Huron Signal

WEEKLY EDITION.

W. T. COX, Editor and Proprietor.] "The Greatest Possible Good to the Greatest Possible Number."

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CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

The legal profession, beyond a doubt presents among its records more incidents of the checkered and startling phases of human life than that afforded by any other source. Within our own experience we can recall many an instance of the most vivid and romantic character as connected with the developments of the court room, a sample of which will be found in our story.

In one of the inland counties of Virginia, some time in the year 1792, there lived a family named Verdet. They were of French descent, and had occupied their present homestead for half a century when our story commences. The delight of old Mr. and Mrs. Verdet, and the belle of the county, was their daughter Victorine. Young, lovely and intelligent, she possessed every requisite to captivate the heart, and every quality to bind it in willing bondage to her service. Though Victorine was not yet more than eighteen, still she was tenderly pressed by more than one suitor for her heart and hand. But to all she turned a deaf ear, save Horace and Frederick West, two young men nearly of her own age, and who were own cousins to each other.

Their attentions to Victorine were of a far different nature from that which characterized the ruder and humbler aspirants for her hand. They, like herself, were intelligent, refined in feeling, and not wanting in a considerable degree of classical cultivation. The families of both Horace and Frederick were wealthy, and the young cousins had been educated side by side in all the manly branches of study.—She was their frequent companion, as often when the cousins were together as when separate, the three wandering in the green woods and by the banks of the purling streams—now gathering wild flowers, and now reading together. They had been thus intimately associated for the last three years, and had grown to love each other like brothers and sisters, as the old parents of Victorine used to say, but Horace and Frederick felt that they regarded her with a far more ardent passion. Both were of noble spirit, scorning to take advantage of each other by the least stratagem, though both felt how much they desired to possess the heart of Victorine Verdet. To suppose that she was not sensible to the peculiarities of her intimacy with the cousins would be unreasonable. She realized this fully, and even at times felt how hard it was for her to make up her mind to love one more than the other. But those who knew her best declared that it was Frederick who had gained her heart, for she was more free and unconstrained when with him alone; but a shrewd interpreter of the heart, and a careful observer of the subtle influences of love, would have translated the delicate reserve that Victorine evinced towards Horace, to be the stronger token of her heart, and to show that he was her idol; this was indeed the case. Horace was her choice, though neither he nor Frederick knew it.

It was on a clear, bright evening after a summer's day, that Horace and Frederick, after bidding Victorine good night, turned their steps through the little Village of G——, on their way to the residence of their fathers, some half a mile through a woody road on the other side of the village from that where the Verdets lived. Frederick had, by some singular association of thought and study, become strongly prejudiced in favor of the claim and right set up at that period by the British government of searching American vessels for their seamen, and some other matters that involved in Horace's ideas a desecration of our national flag. It was a subject upon which they both often got quite warmed up in discussion, and this was the case at the present time, to such an extent that more than one of the villagers after passing them, turned round to mark the earnestness of their words.

Frederick lived nearly a quarter of a mile further on the forest road than Horace, and so at the gate of the latter they bade good night and parted as usual. On the following morning, to the consternation of Horace, and the amazement of all, Frederick was missing. No trace whatever could be found of him, and conjecture was rife as to what could possibly have happened to him. Perhaps no one felt more keenly this fearful agony of suspense than Horace. The thought that if anything serious had befallen him and he was lost, that a rival would be removed from his path with Victorine, never crossed his mind, but he went to the greatest lengths, and put upon himself the greatest hardships to seek out and find the body of his lost cousin, but all to no avail.

The astonishment of Horace may therefore be better conceived than expressed, when it was told him he was strongly suspected of knowing more of the disappearance of his cousin than anybody else; and indeed, ere the close of the second day, he was actually arrested and imprisoned, charged with Frederick's murder. The terrible imputation struck him dumb, and when arrested by the officers of justice, he could not utter one word. This silence and strange agitation was interpreted by them and many others to be the workings of guilt within his breast; their coarser natures could not understand the spirit that moved him.

While he lay closely confined in prison, the neighboring pond was carefully dragged and examined in search of the body, and renewed search was made in every direction, but all to no favorable end. In the meantime it was remembered by more than one person that they were seen together on the evening previous to the disappearance of Frederick, and that high words were exchanged between them. At last this idea being advanced by one, others who heard them talking rather earnestly, became impressed with the same, and thought they also heard much more than they did, and gave evidence accordingly.

There was one who strenuously repudiated all these ideas of Horace's guilt, and that was Victorine. She knew in her own own heart that he was innocent, and notwithstanding the strong chain of circumstantial evidence, declared boldly that she knew he was innocent. Others argued that he was innocent. Others argued that the cousins were both lovers of Victorine, and consequently rivals, and that this doubtless had been the motive that had led Horace to kill him, and secrete the body. The whole county was in excitement about the matter, and the respective friends of the branches of the West family were found arrayed on the side according to their prejudices—the one strongly advocating Horace's innocence, the other his guilt.

