is true that in the earlier centuries it was more prevalent than it has been in later years, but if reports be true, the dread disease is now making its appearance in almost every section of the globe. The eating of semi-decayed food and uncleanness are the principal causes of leprosy, but as the disease is said to be infectious every one has a direct interest in seeing it stamped out.

According to Prof. R. H. Thurston electricity is in the near future to come most powerfully to the aid of socialism. It is to do no less than break up the existing factory system and restore the home-laborer to the position he formerly enjoyed. In all the large cities great steam engines or other sources of power are to generate electricity, which will be carried to every corner of the town, helping the sewing woman at her machine, the weaver at his loom, the artisan at his lathe, as well as giving in every house the mechanical aid needed in the kitchen, the laundry, or the elevator, besides furnishing light and heat.

The visit of Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught, and the Duchess of Connaught, to Canada, although short, gives much pleasure to Her Majesty's loyal subjects. Their Royal Highnesses have been received with enthusiasm. By special command of the Queen, a collection of the various press notices relating to the Duke's departure from India has been made. Her Majesty is said to be delighted at the cordial and loyal terms in which her Indian subjects regard her dashing and gallant soldier son. Beyond all doubt the widespread popularity of Prince Arthur throughout India is well deserved. We trust, if the Queen has a collection of Canadian press notices made, that she will find her subjects on this side of the water in no wise behind hand in welcoming the Duke and Duchess.

President Van Horne and a party of Canadian Pacific officials have recently visited St. John and had a look at the Company's property in Carleton. The St. John papers are full of the visit and the important results likely to flow from it, and we can truly say that we hope that their brightest wishes may be realized, and that the city may rapidly increase in population and wealth. One of the great drawbacks to Halifax has been the fact that there were no populous districts behind it to help build up the trade of our magnificent harbor. Now that St. John is likely to forge ahead, the want to a certain extent will be remedied, as in the absence of a safe and commodious harbor the bulk of its foreign commerce will have to pass through Halifax, and thus both cities will reap the benefit.

"We have been expecting for some time past that an attempt would soon be made to break down the monopoly held by the well known Melbourne syndicate in connection with the supply of colonial horses for the Indian remount trade. We are now informed that a strong English syndicate has been formed for the purpose of shipping horses in large numbers from Queensland. To carry out the arrangements, 50,000 acres of land are to be acquired within 50 miles of Brisbane, and extensive paddocks will be formed in the neighborhood of Ipswich. The promoters of the concern contemplate shipping 5,000 horses yearly." So says the *Colonies and India*. We have heard very little for some time about shipping Canadian horses for use in the Imperial cavalry, and, if reports are true, remounts are much needed. Canada should look out for herself in this matter or Australia may secure the trade for England as well as India.

Most people associate the title of Duke of Clarence with the nobleman who chose death by drowning in a butt of Malmsbury as to be preferred to death by any other means, but the title has now been conferred upon Prince Albert Victor, the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, who will hereafter be officially addressed as Duke of Clarence and Avondale and Earl of Athlone.

A rather good story is told of the recent occasion on which the Parnellite party in the British House of Commons took the Government by surprise, and succeeded in defeating them by a majority of twenty-six on the second reading of the Agricultural Laborers Bill. The Tory whip, when it became evident that a division was imminent and the Government supporters not at hand, rushed to the telephone in the lobby, only to find it in possession of one of the Irish members, who seemed to be engaged in most interminable conversations with an endless succession of friends.

The McKinlay tariff bill is now before the United States Senate, and the Press of that country are very divided in their opinions of the probable fate of the measure. The New York *Herald* claims to have secret and reliable information that the bill will certainly be thrown out, but leading Republican journals assert that it will be passed with few if any important amendments, and with little or no discussion outside of Committee. The *Herald* seldom hazards such a decided opinion without good reason, but in this instance we think it has been deceived, and that the bill with all its crudities and absurdities will be passed by the Republican majority which is made up of subservient tools—where they are not principals—of the great trusts and combines which now wield such great power in the States. The passage of the bill will prove the death knell of the Republican party.

The wonders of modern surgery grow apace. At the surgical congress in Berlin Prof. Gluck gave an exhibition of the successful substitution of catgut, wory, and bone freed from chalk, for defects in the bones, muscles or nerve sinews of the patient. In some wonderful way these foreign substances are assimilated and literally made bone of the patient's bone and flesh of her flesh without any diminution or shortening of the affected part. He presented cases of patients in whom there had been an insertion of from six to ten centimetres (i. e. between two or three inches) of catgut to supply defects in the leaders of the hands, to which complete mobility had been restored. In another case the Professor removed a tumor from the thigh causing a considerable defect in the bone. He inserted wory and no shortening ensued. In another case he removed a large piece of nerve in the groin and inserted catgut and the functions remained completely satisfactory.

The assurance of France in proposing that in return for the cession of her rights in Newfoundland England should evacuate Egypt is certainly refreshing. That Egypt should be uncontrolled by any foreign power has always been considered by Great Britain as essential to the security of our Eastern possessions, and it was mainly on that account that we expelled the French in the beginning of this century. The same reason also led us to buy up the shares in the Suez Canal some years ago. To expect, therefore, that Great Britain will now give up her vantage-ground is obviously absurd. Nor would France have any just cause of complaint should Great Britain declare a protectorate over Egypt. By withdrawing from the defence of Egypt during Arabi's mutiny the French Government deprived itself of its share in the control of that country. Of course it is greatly to be desired that the French treaty rights in Newfoundland should cease, but France will be obliged to content herself with a much more moderate recompense than she asks—her present proposition is simply impudent.

Misfortunes never come singly, is a truism which has been exemplified by the fact that *La Grippe*, which played havoc among us in the winter, has been followed in many places by such diseases as diphtheria, typhoid and scarlet fever, measles, etc. The epidemic of diphtheria in St. John's, Newfoundland, was fearfully destructive of life, but it has for some time been decreasing, and it is hoped that the complete eradication of the disease is at hand. In many towns in Nova Scotia infectious diseases have been prevalent during the spring months, especially among children. Neglect of sanitation is one prime cause of this, and the habit some people have, when a child is ill, of saying nothing about it and continuing to send the other children to school, does not have the effect of checking the spread of disease. This is why the schools have to be closed at times, when, if parents would only do their duty to their neighbors and keep their children away from schools when disease is in the house, there would be no necessity for this step. The lesson is hard to learn, but eternal vigilance is the price of safety.

Travellers are now looking forward with some anxiety for the appearance of the summer time table on the I. C. R. A St. John paper announces that both the Canada Pacific and Intercolonial Expresses will form one train so far as Moncton, leaving Halifax at 1.30 p. m. and arriving at St. John at 10.30 p. m., and be in Montreal in time to make through connections with still more western points. We hardly know how this arrangement will work in practice, but should think it would have the effect of causing all through Montreal passengers to select the Canada Pacific route, and that the I. C. R. would lose the through passengers they now have. Although the run to St. John will be made in nine hours the saving of time will hardly benefit passengers to Boston, as the Flying Yankee starts from St. John in the morning, and if they catch the slow night train they will not be much further ahead than if they passed the night in St. John and took the fast train in the morning. For fast running we should think the combined train as far as Moncton would prove too cumbersome, and that break-downs would be of frequent occurrence.