

Dominion Parliament. Manitoba seems disposed to adopt it. The idea is rapidly becoming popular in Ontario, and the movement is spreading to other Provinces. The system owes its existence to the late Sir Robert Torrens, a layman in one of the Australian Provinces. Being struck with the ease, cheapness and safety of the ordinary mode of transferring shares in vessels and other property, as compared with the cumbrous, costly and unsafe mode of transferring land, the question occurred to him why real estate should not pass as easily from hand to hand as a horse or a share in a bank. He devoted much time and thought to a plan for bringing about such a simplification, was elected to Parliament as its author and promoter, and eventually succeeded in having it adopted in his own Province, whence it has since spread over the whole Australian Continent. After it comes in force here people will ask in amazement why some such plan was not adopted a hundred years ago, or rather why any other ever had an existence or found a defender.

The fall of Khartoum brings to an end the vacillating policy of the British Government in North eastern Africa. The course of that policy will yet form an instructive episode in general history no less than in English Parliamentary Government. When Arabi Bey rebelled against the Khedive of Egypt, and took possession of Alexandria, the British Government undertook to quell the rebellion mainly, so far as one can see, in the interest of British holders of Egyptian bonds. The temporarily successful uprising under Arabi Bey in Lower Egypt gave an impetus to the much more persistent one under the Mahdi in Upper Egypt and the Soudan, and Chinese Gordon was allowed at his own urgent request to penetrate to Khartoum and put himself at the head of the enemies of the False Prophet. The latter is an Arab, and has gathered round him many of the sheikhs of the desert. Gordon had a considerable amount of influence with the tribes, but was gradually hemmed in, and English public opinion forced the Government to send an expedition under Wolseley to relieve him. The vanguard of that expedition reached the beleaguered place on the 28th January, only to find it in the hands of the enemy, Gordon being either dead or a prisoner. It is evident that to allow Gordon to undertake such a mission was a fatal error. His life was worth no more to the nation than those of of some who have lost theirs in the effort to relieve him. He is an enthusiast, but enthusiasm must be kept under restraint when it tends to lead to the needless sacrifice of life. What was England's interest in Khartoum? The occupation of that place by the Mahdi was not even a menace to the Suez Canal, which could in any event be more easily defended from itself than from the Nile at Khartoum.

The Wolseley expedition was sent out greatly against the will of some members of the Gladstone Government, but now that Khartoum has fallen and the little army is in danger there will be no more indecision. If Mr. Gladstone wishes to popularize himself now all he need do is to start a crusade against the slave trading Arabs and crush them once for all in the Soudan. Gen. Wolseley has been given full power to act on his own discretion, and this means that he will be supplied with the necessary means. There is no likelihood of France giving trouble for she is in a worse fix in China and Tonquin. Italy will cordially assist England, and even Germany will applaud. The greatest difficulty in the way is the desert, but that can be overcome by the construction of a cheap railway over a district which presents a level surface. At this writing the ball still seems to be at Mr. Gladstone's toe, and he will belie his high reputation for versatility and resource if he fails to send it off.

ONLOOKER.

## General News.

### CANADIAN.

The Dominion W. C. T. U. closed a very successful three days convention at Ottawa on Friday last.

Col. Trywhitt, M.P. for South Simcoe, has made application to the War Office to organize a Canadian regiment for service in Egypt.

Mr. J. W. Bain, the Liberal-Conservative candidate, has been elected to the House of Commons for the county of Soulanges, Man.

Mr. Poirer, postmaster of the House of Commons, has been appointed Senator for New Brunswick, in place of the late Senator Muirhead.

Elections under the Canada Temperance Act are called for the counties of Elgin, Lambton, Missisquoi and the city of St. Thomas, all on March 19.

Canadian Pacific Railway traffic receipts for last week show an increase of \$64,000, and those of the Grand Trunk a decrease of \$62,156, compared with the corresponding period last year.

The John H. Stratford hospital, at Brantford, the munificent gift of Mr. John H. Stratford to the city, was formally opened on Tuesday by the Lieut.-Governor of Ontario.

Preparations are being made for a monster representative delegation of those opposed to the Scott Act to visit Ottawa and impress their views on the Dominion Government.

At Belleville, Feb. 6, the four-year-old daughter of Mr. David Babcock, accidentally set fire to her clothes on Tuesday, and was burned so severely that death resulted yesterday afternoon.

Toronto University Convocation have discussed the question of federation, and passed resolutions approving of it with a certain proviso, and have appointed a committee to watch whatever legislation may be required to that end.

FIRES.—A fire broke out in C. H. Cordingly & Co's. distillery, Montreal, on the 10th, when the stock on the third and fourth flats was damaged to the extent of \$4,000. Insured for \$12,000.—At Woodstock on Feb. 8th, John Bain's cabinet factory, east end, was burned. The loss in furniture is considerable and unrecovered.—At Belleville, on Feb. 10th, about 2.30 in the morning, a fire broke out in Patrick Murphy's store on Front street. Considerable damage was done to the goods by smoke and water. Mr. Murphy is insured for \$700, which will cover his loss.

### UNITED STATES.

During a scrimmage between Mexican horse thieves and Texans last week, ten of the former were shot.

Edward S. Arnot, an actor, suicided on Feb. 5th, by cutting his throat. Drink and financial embarrassment were the cause.

A tremendous snowstorm prevailed in the North-Western States on Monday. In some localities it was accompanied by heavy rain and thunder and lightning. Railway traffic is almost completely stopped.

At Ashland, Oregon, on Feb. 5th, Alex. Jones, mail carrier, and Mrs. Geo. Gibson and two children, and a young man named McClung were drowned while attempting to ford a creek which was swollen by recent rains.

At Cairo, Ill., on Feb. 8th, Frank Abner, 15 years old, has been gaoled, charged with murdering his grandmother, Mrs. Ross, near Rock Creek. He had been reprimanded by his grandmother for neglecting his work. At midnight he got up and buried an axe in her brains, killing her instantly.

A fearful collision occurred early Saturday morning at New Brunswick, N.J., between a freight and an oil train, by which four people and twelve horses were burned to death, and factories and property valued at three-quarters of a million was consumed by the burning oil.

FIRES.—One of the largest fires witnessed in New York for some time broke out at midnight on the 4th, in the wine vaults of Steinhardt Bros., Wooster street. The flames spread with frightful rapidity throughout the building, and owing to the inflammable nature of the contents the department were unable to cope with the devouring element. The fire gained such headway that the entire fire department of the lower part of the city was called out. Shortly afterwards the walls caved in crushing the adjoining houses. Contiguous to the burning structure were a number of tenement houses. About fifty families are now in the station house. The intense heat from the blazing structure has cracked the walls on the other side of the street. The loss is estimated at one and a half millions of dollars.—Another fire broke out same evening in the five story marble building on Barclay street, occupied by Major & Knapp, lithographers, Edward Miller & Co., clock manufacturers; Fritzsche Bros., essential oils; John Wygands, glass and crockery. The flames spread so rapidly that several of the hindermost were slightly burned in making their escape from the building. Loss, \$275,000. Fireman James Smith, who mounted to the top storey, lost his footing, fell to the street seventy feet below and was killed.