But the circuit court was in session, and this trial would soon come on. Great interest was felt on the subject, the court was crowded from far and near, and the story of the cousins had been distorted into a thousand different shapes, until Horace, in the eyes of those who had never seen him, had grown from the quiet and handsome man of one and twenty, that he really was, to be a monster in personal appearance, and a villain of the deepest dye.

Victorine could not visit Horace in prison—that was forbidden; but she wrote to him, told him that she had not for one moment believed the charges brought against him, that she was sure the court must acquit him legally, and that no one would be more ready to welcome him again than herself and her parents. The letter was delicate, but carried with it a strong assurance to him that the dear hand which had traced it loved him, though the owner had never said so. Horace had been carried to the prison in the extreme part of the county, and was many miles from his home and friends, and strangely enough, those who should have aided and helped him at so critical a moment, seemed to have entirely deserted him. His mother had been long since dead, and his father, overpowered by the army of circumstantial evidence that was brought to bear against his son, believed him guilty. So affected was he by this that it threw him at once upon a sick bed, and there seemed to be no one to plead for Horace, or to prepare such matter for his defence as was necessary.

Some friends who believed him innocent, in spite of all that was brought against him, sent to Philadelphia for legal advice, but up to the night before the trial no response was had to this application, and it really seemed that Horace would be sacrificed for want of counsel, or that he must rely upon the feeble aid of some village attorney, who was by no means competent to discharge the duties of such a case.

Horace had been forced, therefore, to retain the services of a lawyer of some repute, who resided in the country, but of whom he knew but little. On the morning of the trial he received the following note:

"SIR:—I have come at a late moment, but have been able easily to comprehend your case. I shall be present to defend you to-day. I do not deem it at all necessary to confer with you in the premises, sincerely believing in your innocence, and when this is the case, I had much rather trust to justice than to any stratagem of law."

Upon the receipt of this note he sent word to the lawyer whom he had retained, that the legal adviser who had been sent for to Philadelphia had arrived, and that he should not therefore require his services unless he chose to confer with that gentleman on the merits of the case as junior counsel. But the country attorney replied that he was very willing to relinquish a case that was so unpromising, and so retired.

The court-room was densely crowded, the prosecuting attorney opened the case in the usual form, showing a strong picture of the heinousness of the crime, and as in duty bound, represented the guilt of the accused beyond a doubt. The attorney for the defence offered no remarks, but desired that the trial should proceed at once, and as no questions were raised, the witnesses gave in their evidence on various points, forming a connecting link of circumstantial facts that was very strong as presented to the notice of the court and jury.

It was clearly proved, in the first place, that Frederick West was the rival of Horace, and as far as could be judged from appearances, that he was equally successful with the latter in the effort to win the affections of Victorine Verdet; and indeed, as more than one testified, was the most successful of the two. It was also proved beyond a doubt, that on the evening of the disappearance, the cousins were last seen together, and by more than one witness that at the time they were exchanging high words with each other.—Others testified that they had frequently seen them thus engaged of late, and thus, link by link, a strong case of circumstantial evidence was made out. The prosecuting attorney summed up the case in a masterly manner, and it seemed to all in the court-room that Horace's guilt was manifest.

It was the second day of the trial.—Horace's counsel had remained absorbed in silence during the earlier proceedings; he had not once referred to the prisoner or spoken to him, and sat at his table wrapped in his cloak and apparently engaged in the minutes and records that he was keeping of the trial; he was a very young appearing person—some remarked, too young they feared, to conduct the case of the defendant to any favorable issue; he had sat with his back to the audience and Horace, and when he had looked up from his notes, it was only at the judge and the jury. Cases were much more speedily disposed of in those days than at the present time; the technicalities of the law were not then so minutely discussed—and now the counsel for the defence rose to make his remarks.

He was indeed young in appearance, and as he stood there, with his dark blue cloak raised gracefully upon one arm, and the collar thrown back from his throat, he presented a face of almost feminine beauty; his hair was short and curled about his temples, and the features, though pale, were firm and expressive. But of the whole appearance of the young lawyer, the eyes were the crowning beauty; fraught with depth of thought and stirring appeal, they were now bent upon the jury, who sat in almost painful silence. Not a whisper was heard in the court-room, and it seemed as though each heart could be heard in its quick pulsations. Horace leaned forward with the deepest interest; he had not exchanged one word with his lawyer, and now, as he got a fine view of his features, for the first time, almost trembled to think that his fate was placed in hands apparently so inexperienced. But the silence was soon broken by the utterance of sounds that touched every heart by the deep, musical utterance that fell on the ear.

"Not one iota of evidence," commenced the youthful pleader, "has been adduced to prove the guilt of my client. The array of evidence that has been brought to convict Horace West of this supposed murder, is of a character that might convict the most innocent among us all. Circumstantial evidence is no evidence at all, fearful in its supposition, always doubtful, and never satisfactory."

