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TEMPERATURE.

as observed by HEARN & HARRISON, Thermometer and Barometer Makers, Notre Dame Street, Montreal.

Table with columns: THE WEEK ENDING, January 23rd, 1881, Corresponding week, 1880. Rows for Max., Min., Mean for each day of the week.

CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.—A Winter Blossom—The Late Judge Dunkin—Electric Lighting in New York—Sketches in British Columbia—The Frost King at Niagara—Battle of Crees and Sioux—The Nordenfildt Gun—The Surrender of Dalricquo—Stealing in Quebec—Boiler Explosion near Lunenburg.

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, Montreal, Saturday, January 29, 1881.

THE WEEK.

It is well, financially, to be a Pagan. This we say in no proselytizing spirit, but in simple admiration of the artless conduct of His Majesty King M'TESA. First, Lady BURDETT-COUTTS would make a Protestant of him, and MAC TEASER (whose name and principles surely suggest his descent) was willing enough for a consideration. When, however, the seventeen thousand pounds sent out for the purpose of converting him, was gone, the Roman Catholic religion presented greater attractions in the form of vestments and rifles and other easily convertible commodities; and MAC TEASER opened his arms, even as his ancestors did their jaws, to the Jesuits from Algiers. After which it occurred to him that he had received all that he could reasonably expect from the Christians, and having become a little "mixed" as to the relative values of the different faiths of Christendom, His Majesty thought it would be well to return to the faith of his fathers and take time to think it over. It is understood, however, that the King is still open to offers of conversion—at a price. Forms of tender may be obtained by addressing the Home Secretary, South Africa. His Majesty does not bind himself to accept the lowest or any tender, but is believed to have expressed a desire to make an experiment in Mormonism.

A LAWYER and a physician may or may not be together a match for His Satanic Majesty on ordinary occasions, but they certainly proved too many recently for an artistically-arranged move from this world to the next. WILLIAM CARNEY, of Erie, Pa., announced to his friends, on the strength of a supernatural revelation, that he would die at 2 a.m. one Sunday. On Friday he made his will, was prepared for death by the Bishop, filled the house with eager and expectant friends, and all would doubtless have been well but for the untimely interference of Judge GALBRAITH and Dr. BRAND. While the former put back the hands of the clock, the latter so effectually physicked his patient that he never awoke until six o'clock, and was most disappointed on awaking to find that he had over-slept himself and missed his appointment below stairs. Much blame, we read, is attached to the conduct of these gentlemen, who thus by their officiousness robbed the crowd of a spectacle, the legates of their expected reward, and

last, but not least, "cheated the d—l of his dues."

THE Easy Chair in Harper has solved, we believe, the mystery of the unparalleled success of "Endymion." Reviewed according to the standard by which we are accustomed to judge other works, what has this most extraordinary effusion to recommend it? Incident it has none; plot of the most meagre description only; study of character! the chaotic medley of inconsistent attributes which form the so-called characters would move the scorn of the critics against a tyro in literature. And yet, the book is not only bought, but read, not only read, but, in a sense, enjoyed; and the secret of this, we believe with the Easy Chair, lies in the personality of its author. "Endymion" is neither a novel nor a history, an essay or a caricature, but it is all these at once, even as its author is the indefinable mixture of wit and pathos, of charlatanism and statesmanship, which two generations have accepted as a thing to be admitted or wondered at, if scarcely ever taken in earnest. Disraeli may do things that no other man could suggest, because he is Disraeli and for no better reason; and we read his book and find in it a charm we cannot analyze, even as the man himself fascinates us by his intense personality.

THE artists in France are to have a "fair field and no favour," as far as the Salon is concerned. The control by the Government has always been beset by difficulties. At the best it was a thankless office, perhaps as often misrepresented as misdirected. And now, wearied with constant complaints from all sides, the decree has gone forth in the shape of a permission to the artists to manage the whole affair themselves. Accordingly, a meeting is to be held, at which all who have ever exhibited at the Salon will be entitled to vote for the appointment of a committee, to consist of 50 painters, 20 sculptors and 20 architects to whom the management of the annual exhibition will be entrusted. Several reforms are to be introduced, the most noteworthy being the publication of the minutes of the jury meetings, hitherto kept secret. What a chance for fault finding and general dissatisfaction with results.

