

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1872.

SUNDAY,	Mar. 10.—Fourth Sunday in Lent. Prince of Wales married, 1863.
MONDAY,	" 11.—Tasso born, 1544. Luddite Riots at Nottingham, 1811.
TUESDAY,	" 12.—St. Gregory the Great. Peace of Utrecht, 1713. Desjardins Canal Accident, 1857.
WEDNESDAY,	" 13.—Planet Uranus discovered by Sir Wm. Herschell, 1781.
THURSDAY,	" 14.—York constituted a Market Town, 1814. Victor Emanuel born, 1820. Discovery of Lake Albert Nyanza by Sir S. Baker, 1864.
FRIDAY,	" 15.—Literary and Historical Society of Quebec founded, 1824. First Manitoban Parliament met, 1871.
SATURDAY,	" 16.—Reciprocity Treaty ratified, 1855.

TEMPERATURE in the shade, and Barometer indications for the week ending Tuesday, 27th February, 1872, observed by HEARN, HARRISON & Co., 242 Notre Dame Street.

		MAX.	MIN.	MEAN.	8 A.M.	1 P.M.	6 P.M.
W.,	Feb. 21.	34°	21°	27°5	29.60	29.65	29.60
Th.,	" 22.	37°	15°	26°	29.90	29.95	29.95
Fri.,	" 23.	35°	4°	19°5	30.04	29.90	29.83
Sat.,	" 24.	28°	—4°	12°	29.65	29.64	29.60
Su.,	" 25.	33°	7°	20°	29.42	29.45	29.48
Mo.,	" 26.	25°	—4°	10°5	30.10	30.10	30.06
Tu.,	" 27.	17°5	—5°	6°5	29.97	29.94	29.97

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The arrangements for transferring to local agents the total charge of our subscribers, so far as renewing and collecting subscriptions and distributing papers are concerned, not having met with general approval on the part of subscribers; and the agents having in many cases declined the responsibility, or neglected our interests, theirs, and that of our subscribers, we are obliged to revert to the former mode of distribution through Post. This need not disturb arrangements already made between any subscriber and any local news-dealer. We hope to see the sales effected by news agents increase rapidly, and desire that as much of our business as possible may be transacted through them. But we cannot overlook the complaints now made, and henceforth our subscribers will receive their papers, as formerly, through the Post. Any one who has missed any numbers since 1st of January can have them gratis on application.

Our readers are reminded that the subscription to the NEWS is \$4.00 per annum, payable in advance; if unpaid in three months it will be charged at the rate of Five Dollars.

All OLD subscribers whose subscriptions are unpaid on 1st July next, will be struck off the list.

All NEW subscriptions received henceforward, MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE.

THE CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1872.

The subject of the patent laws has been one of frequent discussion. The laws regulating patents prevailing in Canada have not heretofore been characterised by much liberality; but the excuse for this was that the United States Government acted in an unfriendly spirit towards Canadians by imposing upon them an exorbitant fee which virtually amounted to a prohibition. A year or two ago Congress removed this reproach by placing foreigners on the same footing as natives in regard to patents; in other words, it was enacted that Canadians could obtain a patent at Washington on the same terms as an American; or for the small fee of thirty-five dollars in addition to incidental expenses. It is now announced that Congress is about to repeal this liberal law; and that for the reason that our own Government has not reciprocated the liberal action of the American Congress. Our patent laws have remained closed against foreigners, unless they can prove a domicile in the country of twelve months' duration. During the lapse of that period we believe it is within the reach of any Canadian who is scoundrel enough to do so, to steal the foreigner's invention and have it patented for this country in his own name. The bare statement of the present condition of the law ought to be enough to condemn it, and to move the Ottawa Government towards a change in the direction of liberality and intelligence.