This bold position, the calm, clear, self-convinced spirit that beamed from the speaker's eyes, surprised the jury. Without offering one witness in defence, or attempting to refute one position taken by the prosecuting attorney, he pleaded so vividly against the spirit of such evidence, as to cause the jury to tremble in the position which they had generally arrived at as to Horace's guilt.—They seemed to be charmed by the eloquence and truthfulness of the defendant's counsel; his mode of pleading was something new in the courts of law; he appealed to the feelings of the jury through a new channel, and finally closed his remarks by a soft and glowing panegyric of the quality of mercy, that left not a dry eye in the court room.

The whole scene was one of the most vivid character; even the judge had risen during the closing remarks touching the "glorious attribute," as the young speaker said, "that descended straight from the throne of heaven," and placing his spectacles upon his forehead, forgot his official dignity in the excitement and feelings of the man, as he leaned forward with his eye bent on the almost wonderfully eloquent youth. An inexpressible charm followed the sweet and mellow intonations of that voice; and when the speaker sat down, and covered his face with his hands, as if to calm himself after so much exertion and such a trial of his feelings, one long breath seemed to be taken simultaneously through the court room, as of relieved and ever-wrought hearts. A few moments' silence followed. The judge composed himself, and then briefly laid the case before the jury, striving to be impartial and just, but yet evincing what he was strongly influenced by the appeal that had just been made. They conferred together for a few moments: they did not even retire. The burning words of the defence were still fresh in their ears, and the foreman of the jury signifying that their verdict was ready, at a call from the judge announced their decision—"*Not guilty!*" At this announcement the head of the counsel who had spoken so eloquently was raised from the hands that had shrouded the face, a prolonged scream rang through the court room, and those into whose arms fell the object of so much interest, and whose words had saved the prisoner's life, saw at once that they held in their support the form of a woman. It was Victorine Verdet!

The reader must come over a lapse of years with us now. The beautiful hair that had adorned Victorine's head had again attained its wonted length and beauty. She is the wife of Horace, loved and happy, as such a union could not fail to be. Their little son is named Frederick, and the sunshine of peace is in their happy home.

Another series of years are gone, and behold there comes to their board a stranger, one who has travelled long and far, who has trod the sands of Sahara, and who has slept on the banks of the Niger; who has tracked the Nile in its course, and who has shared the Hottentot's hospitality. A wanderer, one who has been a rover for years. It is Frederick West. His motives for abruptly leaving as he did were easily explained; he saw that Victorine loved his cousin best; he could not bear to witness their happiness, and on the moment of his bidding Horace good night for the last time, a strange resolution came over him; he would seek forgetfulness in some occupation in a distant land.

He never once thought of the possibility of such suspicions being raised against Horace as to charge him with murder, but seeking the sea cost, he shipped for the East, and had wandered on and on, now living for a while here, and now there, until at last he had resolved once more to return to the scenes of his childhood. He felt that this early disappointment had changed his disposition greatly, or he never could have severed every home tie as he had done, and left all without a token. But now he had come back to close his days in calmness here amid the scenes of his childhood.

The New Registry Bill.

[To the Editor of the Leader.]

SIR,—I fully agree with your views expressed in the *Leader* of the 19th instant, as to the wisdom displayed by the Attorney General West, in consolidating all our laws respecting the Registration of Titles and management of Registry Offices in one general Act. Also, with you I exceedingly regret that, after a certain day, the registration of duplicates is not made *imperative* and not left optional. In ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, the parties buying and selling real estate do not reflect that the *transactions of to-day are to become a record for all time*. A memorial may really contain nothing, but as it serves as a notice of an instrument, and is done *cheap*, and answers the desired purpose, *for the moment*, by the thoughtless, ignorant, and penurious, would be always adopted, in preference to an exact copy of the original. A stronger illustration of the "penny-wise and pound-foolish" could not be made. To save a trifling expense—and it would be but a trifle—the law now allows to be placed on record, memorials, which gives no more idea of the nature, covenants and trusts contained in the conveyance, than it does of the Book of Genesis. But, says an opponent, what will you do with special trusts, in marriage settlements, which it is not desirable to publish to the world? The very fact that there is a special trust just makes it so much more necessary to have the instrument recorded at full length. The covenant has to be seen and carefully examined when property contained in the instrument is disposed of, and that more so special covenants now and always will be a part of the title to the property. If the special trusts or covenants do not effect the property then leave them out of the instrument, but if they are important and must be contained in the original, it is equally as important that they should be made a matter of record to be fully examined by parties intrusted at all times thereafter. Possibly, there may be one exceptional case of this description to every fifty thousand ordinary conveyances in the Province, and these fifty thousand must now give way for this particular one. I greatly fear that unless duplicate registrations are made compulsory it will be a dead letter, or nearly so. This point has been so well discussed by one of the Registrars, who fully understands the working of our Registration Laws that I will give you his views on this subject at length.

