

# CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1870.

SUNDAY,	Dec. 11.—	Third Sunday in Advent. Charles XII. killed, 1718.
MONDAY,	" 12.—	Victoria Bridge opened for traffic, 1859.
TUESDAY,	" 13.—	St. Lucy, V. & M. New Zealand discovered, 1642.
WEDNESDAY,	" 14.—	Washington died, 1799. Prince Albert died, 1861.
THURSDAY,	" 15.—	Isaac Walton died, 1683.
FRIDAY,	" 16.—	Great Fire at New York, 1835.
SATURDAY,	" 17.—	First Lower Canadian Parliament met, 1792.

## THE CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1870.

THE Annual Message of the President of the United States derives its practical importance from the relations subsisting between the Executive and Congress. If these, in some measure co-ordinate powers, are antagonistic, then it is safe to say that what the President will propose the Congress will dispose of, very summarily indeed, by treating it with contempt. This was the case with President Johnson's Messages; the last one he sent to Congress was treated in the House of Representatives with every indignity; scoffed at, laughed at, tossed under the table, and almost refused a place among the records. This undignified behaviour was designed to show the contempt in which the President was held; and to punish him for his stubborn resistance to Congressional policy. But the case is now entirely changed. Though President Grant and the American Congress are not in accord in everything, he is still the chosen Candidate of the dominant—and domineering—party in the United States Legislature, and it is pretty well understood that he aspires to a renomination as Republican candidate for the next Presidential election. In all matters of party tactics and general policy, President Grant is in harmony with the majority in both branches of Congress, and we may fairly assume that the views he expresses in his Message represent the policy of the Republic, regarding all or nearly all the subjects he discusses. Under these circumstances, the Message of President Grant, delivered to Congress at its opening on Monday last, is a document of considerable importance; and will doubtless command serious attention far beyond the limits of the Republic.

The Message, after the customary congratulations on the prosperous condition of the Republic, regrets the "violence and intimidation" at some of the elections, and hopes that at the beginning of next year, Georgia, the only remaining disfranchised State, will take its place in the National Councils. Touching the Franco-Prussian war it speaks with evident pride of the many foreigners from different countries who solicited and received the protection of the United States Minister in Paris; rejoices at the proclamation of the French Republic, and while adhering to traditional neutrality "cannot be indifferent to the spread of American (!) political ideas in "a great and highly civilized country like France!" After this somewhat "tall talk" the President discourses sensibly on the subjects of mediation and neutrality, having declined to take part in the former when solicited by Jules Favre, on the ground that "established policy" forbade the United States to interfere in European quarrels, and with respect to the latter having issued proclamations, from time to time, in order that it might be strictly observed. The Cuban insurrection, Spain and the South American Republics, come in for a long notice. He has proposed to Spain a joint tribunal for the settlement of the claims of American citizens against the Spanish authorities in Cuba, and significantly says: "Should the pending negotiations unfortunately and unexpectedly be without result, it will then become my duty to communicate the fact to Congress and invite its action on the subject." Spain having, after long hesitation, gone back on "American political ideas" and returned to the "effete system of monarchy," should accept the very reasonable proposals of the President, otherwise it is not unlikely that the Washington Government may make its grievances a cause of war, for Cuba is worth either paying or fighting for. With respect to the South American Republics the President expresses a sincere interest in their welfare, and says:

"The time is not probably far distant when, in the natural course of events, the European political connection with this Continent will cease. Our policy should be shaped in view of this probability, so as to ally the commercial interests of the Spanish American States more closely to us, and thus give the United States all the pre-eminence and all the advantage which Mr. Munroe, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Clay contemplated when they proposed to join to the United States the Isthmus of Panama."

The significance of the first part of this extract lies in the meaning attached to a "far distant time." In the

rise and fall of Empires, in the elevation and degradation of peoples and races, a period of five hundred, or even a thousand, years is not considered absolutely remote from the time whence you look back; nor should it, therefore, be far from the time whence you look forward. And as the accomplishment of this political disconnection between the two Continents is further relegated to the "natural course of events," we, dwellers in these northern regions, can well afford to wait the realization of President Grant's anticipations with the utmost composure.

