

We are making preparations for the issue of the
Christmas Number
of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, which we are resolved to
work up to

A STANDARD OF UNUSUAL EXCELLENCE.

Besides the ordinary amount of letter-press, we shall publish

A SUPPLEMENT

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1873.

If we properly seize the meaning of Mr. Mackenzie's speech, at his late election, the new Government have resolved to solve the problem of the Pacific Railway, according to the views expounded by the member for Lambton, when leader of the Opposition. He proposes that the sixty miles of road from Pembina to Fort Garry shall be built at once, thus connecting the capital of Manitoba, with the Northern Pacific Railway. Then the Saskatchewan section shall be constructed and finally the Pacific section. The portion between Fort Garry and Lake Nipissing is to be kept for the last, and not entered upon until the rest of the road is completed. As it will take seven years, according to Mr. Mackenzie's calculation, to build the road from Fort Garry to Victoria, in British Columbia, it follows that, for seven years, at least, the Canada Pacific will be virtually a branch of the American Northern Pacific. Of course, the Opposition papers have taken exception to this. They already see in it a consummation of the scheme, whereby the late Government was overturned, to make way for the men who were acting all along in collusion with the Directors of the American Northern Pacific. In plainer words, they charge that the new Cabinet is carrying out its pledge to Messrs. McMullin, Jay Cooke and others, of so contriving the gradual building of the Canada Pacific, as to give the bulk of its carrying trade to the Northern Pacific, for a term of years, ranging from seven to ten. That this will be the practical effect of Mr. Mackenzie's scheme is unquestionable. The moment Fort Garry is connected by rail with Pembina, the rush of emigration to Manitoba, will naturally run in the channel of the Northern Pacific, from Duluth to Pembina. The moment the Saskatchewan Valley is opened to Pembina, *via* Fort Garry, emigration thither will go by the Northern Pacific. And the moment the Pacific slope is reached by rail, emigration will tend thither through its first important stage from Duluth to Pembina. From a mere business point of view, there can be no objection to this arrangement. From an international point of view, there is absolutely no more inconvenience, than there is in running the Grand Trunk, out of Portland to Island Pond, during the winter months. The Treaty of Washington has provided ample reciprocity for the transmission of bonded goods to Canada through the United States, and conversely. The objection to the project is deeper and reaches much farther. It lies precisely in leaving for ten years the Atlantic section of the Canada Pacific unbuilt. That implies more than appears on the surface of it. It implies a check to the growth of the Ottawa Valley, at present so full of ambition and energy. It implies that the upper portion of the Province of Ontario shall remain a wilderness for another decade. It implies that the Lake Superior region shall remain unsettled, and its immense treasures of copper and other ores, shall lie untouched. It implies that the future Canadian city of the North, shall not be built, but remain only a shipping port for passengers and freight *in transitu* to Duluth, which will thus become the Mistress of the Lakes. It is a mistake to suppose that the country between French River and the Assiniboine is a barren tract. It may present engineering difficulties, without being uninhabitable to man. The Algoma district, with proper communications, is destined to be the centre of a large colony. It is a mistake, also, to suppose that settlements radiate from an oasis in the far desert, and that it is best to seek these oases first. The experience of the Western American States shows that they were gradually settled, and that emigrants went further West, only when the border States had been well filled up. Thus Kansas was settled only when Missouri had a large population; Colorado was settled only when Kansas was well occupied. Immigration creeps westward from the most easterly settlement; does not bound into green spots here and there in the wilderness! Emigration is continuous, not sporadic. Thus its natural march is up the Valley of the Ottawa and along the shores of Georgian Bay, from point to point, until it reaches the prairies of Manitoba and the Saskatchewan. Hence the necessity of railway communication in that region. It would be suicidal to wait ten years for that railway. It must be further remarked that the plan of the late Government, included the immediate building of the short section between Pembina and Fort Garry, so that it favored immigration into that territory, at the same time that it provided means for peopling the Upper Ottawa district. In view of the brief statement of his intentions given by Mr. Mackenzie, it would be premature to enter more fully into the discussion of this

important subject to-day, but we believe it is not presumptuous to state that there are two points which the new Government will have to consider, as clearly demanded by public opinion—one, that the Canada Pacific must be proceeded with, the other, that it must begin from Lake Nipissing.