It is not often that New York has the opportunity of seeing, or, as the genuine New Yorker fondly imagines, adjudicating upon a new opera, and it is scarcely to be wondered at that Boito's "Mephistophele" has, since its production, been the one topic of discussion in musical circles throughout the States. Whatever effect the verdict may have upon the ultimate fate of the opera, it seems to have been a favourable one; and the experiment has undoubtedly proved that the new school of opera is likely to be appreciated, or at least tolerated, on this side of the Atlantic. For from the "Trovatore" to "Mephistophele" is a great step. Boito has drunk deeply of the spring whence Wagner drew his inspirations, and the "Music of the Future" dawns through the melodious recitatives of the new opera. For ourselves we doubt whether Boito has not ventured a comparison which will militate against his chances of ultimate success. Many of us are too deeply wedded to Gounod's familiar strains to tolerate a new Faust, and we can ill afford to exchange the "King of Thule," or the jewel song, or even the incomparable choruses for any amount of recitative, however melodious. Boito may look to the future; we question whether he will dethrone Gounod in the present.

MR. BRADLAUGH'S refusal to fight M. LAISANT has brought the question of duelling into open discussion in France as well as England. Thanks to the healthy state of public opinion, duelling is a thing of the past with us; but that healthy public opinion is just what France will never obtain without a radical change in the

national character. The accusation of cowardice is so easily made against a man who has the moral courage to refuse a challenge, and the distinction between this and that is so hard to draw in such a state of over-civilization, if we may so term it, as exists in the Paris of to-day, that few care to take up the cudgels against mistaken notions of honour, or the risk of social ostracism. This, or something very like it, it is which has made the opinion of the French people as a nation of such small account in the discussions or the great questions of to-day. Into Mr. BRADLAUGH'S feelings on the subject it matters not to enquire, but if the question has brought before the minds of the better class of French people the absurdity and anachronism of a practice which has, at all events, the disapproval of nearly all civilized nations, a step has been made in the right direction.

THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

SPEECH OF SIR JOHN MACDONALD—REPLY OF MR. BLAKE—CONTINUATION OF THE PACIFIC RAILWAY DEBATE—THE SENATE—PROF. HIND'S CHARGES.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

OTTAWA, January 22nd, 1881.

"The man and the occasion," said a local paper, "met on Monday." The phrase was intended for satire. But it, in very truth, described the speech of Sir John Macdonald having for subject the greatest of all political and economic questions for Canada, which from day to day has continued to occupy the attention of the House of Commons. It is a treat of Sir John to have made one great speech on each of those questions which have shaped political events in Canada for the last thirty years. The hand of time is beginning to touch him heavily, but he yet, on Monday afternoon, made a splendid exposition, worthy at once of himself, his name, and the question.

Monday was a fresh departure and Sir John broke new ground in giving the Government exposition with regard to the so-called New Syndicate and its proposals. Before entering upon his criticism of these, he thought it advisable to review the ground on which parties stood in the face of the Canadian relations of this question. In doing this, he made from his standpoint a very happy allusion to what is commonly called the Sir Hugh Allan project of nearly ten years ago. He held that that would, in all probability, have been carried out, but for the peculiar sort of attack to which it was subjected. He said that it might have cost a little more money than the present project, but that if it had been carried out, the railway across the continent would in all probability be approaching completion, instead of only commencing. And what would that have implied? It would have meant hundreds of thousands of settlers on the immense plains of our North-West; it would have meant the expenditure of capital directly on the railway and indirectly by the immigrants of hundreds of millions of dollars, and the creation by the immigrants and the expenditure of a still greater amount of wealth. The first effect of this would have been to prevent the late industrial and commercial crisis which swept so bitterly over Canada, and Montreal would probably have been at this day a city of 200,000 inhabitants. It is, however, useless now to talk of what might have been.

Another preliminary point made by Sir John was that the policy of the Conservative party had always been to consider the Dominion as a whole, and the question of its development in relation to its great future which men now saw was sure to come, rather than by the light of local and sectional issues, and questions of sectional differences, which, if pushed to extremes, would weaken or lead to disruption of the Federal bond, and so leave the several Provinces in the position of a loose bundle of sticks, an easy prey to the greed of their southern neighbours. The project of pushing what has been called the Sault Line, which has been so much urged by the Opposition in the debate, in lieu of the line on Canadian territory, he characterized as a policy of this tendency.

Sir John in passing made a party political allusion, not however in unkindly terms, to the position occupied by Mr. Mackenzie as the leader of the late Government, by which he and all his party were pledged to undertake the work of the Pacific Railway on substantially the same basis, with, however, more onerous conditions. He contrasted this with the unfortunate position held by that gentleman and also his party, now that he is supplanted in the leadership. It may be well to state here that Mr. Mackenzie has been very ill, it having been necessary to send for Mrs. Mackenzie. I am much afraid that the combination of events has been too much for even his iron constitution. Sir John also made an allusion to the absence of the Hon. George Brown, pointing out that in his lifetime no avowal of policy would ever have lifted up its head in his party which would have even looked at the weakening of British con-

nection, by rendering insecure the relations of the Provinces to each other. Above all things, through all changes of party, and at all costs, Mr. Brown was loyal to those principles which would keep this Dominion Canadian and British.