On the annexation of San Domingo the President is not only urgent but fervently eloquent. After reciting at great length the arguments in favour of the measure, the increased facilities it would give for the payment of the national debt through the agency of greatly enhanced commerce, &c., he says:—

"The acquisition of San Domingo is an adhesion to the Munroe doctrine—is a measure of national protection. It is asserting our just claim to a controlling influence over the great commercial traffic soon to flow from the East and West by way of the Isthmus of Darien. It is to build up our merchant marine. It is to furnish new markets for the products of our farms, shops, and factories. It is to make slavery insupportable in Cuba and Porto Rico at once, and ultimately so in Brazil. It is to settle the unhappy condition of Cuba, and end an exterminating conflict. It is to promote honest means of paying our honest debts without over-taxing the people. It is to furnish our citizens with the necessities of every-day life at lower rates than ever before, and it is, in fine, a rapid stride towards that greatness which the intelligence, industry, and enterprise of the citizens of the United States entitle this country to assume among nations. In view of the importance of this question, I earnestly urge upon Congress early action, expressive of its views as to the best means of acquiring San Domingo."

He complains that the Mexican Government exempts a large tract of its territory upon the United States border,—and threatens to extend the exemption—from import duties, to the injury of the U. S. revenue, and thinks it expedient for Congress to give serious consideration to proper means for abolishing this exemption; in other words, for compelling Mexico to submit to Washington dictation in the regulation of its tariff. Other questions of minor interest are then referred to, and the question of disputed boundary between the United States and the North-West is discussed in a fair spirit. He says:—

"In April last, while engaged in locating a military reservation near Pembina, a Corps of Engineers discovered that the commonly received boundary line between the United States and the British possessions at that place is about forty-seven hundred feet south of the true position of the 40th parallel, and that when run on what is now supposed to be the true position of that parallel would leave the fort of the Hudson's Bay Company at Pembina within the territory of the United States. This information being communicated to the British Government, I was requested to consent, and did consent, that the British occupation of the fort of the Hudson's Bay Company should continue for the present; I deem it important, however, that this part of the boundary line should be definitely fixed by a Joint Commission of the two governments, and I submit the estimates of the expense of such a commission on the part of the United States, and recommend that an appropriation for that purpose be made."

Great Britain has been too often outwitted on the boundary question to make any wry faces about these "forty-seven hundred feet."

The following brief and pithy paragraph is all that the message has to say on the "Alabama" claims:—

"I regret to say that no conclusion has been reached for the adjustment of the claims against Great Britain growing out of the course adopted by that Government during the rebellion. The Cabinet of London, so far as its views have been expressed, does not appear to be willing to concede that Her Majesty's Government was guilty of negligence, or did or permitted any act during the war by which the United States has just cause of complaint. Our firm and unalterable convictions are directly the reverse. I therefore recommend to Congress to authorise the appointment of a commission to take proof of the amounts and the ownership of their claims, on notice to the representative of Her Majesty's Government; and that authority be given for the settlement of these claims by the United States, so that the Government shall have the ownership of the private claims as well as the responsible control of all the claimants against Great Britain. It cannot be necessary to add that whenever Her Majesty's Government shall entertain a desire for a full and friendly adjustment of these claims, the United States will enter upon their consideration with an earnest desire for a conclusion consistent with the honour and dignity of both nations."

The policy of the President in this matter is readily discernible. He desires to get the "Alabama" whip altogether in the hands of the Executive, so that it may be laid on when the opportunity offers.

But it is only when he comes to speak of the relations of the United States with Canada that the President seems thoroughly to forget the dignity of his position, and to become querulous, peevish, and even threatening. After complaining of the action of the Canadian Government with respect to the fisheries, and treating the subject very much from the Butler stand point, the President says:—

"Anticipating that an attempt may possibly be made by the Canadian authorities in the coming season to repeat their unneighbourly acts towards our fishermen, I recommend you to confer upon the Executive the power to suspend by proclamation the operation of the laws authorising the transit of goods,

wares, and merchandise in bond between the territory of the United States and Canada; and further, should such an extreme measure become necessary, to suspend the operation of any laws whereby the vessels of the Dominion of Canada are permitted to enter the waters of the United States."

