

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

Subscribers remit the Money either direct to the office, or through Agents, will find a receipt for the amount included in their next paper. All remittances should be made payable to A. M. Fraser.

Those who wish to secure pleasant and profitable reading matter for the winter evening, should note our exceptional offer which appears on page fifteen. For \$2.50 in cash we will take to read THE CRITIC to any subscriber for one year, supplying him in addition with seventy-nine of the most readable of readable books. Those who are renewing their subscriptions, as well as new subscribers, should take advantage of this offer.

Murray, the brakeman hurt by the recent railway accident at Stellarton, died on Tuesday night.

A shock of earthquake is reported at Ottawa on Wednesday morning. Wiggins slept calmly through it.

A fellow named Adams has been doing some of the usual dirty work of the volunteer Scott Act detective, at New Glasgow.

Wednesday was the birthday of Sir John Macdonald. He has completed his 73rd year, and is said to be in excellent health.

M. Chouinard (Conservative) has been elected to the Dominion Parliament, in the room of the late Col. Duchesnay, without opposition.

Single copies of THE CRITIC will hereafter be sold at five cents, the yearly subscription remaining as before at \$1.50, payable in advance.

St. John is alive. The St. John Forwarding and Trade Promoting Association were to despatch their pioneer vessel to the West Indies on Wednesday.

The Halifax customs receipts for December were \$124,197, against \$114,510 in the corresponding month of 1886. The inland revenue receipts were \$25,241, against \$21,430.

Belcher's Farmer's Almanac is a publication of great utility, and is deserving of a patronage which we hope will increase. There is, however, room in it for improvement in several directions.

The Toronto *Globe*, finding it may be supposed, that pessimism and unpatriotism do not pay, is reported to have executed a complete somersault, and to be writing with quite patriotic fervor.

Mr. Waldie, M. P. (Liberal) for Halton, Ont., has been unseated for bribery, and four reformers of Prince Edward County were sentenced on Saturday to different terms of imprisonment for the same offence.

A most revolting story comes from St. John of hideous cruelty practised by the captain and officers of the Yarmouth ship *Vancouver* on four seamen belonging to her, and every additional testimony adduced intensifies the horror.

The British brig *Kildonan*, arrived at Baltimore, reports passing through six miles of floating timber, doubtless part of the big raft. It is to be hoped this will be the last allowed to be set afloat on the ocean at a late season in the year.

Sir Thomas Grattan Esmonde, Bart., M.P., arrived in the city on Wednesday and held a reception, lecturing also at the Academy last night on the cause of Ireland. Sir Thomas is a lineal descendant of Henry Grattan, and is the youngest Home Rule member, being only 25.

The N. S. Telephone Company has completed the circuit between Halifax, Pictou and New Glasgow, and subscribers in the last named places may now converse with parties in many different parts of the Province. Connection with other important points in the Province will soon be completed.

A sad accident occurred on Saturday. Mr. Clarence Hamilton, City Collector, skating down the Dartmouth Lakes, on which the ice seems to have become defective, went in and was drowned, no help being at hand, though his cries were heard at a distance, but ceased before he could be reached. Mr. Hamilton has left a wife and child.

The newly opened Sault Ste Marie branch of the C. P. R. will be a very important addition to the carrying facilities of the N. W. The first train crossed the Sault Bridge on the 31st December, and 100 cars laden with flour left Minneapolis on the 2nd Jany. for points in Canada. The distance from Minneapolis to Liverpool via Montreal is 3,947 miles, and via New York, 4,463 miles.

The Quebec Board of Trade has urged upon the Dominion Government the granting of a contract to a line of steamers to and from the St. Lawrence in summer, and Halifax or St. John in winter, second to none entering New York. It is certainly time the slow monopoly of the Allan line, which has always been worked in a narrow spirit of greed, should be broken down. The time occupied between Liverpool and Canadian ports is altogether excessive.

The bountiful harvest in the North-West is leading British millers to consider the possibility of increased purchases of Canadian hard wheat. The *Miller*, the leading organ of the trade, urges British millers to purchase wheat in the Canadian North-West, direct from the growers, and ship it straight to the British markets. It says there is every reason to expect that the co-operation of the Canadian Pacific railway will make Manitoba and the North-West the granary for British millers.

On account of the disgraceful drunkenness and debauchery on Christmas day in Toronto, temperance men are agitating for having saloons closed on Christmas and New Year's day. The stories of Christmas day scenes show a frightful state of things. One saloon which closed at 7 o'clock in the evening on account of fighting inside, had twenty-three men lying drunk on the floor when the door closed. More than one hundred cases have been in the police court. Several serious fights took place and in one saloon a man was stabbed.