We are not unaware that opinion is divided as to the propriety of patent laws. Many intelligent men hold the view that they should not exist; that the products of inventive genius should be free as the air we breathe; that the inventor should have no special right to control the manufacture and sale of his own contrivance; but that everyone should be at liberty to adapt or adopt it according to his choice. This is a liberal creed truly, but it has no analogy in the management or application of any other kind of property. We are not acquainted with any owner of woodlands or broad acres who would quietly

submit to their appropriation by another; nor do we know why the results of invention or research, being equally the personal property, or the estate of the owner, should be subjected to a different law. As Parliament is soon to meet, it is to be hoped that the intelligent men of the community will express their views in an emphatic manner, so that members may understand how inventors, as well as pirates in *esse* or in *posse*, view the subject. There can be no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that in respect of patents as in anything else, the simple and familiar maxim that "honesty is the best policy" holds good.

But there is really no honesty in appropriating the invention of another without giving compensation. As well might we take his lands or his crops or the product of his handiwork. The law has wisely set a limit to privileges granted by patent, as it has to the continuance of a copyright or the time when a debt may be recovered for goods delivered or services rendered. In all this there is no cancelling of the obligation but a mere recognition of the transitory character of humanity and the consequent wisdom of putting a bar to the time for litigation. Now, because A. is a Canadian and B. an American, has the former a right to rob him of the product of his brain, any more than of the product of his hands? The reader's mind will suggest the answer; but we may say here that we no more believe in perpetually locking up an invention for the benefit of one than we do in permitting one man to hold an estate in lands, which are his own, to the injury of the public good. Lower Canada has a wise law of expropriation. The patent laws also expropriate, though without compensation, the inventor's right, within a stated number of years, so that upon the narrowest calculation the work of the mind is more inadequately protected than the work of the hand. The question at present is not, however, between the advocates and the opponents of patent laws, but between those who support an illiberal, narrow and unjust policy, as against those who would welcome the intelligent man, no matter what his country, to the same protection, and our people to the same advantages from his labours, as if he had been born in Canada.

There is a strange argument used in support of the very illiberal patent law now in force in Canada. We are told that were we to place the Americans on the same footing as Canadians, we should bring forty millions into competition with four. Now if inventive genius has any value at all, surely the four millions, *ceteris paribus*, would gain just ten times as much as the forty by a reciprocal exchange of invention. Yet our Parliament did not respond to the liberal action of the United States Congress by placing Americans on the same footing as our own people; and the consequence is that the Americans threaten to go back to their old terms of virtual exclusion. Ministers at Ottawa should take this matter under consideration at once and make a representation to the Washington Executive to the effect that Government will invite the Legislature to grant the same liberal conditions to American inventors that Congress recently conceded to Canadians and is apparently now about to withdraw.

The four against forty argument is, in the mouth of a Canadian, so silly that we are always surprised when we hear it made use of. By a reciprocal patent law the four millions of Canadians, or the fraction of them owning inventions, obtain a market numbering forty millions; whereas the fraction of the forty millions who are inventors, gain but a market of four millions by reciprocity with Canada. Nothing short of the traditional fondness of the Americans for all sorts of "notions" could have tempted them, in spite of their protective theories, to admit Canadian inventors on a level with their own, and it will be the worst of folly on the part of the Dominion Government if action be not immediately taken to prevent the movement now meditated by Congress, of recurring to the old restrictive and almost prohibitory law.

In justice to the inventor, his property in the creation of his own brain should be recognised; hence the wisdom of a patent law. In justice to the public, every man should be permitted to offer his productions on equal terms; hence the wrongness of our present law, which makes a new or special branch of trade or business dependent upon nationality, when the common ones are open to all. As to the privilege which Canadians are presumed to enjoy, under cover of our present law, of stealing the inventions of others, we do not admire its morality, nor do we believe that it is really half so profitable as would be a liberal law, which would enable inventors to protect themselves irrespective of their nationality or place of domicile.

Our attention has been drawn to this question by an announcement of Messrs. Legge & Co. which appears in the papers, and we have treated of it to-day, after a

somewhat hasty examination. As it is, however, the twin-sister to the great question of International Copyright, we may take occasion before the meeting of Parliament to point out more specially the defects in our existing law, and the course which should be pursued in amending it.