"The present system of registering memorials constitutes notice, that some kind of an instrument is registered, and that is all. Many memorials now recorded really contain no information whatever, of the nature and description of the instrument recorded. The difficulty is only surmounted with a good deal of trouble, so long as the original is in existence; but as time rolls on, and the holder of the original instrument has parted with the estate therein mentioned in small parcels, at various times, and the original holder having no further interest in the property, either loses, or, as in many cases thoughtlessly destroys the original document, then all trace is forever gone. The memorials of instruments, heretofore recorded, are so unsatisfactory that many lawyers in Upper Canada will not give an opinion on a title, unless all the title deeds are produced. This, in far too many instances, it is impossible to do, from the fact, that from the small original value of the property, and being divided into lesser parcels than contained in the original grant from the Crown, no pains or trouble have been taken to secure and preserve the original conveyances. In the case of Trust deeds, where it is absolutely necessary to examine the nature of the trusts, Memorials are intentionally recorded from which nothing can be gleaned. Under these circumstances, in place of a Registry Office shewing the exact nature of every title in the County, the records, in many instances, are little better than a delusion and a snare.'

"The only remedy that suggests itself to me; is to have exact duplicates of all instruments recorded. Then, the title, in its most minute details, can be as satisfactorily examined from the Registry books, and the original instrument's filed a century hence, as it can be arrived at to-day, by an examination of the original instruments in the hands, and possession of perhaps, a dozen parties.

"Again—A purchases 100 acres of land from the crown, this property passes through six persons down to G, three of which conveyances are special trust deeds; G divides the property into town and park lots, and in course of time sells every lot; G then leaves the country, carrying his title deeds with him, or, having no further interest in the property, destroys the original conveyances, or they are destroyed or mislaid by the heirs of G—all knowledge of the special trusts are gone, and with the title deeds also go fifty per cent of the market value of the property. In this case had all the original deeds been recorded in duplicate, each and every holder of even the smallest fractional part of the original 100 acres would have been access through the Registry Office to a perfect claim of title; and the title deeds on record, or rather the original duplicates would, in truth, belong to each and every person owing a portion of the property. The Registrar, acting, as it were, as the custodian for all, holding and preserving the title deeds, &c., for all indiscriminately. In the case of ordinary deeds, mortgages, and other instruments, there can be no possible objection to duplicate registrations; and in case of trust deeds, and other instruments of a more than ordinary character, *it is precisely the time and occasion when the instrument should be recorded in full.* Memorials of mortgages frequently mention merely a nominal consideration, and very seldom give the terms of payment or power of sale clause, should such be contained in the mortgage. In the event of the mortgagee changing hands under the covenant or power of sale in the mortgage, there is nothing on record to show the authority by which the mortgage proceeds. In this carelessness, (I call it so, as it only affected the present mortgagor, the loss and inconvenience would be confined to the parties immediately interested. But the mortgage becomes part of the chain of title, and as much affects it forever thereafter, unless the original omission of not having the power of sale in full in the registered memorial, be remedied by a quit-claim deed from the mortgagor. This is never done without some trouble and expense, and often cannot be obtained at any price. The registration of an exact duplicate of the instrument, executed at the time by all parties, would most certainly correct this defect in the present Registry Act. Duplicate registrations would in all cases be the greater security to the title, and consequently a greater market value to the estate.

Yours, &c.,
A BARRISTER.

April 13, 1863.

The Militia Bill.

MR. SANDFIELD MACDONALD in introducing the Militia Bill made a lengthy speech explaining the various provisions of the measure. He alluded to the economy introduced into the Militia Department since he entered office. He said three times as much work was done as formerly at much less cost, the annual expenses having been reduced from $21,170 to $12,905. He gave the following estimate of militia expenses for the current year:—Expense of office $12,905; eight store keepers at $300 each, $2,400; rent of armories and pay of care-takers, fuel, &c., $20,000; incidental expenses $30,000; pay of 130 drill instructors $46,000; their transport $15,333; Brigade Majors' pay and travelling expenses, &c., $27,650; allowance in lieu of clothing for, say 110 uniformed corps of 6,000 men, $36,300; Bill of the Imperial Government for ammunition for several batteries for 1862, $3,181; small ammunition for 1863, $25,460; great coats $25,739; accoutrements $112,000; erection of drill sheds and armories $20,000; prizes for drill and target practice $2,000; clothing, twenty thousand shakos, tunics and trousers at $10 each suit, $200,000; total $582,108. Deducting the excess of appropriation over the expenditure in 1862 ($128,556) there would be left $453,552 as the amount for which a vote will be asked in the Estimates for 1863. An estimate will also be given for 1864, when the same expenditure, will not be required for clothing, &c., a vote being only required once in five years, amounting to $221,888.

The bill was read a first time.

Huron Signal.

GODERICH, C. W., APRIL 24, 1863.

THE INCREASE OF CRIME.