Of course it is quite impossible for me in this summary to furnish you with even the thread of the speech of the leader of the Government, but I may say that having laid down with great force the broad principles of his party, which were well recapitulated in the face of the great question before the House, he came next to deal with the proposal of the new Syndicate, and his criticism of this was so searching that he practically killed it, even in the eyes of the Opposition members themselves. He challenged Mr. Blake to get up and say that he could approve of some of its essential features in the face of his own declarations, and Mr. Blake did not accept this challenge. His remarks left very little doubt in the mind of any man that the object of the proposed scheme was simply political, and that the men who proposed it never expected to have it carried out. He showed that if it had any vitality at all, it was a scheme to build the Prairie section, leaving British Columbia and Lake Superior sections out in the cold; and this Sir John, with great force, showed implied the disintegration of the Dominion itself, with all the vast interests involved in that question. It is nothing for a number of gentlemen to come forward and say that they will do the work for 3,000,000 acres of land and \$1,000,000 less in cash than proposed by the Government contract, while the doors are wide open which enable them to drop the difficult sections and construct, as a simply fat job, the prairie section, about which there is no trouble at all.

Sir John in the latter part of his speech dealt with what has been called in this debate the monopoly question, and he contended that nothing was proposed which was not necessary for the interest of the railway in the first years of its existence, and therefore in the interests of the Dominion. I have bestowed a good deal of study on this branch of the question, and I think it would be simple suicide not to prefer our road as far as possible from being tapped by the American railroad system, and that the Company will and can have no interest apart from the prosperity of the country through which their railway will run. And as to diverting traffic over the St. Paul & Minneapolis Railway, whatever may be the interest of some members of the Company in this, they will have an infinitely greater interest in the traffic of their own eastern extension of the Canadian line.

In view of the vast political and commercial questions involved in the immediate construction of this through line, I cannot understand the entry of the persons who palter at giving \$25,000,000 in cash in addition to the \$25,000,000 we have already spent, or are in for, and which would be practically lost, but for the expenditure of the other \$25,000,000. That is the whole length and breadth of the cash question presented for the consideration of the people of the Dominion. In putting the question in this form I leave the lands out, as without means of approaching them by the railway they are valueless, and might as well be in Alaska for all the good they could do the Dominion, while there is the further broad fact that by giving these \$25,000,000 acres and getting them opened up, we shall make as least 75,000,000 acres more intensely valuable, the sale of which will re-ump us for all the money spent, and give us a large profit beside.

Sir John announced in terms that the Government entirely repudiated and rejected the proposal of the new Syndicate as the most political sham, unentitled to any respect; and that they took their stand upon the scheme which they had presented to the House as embodying the policy on which they would stand or fall. The issue being thus sharply put and the gauntlet thrown down, Mr. Blake, the leader of the Opposition, moved the adjournment of the debate so as to have the floor for Tuesday. Perhaps I should say here that there was a caucus of the Ministerial members on Tuesday morning at which it was resolved to support and carry through the Government scheme in its integrity. This may, therefore, be considered decisive of its success, the vote being only deferred by the amount of breath wasted in opposition. It is expected as I write on Saturday that the vote may be reached early next week.

Mr. Blake opened the debate on Tuesday, speaking until six o'clock and afterwards until 10.30. His speech struck me rather as that of a lawyer arguing a brief, than the exposition of a statesman. He has eminently the gift of words, and as a deliverance of such, his speech was remarkable. At the very beginning he denied that he had supplanted Mr. Mackenzie, or that he had ever sought the position of leader of the Opposition, and said that if he had the use of the wishing cap of Fortunatus, he would wish that the path of duty and fortune would offer a way out of it. This may be true, but there is the fact that he is in Mr. Mackenzie's place. Mr. Blake also declared in answer to the remarks of Sir John, that the Opposition were animated by motives of the highest patriotism and did not believe the "House had sunk so low as to accept that contract." This statement was met by ministerial laughter, and Mr. White, of Hastings, a little later told him across the floor, that there would be a majority of 70 for it any way. To this Mr. Blake rejoined if there were a majority of 70 in the House for the contract, there would be a majority of hundreds of thou-