Another bad railway collision. Two freight trains met on a high trestle bridge over a ravine 80 feet deep, 165 miles east of Port Arthur, three men killed and others injured. Mistake of orders, as usual. It is satisfactory to note that the conductor and engineer of the east bound train, and the telegraph operator, are held responsible for this accident, and have been lodged in jail at Port Arthur.

About the same number of licenses as for the current year have been granted by the City Council for the year beginning 15th March next. The applications were of course strongly opposed by the (so-called) Temperance League, but as the city is said to have lost about \$14,000 last year by the operation of the inquisitorial License Act of 1886, it is probable the Council, where each refusal is said to cost the city treasury over \$100, consider it as important to keep an eye on revenue, as to foster the extreme views which procure us the questionable advantages of over-paternal legislation.

We have been favored with a number of calendars from business firms and agencies of the city and elsewhere, many of which display a decided advance in simplicity of coloring, excellence of engraving, and artistic taste generally; those which have come to hand this week are as follows:—*Jas. C. Mackintosh, Esq., Banker and Dealer in Stocks, Bonds and Debentures; the Royal Fire Insurance of Liverpool, Eng., Farquhar, Forrest & Co., Halifax; the Western Assurance Co., Toronto, Geo. M. Greer, Halifax; Godfrey Smith, Chemist, &c., Halifax, those of the latter being especially worthy of note.*

Harper's for January is an average number, but some of the illustrations are not quite as clear specimens of engraving as might be desired, especially those illustrating "Modern French Sculpture," the examples given of which are not in themselves attractive. An article on the "Adoration of the Magi," however, contains examples of pictures on that subject, both ancient and modern, which are interesting in themselves, as well as being well reproduced. "Virginia of Virginia" is a pathetic story of a somewhat wild Virginian maiden, too handsome and too sensitive for her own happiness, having the misfortune to fall in love with a man who is more strongly attracted by a more civilized beauty. Archdeacon Farrar contributes a pleasant article on "The share of America in Westminster Abbey." The "Easy Chair's" reminiscences of Jenny Lind are very enduring, but none the less pleasant, and the "Study" gives some pages to the latest novel of Armando Valdes, a Spanish writer of merit. We also note the beginning of a new serial, "In Far Lochaber," from the pen of William Black.

On Tuesday evening last the hall of the Orpheus Club was filled by a large and enthusiastic audience, anxious to hear the repetition of Gounod's "Redemption" by the Orpheus Club, with the ladies auxiliary. Having on a previous occasion referred at length to this unique musical composition, it will be unnecessary to repeat our encomiums upon its many striking beauties and effects. Suffice it to say that its repetition only made these the more apparent, calling forth fresh expressions of appreciation from those who had previously had the pleasure of listening to its rendition. The instrumental setting of the "Redemption" is remarkably fine, and much of its effect is lost by the substitution of piano-fortes for stringed and wind instruments. Speaking generally of the merits of the performance, we might say that with the exception of Professor Curry and Mrs. Taylor the soloists were either rendering music which they did not comprehend, or else they were indifferent as to the effect they produced upon those listening to them. To hear a soprano attempting to reach a note that is like sour grapes to her, or a tenor forcing his voice beyond its ordinary volume, or a baritone making his tones shake as if he had been suddenly struck with palsy, is far from pleasurable—even when seated in a comfortable part of the hall, but when listened to beside a draughty window with a miniature blizzard playing about the back of your neck, they become positively painful exhibitions of musical ambition, and we hail with gratitude the quick beat of the baton which brings to their feet the members of the club with the ladies auxiliary. Then draughts and blizzards are forgotten, and we listen with rapture to the glorious choruses, most of which are performed in a manner that would do credit to the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, which is no faint praise. Under Mr. Porter's instruction the Club has come to sing as no other association has ever previously sung in this city. The balance of the parts is good, the observance of time excellent, while with each succeeding concert more and more evidence is shown of that careful training which is required to insure any degree of excellence in expression. What Halifax wants, and wants badly, is good soloists, and we could wish that the Orpheus Club could see its way clear to get up the concerted work in some standard composition such as the "Redemption," and bring down from the musical centres of the United States a quintette of good soloists; then we should have an evening of unalloyed pleasure, for which we should be quite willing to pay double the cost of the present admission.

The largest individual taxpayer in Meriden, Conn., is Horace C. Wilcox, who is assessed at \$199,480.

There is a mountain of coal in Wild Horse Valley, Wyoming, which has been burning for 30 years. It sends up dense volumes of smoke.

Proteau, the first white settler of Dakota, was found frozen to death near Fort Bennett a few days ago. He was a noted trapper and scout. He was 93 years old.

The public debt of the United States was reduced during the past month \$15,250,000; for the entire calendar year of 1887 the debt was diminished by \$17,016,000.

Duck hunters in Georgia report an unusual supply of these birds this fall. Ward Allen killed over 700 in eight days, and one day shot 150 by daylight and 40 by moonlight.