EVERY reader of newspapers in Canada—and who is not one—must be startled at the ever-recurring announcement, "Another Murder." Scarcely a paper reaches us that does not furnish its sickening stories of crime and villainy of every description. The great cities are seething and swarming with the vicious, who, although their ordinary vocation is burglary, arson, &c., are not deterred by the prospect of speedy retribution from adding to the loathesome list the last terrible *denouement*—murder. Take Toronto for example. Week after week, one terrible scene after another is laid before the public in the morning papers. No sooner is the popular mind calmed after the excitement caused by one murder, than another comes in course. First a man is murdered, then a child, a woman, and so on without ceasing. But crimes, great and small, are not confined to the metropolis. Every Village, town, and township, almost, furnishes its full quota, and every newspaper is compelled, however painful the task may be, to chronicle tragedies which make the heart sick at the recital. And this is our boasted civilization! Alas that Society, as it becomes more artificial, more advanced generally in all the arts of that state of artificial existence, should so far forget those wholesome restraints which are seldom to be found outside of secluded hamlets in the bush, and not always there. Every philanthropist asks, What are the causes of these evils—these foul cancers which reveal the unsoundness existing in the body of the Great Public? It is not *all* attributable to intemperance, but, we think, to *cultivated* vice generally. Passion, lust, and the love of ill-gotten gain strive earnestly with the Abomination intemperence in furnishing work for the Laws and food for the Gallows. The practice of inflicting the death penalty for capital offences, does not seem to have the effect of deterring men from imbruing their hands in human blood. It may be the proper punishment, and the best man can devise for punishing the more heinous criminals, but it seems every day to become more evident that even the extreme penalty of the law fails adequately to warn the transgressor of what will be his end if he pursues his blind course. Indeed, it is much to be feared that like the foul chimney this curse of our fair land must burn itself out. In spite of our good institutions—our "laborers of love"—our schools, academies and colleges, there is a class of men and women who have been trained up in crime, and who *will not* stop short of the Consummation of Evil, unless by some means restrained by the hand of the Omnipotent. The great duty of Society is to apply preventives which will have a tendency to stop as completely as possible recruits from enlisting in what Carlyle calls "The Devil's Great Regiment of the Line." This must be done by those representing the administration of the Government in which they live, and by our fathers and mothers. The young mind is capable of receiving impressions—of imbibing good motives, and habits of thought which elevate the soul part above the animal, and which cannot fail to be a wholesome restraint through life. Let every man try to do what he can for the moral renovation of Society commencing at his own home. Let that home be rendered a home indeed—pleasant, cheerful and happy—let it be the place where his children love to linger, and from which they will take into the Wide World those sentiments and *home associations*. Could we persuade all fathers and mothers to pursue such a course as this the foundations of vice would soon be undermined.

AN IMPORTANT BILL.

Hon. Mr. Dorion has introduced a Bill to amend the Election Law and reduce to one the number of polling days. This is a most sensible measure, and if properly carried out will have a decidedly beneficial tendency, especially as it will provide for an increase in the number of polling places for each township, &c. There will be a more peaceable polling, and it will be impossible under the new arrangement to carry out many of the reprehensible practices which have disgraced some of our recent elections. We may as well give the substance of the Bill for the information of our readers, as it will very likely become law:

"1. From and after the passing of this Act there shall be but one polling day for recording the votes of the Electors at every election of a Legislative Councillor or of a Member of the Legislative Assembly.

"2. It shall be the duty of the Returning Officer on receiving the Writ of Election to fix in every parish, township, city, town or ward in his Electoral Division, one polling place if there be less than two hundred Electors in such parish, township, city, town or ward, according to the list of Electors to be used at such election; two polling places if there be over two hundred Electors and under five hundred, and so on, adding one polling place for every two hundred additional Electors, on such list as aforesaid.

"3. The polling places shall be fixed at the most convenient places in each parish, township, city or ward, so that they may be distant from each other at least half a mile in each rural parish or township, and at least *three hundred* English yards in each city, town or ward.

"4. The Electors may vote at any one of the polling places established and fixed within the parish, township, town, city or ward for which they are qualified to vote; except in the case of a sub-division as hereinafter mentioned, when the Electors shall only vote in that division in which they are respectively qualified to vote.

"5. It shall be lawful for the Municipal Council of any parish, township, city, or town to divide the said parish, township, city or town into Electoral divisions or wards so that there may be at least one Electoral division or ward for each two hundred Electors in such parish, township, city or town; and whenever such a division shall have been made before the date of a writ of election, separate polls shall be held, and separate lists of voters shall be made by the same persons and in like manner as the lists of electors are now made, for each such division of any parish, township, city or town."

☞ HARPER.—We have to thank Mr. Moorhouse for the May number of this favorite American Magazine. It is a good number, and besides a large amount of pleasant chit-chat gives continuations of stories by some of the best writers of the day. The illustrated article on the Scenes of the War of 1812 gives the American version of the subject.

Buy Harper. For sale at this office.

☞ Uncle Abe's Army is on the increase. One of our Goderich boys writes that a Corporal of one of the New Jersey regiments, posted near him, wishing to assist Mr. Lincoln as far as possible in raising recruits for the army, was a few days ago delivered of *a fine male child!!* The youngster, however, not finding the regimental quarters very comfortable, soon made his exit from this sublunary sphere, and was buried with military honors. The bowld sojer boy, its mother, should receive a medal, and be promoted to stay at home. The above is literally true.