The "Virginus" question has been settled, for a time at least. Spain, after some little delay and a faint show of resistance, has acceded to the just and temperate demands of the United States Government for restitution. She has consented to restore the "Virginus," salute the American flag, return the surviving passengers and members of the crew, and indemnify the families of the men who were executed at Santiago de Cuba. Before committing himself to this step, we learn that Castelar consulted the various European governments, and received a unanimous reply to the effect that concession was absolutely necessary. Another powerful argument in favour of an apology—and one to which he could not afford to turn a deaf ear—was the rumour of active preparations for war in the United States arsenals. England, it was whispered, was willing to back the demands of her cousin across the ocean. So, the cards being against him, the Spanish President took the safest course that remained open, and acquiesced in the stipulations of the injured party. In so doing he has come out of the difficulty with increased honour and a new claim upon the gratitude of the people he rules for having spared them an unequal struggle and an ignominious defeat. Whether the Spaniards will take this view of the matter is another thing. They are a vain, haughty people, quick to resent and slow to admit an insult; and they will unquestionably keenly feel what they will doubtless be pleased to call the humiliation of an apology. It redounds all the more to the credit of Castelar, that knowing this, being perfectly aware that he was putting a weapon into the hands of his enemies at home, he had the moral courage to do what was right and defy the consequences. That his decision may militate against him, may even lead to his downfall from power, is only too much to be feared. A third party of malcontents will not improbably be formed to add to the distraction that is already racking unhappy Spain, while from Cuba the fiercest opposition is only to be expected. If he survive the crisis, we may hope for the inauguration of a more peaceful and prosperous future for the Spanish Republic; while if he falls, he will retire with the sympathy of all men and the proud consciousness of having stood firm in the cause of justice. Yet another question arises. Can the retraction be carried out in Cuba? It is a very favourite belief among journals in the States that the Spanish Government will be unable to enforce its authority in the island; that the Spanish Cubans will resist to the last, and will only yield to overwhelming force. On this ground we see no score whatever for apprehension. The slave-holders may show signs of mutiny, but they are in no position to carry out a determined resistance. No large force would be required to compel them to submission. Hedged in on the one side by the troops from home, and on the other side by their bitterest enemies, the Cuban patriots, their struggle would be but a short one. The only thing for which there is the slightest cause of alarm is that on the publication of Castelar's decision, the Spanish party in Cuba may have forestalled the enforcement of that portion which relates to the "Virginus" survivors and completed the bloody work they began at Santiago. That they are capable of doing such a thing no one will for a moment doubt. Their contempt for all law and authority is a fact that is only too notorious. Of this they have given proof sufficient. And herein, we take it, lies a fruitful cause for future trouble. Should another butchery take place, the question will be re-opened, no longer as a matter purely between the United States and Spain, but as a matter in which all nations will be interested. And the decision that must necessarily be reached will be: If Spain is not strong enough to enforce her authority in her own possessions, it is time they were handed over to some one else.

Apropos of marine calamities—they have been on everybody's lips during the week—is nothing to be done in the case of the "Ismailla?" Sixty-seven days ago, that steamer left the port of New York for Glasgow. Since that time nothing has been heard of her, and notwithstanding the hopeful expressions indulged in, with what reason we fail to see, by the officers of the Anchor Line, it is difficult to persuade oneself that anything ever will be heard of her. A grosser case of recklessness than that exhibited by the men who sent the vessel out to sea can hardly be imagined. According to the testimony of the underwriters the "Ismailla" could not be considered to be in a fit condition for the voyage if she were so loaded as to draw more than twenty feet of water. The pilot who took her to sea swears that she drew twenty-two. A clearer case could not be made out. Those who are answerable for the over-loading of the vessel are responsible for the lives that we cannot doubt have been thrown away. It is high time that an example were made. The crime—we can call it nothing else—to which the loss of the "Ismailla" is due is one of only too frequent occurrence. If the present system, of which negligence and absolute recklessness are the main features, is allowed to go unchecked, the loss of life by marine disasters will before long be frightful to contemplate. The death-roll of those who are yearly sacrificed to greed will in no time be trebled and quadrupled. It behoves the authorities

to interpose the strong arm of the law at once and instantly put a stop to the iniquitous practices against which Mr. Plimsoll, on the other side of the Atlantic, is so earnestly and efficiently carrying on an unrelenting warfare. In Canada, we are happy to say such cases are rare. Our large steamship companies are particularly careful in this, as in all points which affect the safety of their vessels and passengers. The result is that their accident record has within late years been remarkably clear, and they enjoy a large and deserved share of public confidence.