ONTARIO LEGISLATURE.

The first session of the second Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario was closed on Saturday last by Lieut.-Governor Howland with the speech copied below. It is a pity that the egotism of the Premier should have been permitted to display itself so offensively; for the speech reads like a censure on the old Cabinet, and a fulsome laudation of the new. Very few people, whether Conservatives or Reformers, cared much about the change in the heads of departments, so long as Provincial affairs were administered with intelligence and economy. But many will regret the bad taste that dictates unnecessary congratulations over a reversal of policy on trifles, when those congratulations reflect upon the administration of the previous Cabinet. We think it was hardly fair to force the Lieut.-Governor to become so jubilant over the incidents consequent upon the changes of Government, even though in a great many respects its policy may be more agreeable to the public. It is shabby to forget the maxim *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. The following is the closing speech:

"I thank you for the diligence with which you have laboured for the public good. I have cheerfully assented to various important measures which you have passed. I rejoice to observe that your independence has been further secured against influence as well of local Executive as of other powers, that you have resumed the exercise of your constitutional privilege and obvious duty in determining the appropriations of public moneys, and that you have asserted the right to speak and act in reference to the unpunished murder of a fellow-countryman. I notice with pleasure the hearty approval which you have given to my proposals for the distribution of the existing Railway Fund. In providing for further aid to these enterprises, you have recognized the duty of guarding with most jealous care the honour and good faith of the Province, and I am persuaded that what you have done will advance our material interests. I hope that the steps you have taken as to immigration will result in the introduction among us of a number of those labourers whom we need so much, and who are best suited to subdue unsettled lands, and there can be no doubt that the remissions you have authorized in respect of settlers in the Common School and free grant lands will tend to promote their contentment and prosperity. I believe that under the Act of this session charges for drainage operations will be less onerous, the work better done, and the tax more cheerfully paid than under the previous provisions. I am glad to see this further application of principle of local management so much in harmony with the spirit of our institutions. I thank you for the prudent liberality with which you have provided for the wants of the public service, and I shall take care that the monies you have granted are properly applied. I congratulate you on the great prosperity which we now enjoy, and I am sure that you will join with me in prayer that our present mercies may endure, and that we may be permitted when we meet again to renew the expression of our thankfulness to Him from whom those mercies flow."

The Montreal Warehousing Company announce that in consequence of the increasing demands made upon its resources for storage-room, the directors have purchased the well-known Royal Mills, on the south side of the canal, which they purpose converting into warehouses. They further state that their business having increased beyond their most sanguine expectations, they intend reorganising the Company with a subscribed capital commensurate with the value of its property. It is proposed to increase the amount of capital to \$600,000, in 12,000 shares, (at \$50 per share) of which 6,000 are offered for public subscription. This is a most eligible investment, and the names that appear on the list of directors are a sufficient guarantee of the soundness of the enterprise. In the present state of the money market we hope to see the new stock speedily taken up.

Between breathing the effluvia of the sewers, and being denied the use of water for nearly twelve out of the twenty-four hours of the day, we do not wonder that our death rate is three times as great as it should be. *Quære*: Are not the managers of our Corporation affairs responsible for the deaths of the extra two-thirds? At all events the living should have water, and the authorities should not expose the city to the risk of a fire which might make of it a second Chicago. The coals saved by stopping the engines would be but a poor recompense for our houses being turned into ashes.

We learn that on the 21st inst., a lecture will be given at St. Patrick's Hall, by Dr. Bessey, to be followed by music and tableaux. The proceeds of the entertainment will be handed over to the Montreal General Hospital, a most deserving charity which merits support from every class and creed. Mr. Brydges will preside at the entertainment which, we believe, from the number of ladies and gentlemen who have interested themselves in the matter, will be very enjoyable.

One of the most recently published of American Encyclopedias informs its readers that Montreal is "a city and river port of Upper Canada." We need scarcely quote further, though a correspondent has favoured us with a copy of the whole article.