THE AMERICAN WAR.

CHICAGO, April 22.

A special despatch from Memphis, dated April 21, says: On Saturday three regiments of infantry and one of cavalry left Memphis on a reconnoitering expedition. When near Nonce on the cavalry came upon a detachment of Blythe's Confederate cavalry. A fight ensued, resulting in the rennise of the Confederates. The next morning the cavalry again attacked the Confederates, killing 20, wounding 40, and capturing 80. The Confederates fled in great confusion across the Coldwater. After crossing they received reinforcements, and the Federals fell back to Hernando. The Confederates were so severely handled that they did not attempt to follow at Hernando. We were reinforced by infantry and artillery under Col. Bryant, who moved to the Coldwater and attacked the Confederates on the opposite side of the river. The fight lasted until sundown, and was confined chiefly to the infantry as the artillery could not be as successfully used as desired. Our loss was 5 killed and 15 wounded. Col. Bryant holds a strong position.

NEW YORK, April 22.

The steamship Ericsson arrived to-day from Port Royal. She brings no news.

WASHINGTON, April 21.

A correspondent of the *Evening Post* says: There are fresh rumors flying every day about Charleston and Admiral Dupont, the truth of which seems to be about as follows:—

The brief attack upon Fort Sumpter was a heavy reconnoissance which might easily have become the grand attack upon the defences. This reconnoissance revealed to Dupont his strength and his weakness, so that he will be better prepared for the work in hand should he renew the attack.

The statements that the President was very angry with the Admiral, that he is to be removed in disgrace, and that the President peremptorily ordered a second attack, are all groundless. There is to be a second attack, but Dupont will probably lead it, and no unpleasant disputes have been sent to him at all. He will however, make the attack only when in his own judgment he thinks fit.

Arrival of the "Jura."

The telegraph line has been extended to Greencastle, at the mouth of Lough Foyle, where the Montreal company's steamers touch and the despatches by the Jura by this line are up to one o'clock p.m., of the 10th instant.

It is stated that Prince Napoleon's visit to Egypt is for the purpose of meeting the Sultan and obtaining his firman for the Suez canal.

The Sultan on arriving at Alexandra declared that he wished to be considered and treated as the guest of the Viceroy. In his speech to the Foreign Consuls, the Sultan said that he only came to Egypt for the purpose of giving the Viceroy fresh proof of his good will and particular attention, and to see that important portion of his empire. All his efforts would be directed to the development of the welfare and happiness of all classes of his subjects throughout the Empire and to strengthen the ties uniting them with Europe. He was convinced that the Viceroy would continue this course, and, following the steps of his celebrated fathers, one of the most illustrious men of the nation, he would understand how to carry to completion the work which that great Prince commenced.

Cracow, April 9.

Gen. Bergrad arrived in Warsaw, and in the name of the Emperor he thanked the army for their fidelity and courage.

The insurrection is spreading in Lithuania.

The Polish peasants are burning the schismatic churches.

Bands of insurgents under Cziatowski and Openski are gathering strength daily.

The insurrectionary forces in the District of Kalizch, have largely increased.

It is reported that the entire Russian army is to be placed on a war footing, and that Cronstadt has been placed in a state of defence.

Liverpool, April 10.

In the corn market we have fully an average attendance. Wheat in fair demand at Tuesday's prices. Flour is slow of sale, but not lower.

London, April 10.

Osborne's circular reports as follows:—The weather is beautiful, supplies are moderate, and the trade in all articles is exactly as on money. Buyers and sellers appear equally indifferent in pushing business.

Portland, April 21.

The Jura, from Liverpool on the 9th, *via* Londonderry on the 10th, arrived here at 11.20 this morning.

The Polish insurrection was still spreading.

Breadstuffs quiet, but steady, except corn, which was tending down. Provisions flat.

The United States Consul at Dublin contradicts the rumors with respect to the enlistment of Irishmen for the United States army.

The representatives of the United States Government in Ireland, however, are said to be literally besieged by persons anxious to be sent out to join the Federal army.

A short time since four men, who were quartermasters on bard the Great Eastern, and who had been gunners in the British navy, left the big ship and joined the vessel Japan, which was fitting out at Greenock for China and other Eastern ports. More recently those quartermasters came to Liverpool and shipped about 100 men. Some of the men got intoxicated, and the rest having learned some secrets from an indiscreet quartermaster, they paid a visit to Mr. Dudley, the American Consul, who told them they had been shipped for service on board the Japan, then a vessel fitting out, to burn, sink and destroy Federal vessels. Mr. Dudley at once telegraphed to Mr. Adams at London, who promptly called on Earl Russell, and the latter telegraphed to the Collector of Customs at Liverpool to stop the Japan. The Collector at once looked into the business, but nothing could be seen of the Japan there. The Collector then thinking she would soon enter the river, ordered four revenue cruisers up and down and stop her should she made her appearance. No Japan, however, turned up, and the Collector then telegraphed to Earl Russell that he must have been mis-informed. On farther investigation it was found that Mr. Dudley had forged a letter to state that the Japan was at Greenock. However, when it became known that the real owner of the Government were immediately telegraphed to Greenock, the Japan, en route for Virginia, had then sailed for an unknown destination.