The coasting trade of a country which has so immense a littoral as Canada is one which naturally grows more important every year, and we are glad to find foreign bottoms seeking an occasion to partake of its privileges. The present law provides for the exclusion of foreign vessels from our coasting trade, but giving the Governor-General in Council power to declare that the Parliament of Canada is willing to admit foreign vessels to share in its coasting trade upon the principle of reciprocity. This is the true policy, and, as between the United States and Canada, it should be rigidly adhered to. American shippers and ship-owners are naturally very anxious to engage in our coasting trade, for it is to them a very lucrative business; but unless their Government open American ports to Canadian vessels, on precisely equal terms, the privilege cannot be countenanced. The question of reciprocity between the two countries, in trade relations of all kinds is fast gaining ground, and the National Board of Trade which lately met at Chicago, passed a resolution favouring that consummation, such as will not be without its effect on Congress. Until a regular treaty is made between the United States and Canada, it is not to be expected that the coasting privileges can be settled; but until then Canada cannot do better than adhere to her present legislation on the subject.

An opinion which largely prevails and which has no doubt been considerably strengthened by the recent appearance of an illustration in this journal, is to the effect that at the time of the burning of the lake steamer "Bavarian" the flames so speedily overspread the fore part of the vessel that it was found impossible to save the ladies who were clustered in the bows. In his illustration of the scene, our artist, who obtained his particulars from one of the survivors, shows the wind to be blowing from the stern forwards. We have since been informed that in this he was mistaken. As soon as the flames were discovered, the engineer turned the boat's head to the shore, from which the wind was blowing at the time. The flames therefore were swept sternwards, and for a considerable length of time the fore deck was completely clear. We make this correction all the more willingly as the misconception which has arisen as to the true state of the case might tend in some degree to mitigate the public feeling as to the unwarrantable, cowardly conduct of those who left poor feeble women to perish without a single effort to save them.

The "What will they say in England" cry has died out wonderfully since the reception of recent mails. England has had its say, and this is about what it amounts to:—"Unfortunately the traces of corruption and sharp practice are only too clear on both sides. The people of Canada will soon sink deeply in the estimation of their well-wishers if they do not call their public men to strict account for every lapse from upright, honourable, and truly exemplary conduct. Parliamentary Government in Canada is on its trial. One man alone is conspicuous not only for reputation of the highest kind, but also for sound judgment and genuine Constitutional behaviour in trying circumstances—this is the Governor-General."

The accident which occurred last week in mid-ocean to the "Ville du Havre" brings up once again the question of life-saving appliances. In the telegraphed account we learn that in the brief interval between the collision and the sinking the crew had only time to launch two boats. If the crew had been drilled and disciplined as has already been frequently suggested the loss of life would unquestionably have been much smaller. In that supreme moment when the vessel settled down and two hundred souls sunk into eternity the usefulness of a couple of small rafts would have been beyond calculation. An unexplicable feature of this new horror is the ease with which the "Loch Earn" stove in the side of one of the largest and most perfect vessels that ever crossed the Atlantic.

There has been a very lively discussion between the Congregationalist body of Brooklyn and Plymouth Church. A member of the latter who had preferred scandalous charges against Mr. Beecher was allowed to fall out of his membership with the church, and the Congregationalists of other churches protested against this. Plymouth Church, which is also Congregationalist, resisted the intrusion, and headed by Mr. Beecher, proclaimed its independence of all ecclesiastical dictation. A great deal of feeling has been excited in consequence, and we shall probably hear more of it before long.

At the recent meeting of the Great Western shareholders in London, the chairman was good enough to inform his hearers that a part of the Grand Trunk runs through America. May we ask to be informed where the balance of the road is to be found?