It is hardly necessary to point out the unreasonableness of the American demand for a share in our fisheries without the offer of an equivalent. The question is well understood both by the Canadian and British Governments, and we believe that, as it is not very distantly associated with the subject of naval strength, the rights of our country will be firmly upheld, while their enforcement will, as heretofore, be in the mildest form, in order to prevent irritation. But it is a notable feature in the above declaration that it indicates President Grant's seeming departure from his course of last summer, when his Government admitted the justice of the Anglo-Canadian policy regarding the fisheries, and instructed American fishermen, by departmental circular, to respect the Canadian regulations. This apparent change is attributed to the ascendancy of Gen. Butler in the confidence of the President.

There is complaint made of "a like unfriendly disposition manifested on the part of Canada in the maintenance of a claim of right to exclude the citizens of the 'United States from the navigation of the St. Lawrence.'" In this statement President Grant is as inaccurate as in his quotations from, and references to, the Treaty of 1818. Canada never set up "a claim of right" to do any such thing. Yet the President expatiates to the extent of nearly three-quarters of a column upon the injustice of this claim, dragging into his argument John Quincy Adams, Clay, the Congress of Vienna, the Douro, the Rhine, the Argentine Republic, &c., &c., all to prove that Canada should have no such "right;" and he concludes:—

"It is hoped that the Government of Great Britain will see the justice of abandoning the narrow and inconsistent claim to which the Canadian Provinces have urged their adherence."

Now, we venture to say that it is on the score of humanity only that Canada would desire to exclude the Americans from navigating the St. Lawrence. Canadians would not like to see an "American steamship," nor a sailing craft either, even though Ben. Butler were on board, attempt to run from the head waters of the St. Lawrence to the sea, for they know that, if all other dangers were overcome, the Falls of Niagara would prove fatal to the success of the enterprise!

The "claim of right" upon which Canada insists, and in which she will undoubtedly be sustained by Great Britain, is simply the exclusive right to control her own canals—to close them when and against whom she pleases. This "right" she only claims; but the same "right" the American Government has actually put—and maintains—in force against foreign ships. It is extraordinary that American statesmen should so commit themselves to *buncombe*.

The rest of the message is devoted to home affairs, and we are glad to notice the record of progress and prosperity among our neighbours. The President recommends economy, prompt payment of debt, reduced taxation as demands upon the revenue will permit; and "honest and fair dealing with all other people." A good programme truly.

The following remarkable and strikingly suggestive, indeed prophetic, paragraph, is copied from the *American Eclectic Magazine* for May, 1862:

"A CURIOUS DOCUMENT.—From Paris we learn that the second volume of *The Family of Orleans*, by M. Crétineau Joly, is shortly to appear, and it is said to contain a curious document relative to the present Emperor of France. It is a letter from Queen Hortense, written after the Strasburg adventure. The mother of Louis Napoleon writes:—'The failure of the undertaking is not much to be regretted.' And later:—'If unfortunately my Louis should ever become Emperor, he would ruin everything, and France entirely.' It is supposed that this volume will appear in two editions, as no French publisher will venture on printing this letter; the French edition will merely make mention of the letter, while the Belgian is to print it completely.—*Paris Letter in London Review*."

The fourth session of the first Legislative Assembly of Ontario was opened at Toronto on Wednesday last by Lieut.-Governor Howland.

The "Eastern question" is still the subject of much earnest discussion, but fears of a rupture have almost wholly disappeared.

Early on Sunday morning a fire broke out on the north side of Sparks street, Ottawa, destroying a number of outhouses and four or five shops, the principal of which was that of Messrs. Young & Radford, jewellers. The stock in every instance was fortunately nearly all saved. Will the rate-payers of Ottawa seriously set about getting water works in order now, or do they prefer waiting for another lesson—"just to see how far the fire might go?"

Messrs. Lyman, Clare & Co., of this city, recently received a letter from Paris which made its exit from the besieged capital by balloon post. It bore the Paris stamp of the 4th, and the London of the 9th Nov.