The London *Globe*, referring to the seizure of the gunboat Alexandra, on suspicion of her being intended for the Confederates, admits that circumstances justified the proceeding, but from what it learns, it doubts whether the matter can be carried any further. The vessel was in a very unfinished state, and it was ascertained that there was nothing in her to indicate what her service was to be.

Consols 92¼ for money. Erie shares 47½ a 48¾ discount. The bullion in the Bank of England had decreased £78,000.

New York, April 21.

The steamer City of Baltimore, which left Liverpool at noon on the 8th and Queenstown on the 9th inst., arrived here this morning.

The new gunboat Alexandra, built by Miller & Co., of Liverpool, recently launched, was seized in one of the Liverpool docks on Saturday the 5th, by the Customs authorities, on suspicion of being intended for the Confederates. The matter will be fully investigated before any proceedings will be taken beyond the detention of the vessel.

The London *Star* considers the event an exceeedingly good omen, and demands the prosecution of the builders.

The correspondence between the owners of the Peterhoff and Foreign Office is published.

Earl Russell says the examination of the papers having satisfied the Government that there was no *prima facie* ground for the capture, and that the seizure was wholly unjustifiable, he instructed Lord Lyons to make an immediate representation of the circumstances to the Washington Government, and if no legal ground for capture is alleged, to press for a release [illegible] with compensation [illegible] prize court; but if [illegible] are be alleged, this c[illegible] low in the ordinary [illegible]

It is report[illegible] American merchants [illegible] to dispose of two mi[illegible] per cent U. S. bonds, and with [illegible] proceeds to buy up vessels building [illegible] for the Confederacy. It is also reported that they were authorized to negotiate a loan of ten to twenty millions sterling.

The Confederate loan touched through at 3 per cent discount, but rallied to 1¼.

The American Consul at Hamburg refused to attest his signature to a notarial document because the names of Schroder & Co., who negociated a Confederate loan, appeared in the document.

The Union and Emancipaton Society of Manchester held a meeting to protest against the building of war ships for the Confederates. They adopted a memorial calling on the government to vindicate the honor of England by stopping such proceedings.

The nobility of St. Petersburg adopted an address to the Czar, in favor of maintaing the integrity of the empire at all cost.

It is reported that Denmark will allow Prince William to accept the Greek throne, but upon terms not likely to be accepted.

Confederate Position at Fredericksburg.

Correspondence of the Richmond Examiner.

FREDERICKSBURG, April 14.

The military condition here has been without incident or interest. Until Sunday not even a rumor rippled the quiet surface of the situation. It was then reported that the enemy were on the march toward the United States Mine Ford. This conclusion was based upon observations made within their lines from elevated points on this side of the river, but your correspondent has seen all that was visible, and can say with certainty that no considerable force has as yet taken that direction. Two or three regiments of infantry, as many field batteries, and a single regiment of cavalry, comprised the movement in our immediate front. Its destination and designs are unknown, but so far from the general indications within the enemy's lines signifying a forward movement, they import the contrary, and for several nights the sounds of working parties engaged in the construction of defensive fortifications on the opposite hills have been distinctly audible. Last night signal lights were gleaming on the Falmouth Heights, and the railway trains were in motion until morning. To-night we have the same interesting display, with the addition of a great banging of drums and blowing of trumpets.

It is to be hoped that Hooker will advance. His coming is anxiously awaited by the army of Northern Virginia, who now regard the destruction of the army of the Potomac as a military necessity, and believe that the war is near its termination, they desire to give it a brilliant *coup de grace*. Our successes at Vicksburg and Charleston, and the prompt and influential subscription of the £15,000,000 European loan, have inspired the enemy and the whole country.

There remains nothing more to be said save that the condition of the troops here is all that can be desired. This was inspection day for Gen. Barks lale's command, and there was not a condemned musket in the whole brigade. The men throughout this department were never in such good health, equipment, and efficiency as at present.

Charleston: Curious Disclosures.

From the New York Post.

NEW YORK, April 18.

The *Post* says, by the steamer Cahawba, Captain Baker, arrived this afternoon, we have intelligence from Port Royal. A movement is making for the removal of Admiral Dupont from the command of the iron-clad fleet, and it is said General Seymour, who came North in the Arago, two or three days ago, and proceeded to Washington, has urged this subject upon the attention of the government. Among the other objects of General Seymour's mission, we are informed, was the reinforcement of the forces under Hunter. It is understood the troops belonging to Gen. Foster's old command will be returned to his old department, the feeling among the land forces at Port Royal is stated to be very strong against Admiral Dupont, and the confidence of the sailors and many of the officers in our squadron is much weakened.

An important statement is made in regard to the attack on Charleston and the withdrawal of our iron-clads, namely, that the order directing the attack was countermanded from Washington—the countermand not reaching the Admiral until too late to prevent the assault. It is said he was partly in obedience to this last order that Admiral Dupont decided not to renew the attack. The hasty departure of the Fl[illegible] for the North with despatches on [illegible] is referred to as a partial confirmation [illegible] report, though there is [illegible] that this belief is well [illegible] report was current at [illegible] sailed, that [illegible] New Orleans. [illegible] Charleston [illegible] sign of re[illegible] doned for [illegible] is good [illegible] not re[illegible] move[illegible] efforts are [illegible] direction. The [illegible] for action in [illegible] and would be as efficient [illegible] fore the engagements. It is the [illegible] of Captain Worden, although we are [illegible] authorized by that officer to state the fact, that the monitor fleet is able to batter down Fort Sumter and in this opinion nearly all the officers coincide. It is believed, also, that the obstructions might be passed, though the experiment might be attended with the risk that the monitors might not be able to return.

The Ironsides still lies off Charleston bar where she will remain to prevent the rebel iron-clads from raising the blockade, should they make the attempt.

DREADFUL AFFAIR IN OTTAWA.—On Sunday night, a woman named Beardwood, residing in Ottawa, cut the throats of two of her children, killing one, and severely injuring the other. The unfortunate woman, it appears, was subject to sudden fits of insanity, and had been twice confined in a lunatic asylum. On the evening in question she went to bed with two of her children, one seven months old, the other nine years. An older girl lay upon the lounge in the room. The husband, Jonathan Beardwood, a man named Roonie, and a fourth child, slept in an adjoining room. In the night the latter were awakened by the loud screams of the girl who lay upon the lounge, and rushing into Mrs. Beardwood's bedroom, they found her with the razor in her hand reeking with blood.—attempted to put an end to her own existence, but was prevented. There can be no doubt of her insanity.

Town & Counties.

SHOCKING DEATH—INQUEST.—An inquest was held by Dr. Coleman, on the 16th inst., on the body of Charles Butler, who has been stopping at Morton's tavern, near Harpurhey, for some time past. It appears that Butler was very much addicted to drinking, and while laboring under a fit of *delirium tremens* he fell down stairs and broke his neck, causing instantaneous death. A verdict was returned in accordance with the above facts.—*Huron Express.*

INCENDIARISM IN MORRIS.

High Constable Traynor has kindly handed in the following particulars respecting recent acts of incendiarism in the township of Morris: It appears that about a year ago Mr. Richard Armstrong of that township had his barn burned under mysterious circumstances. The neighbors with their proverbial kindness assisted him in the erection of another fine frame barn, which, shortly after its completion, with all its contents, including a fine young horse, was consumed by fire. In this instance, again, no clue could be obtained as to the origin of the fire. There was nothing to show that the sad occurrence had been purely accidental, and the painful conclusion was that the incendiary had been at his hellish work; but suspicion could not be fastened on any particular person. No further damage occurred until Friday last, when a fire was discovered *in a trunk* in Mr. Armstrong's dwelling house. The fire had been introduced into the trunk and the lid closed in a very artful manner. The attention of the family was called to the dense smoke rising from the smouldering mass, and after it had been extinguished, Mr. Armstrong at once accused a little girl living with him, named Charlotte Scales, of having committed the act. She soon began to cry and acknowledged that she had been the guilty party from the first—that she had wilfully fired the two barns, and eventually the house. This girl is only about 13 years of age, has been living with the family which she attempted to ruin for some six years, and has, it is alleged, been treated with uniform kindness. Those who have seen her, say there are no traces of the insanity her fiendish course would seem to indicate. Having been examined before J. P.'s Mooney and Evans, she was sent to Goderich, where she now lies waiting trial at the proper tribunal. Verily our County is progressing in crime!

Dinner of the St. George's Society.

The Anniversary of the Patron Saint of England was celebrated by the Society of this town at a Dinner in Hosker's Hotel last night. The attendance, owing to meetings of Masons and Battalion drill being held at the same hour, was not so large as had been anticipated, but it was, nevertheless, very respectable. About 9 o'clock the welcome sound of the dinner bell was heard, and the guests filed into the dining room, where a most appetising repast had been prepared. John Davison Esq., president of the Society, took the chair at the head of the table, Judge Cooper occupying the Vice-Chair. We always find it difficult to describe the *eating* part of a Dinner without using hackneyed expressions, but it will surely be sufficient to say that Mr. Hosker, a thorough Englishman himself, surpassed himself on the occasion, and although every breast was filled with thoughts of *home*, and the "Roast Beef and Plum Pudding" of "Old England," we could not discover the slightest symptoms of contempt for the Beef, Pudding and et cateras of Canada on the part of the guests, who after a long and vigorous attack, achieved a gustatorial triumph