

A RECENT deliberate and malevolent distortion of an item of war news cabled to New York has called forth another demand for direct communication between Canada and England—this time from a Montreal contemporary. If such a scheme were successfully undertaken, a much-needed amelioration of journalistic ethics would be amongst the indirect probabilities. It would scarcely be safe then to write "London letters" and "special despatches" on King-street, Toronto, or to impose upon a confiding public impossible "interviews" cabled by "own correspondents" from Timbuctoo.

He lets "I dare not wait upon I would" is the general opinion of Mr. Mowat's position on the proposal to erect New Parliamentary Buildings.

A good deal has been said about Henry Irving's eccentric walk on the stage. "But the way in which Messrs. Twain and Cable reel and toddle off the stage," says the *Chicago Saturday Evening Herald*, "with a dot-and-go-one, hop-skip-and-jump kind of performance, beats all the records of walks eccentric, concentric, or ridiculous, our eyes ever beheld. They ought to buy a couple of go-carts, and hire a nurse to teach them how to walk."

MR. FORSTER's article in the *Nineteenth Century* on the subject of Imperial Federation is disappointing. What is wanted as a preliminary to discussion on the subject of Federation surely is the statement of a scheme whereby it can be shown that Federation is practicable. But Mr. Forster does not formulate any proposals or meet the difficulty in any satisfactory way; all he suggests is that the Colonial Office should call a conference, to be held in London, at which accredited representatives of the various colonies should be invited to attend. It would be for them to say how the difficulties in the way of constituting a general governing body should be overcome. About one thing Mr. Forster is very decided. He thinks that the colonies should have a voice in directing the foreign policy of the country, and he believes that if they had the result would be in the direction of peace.

APROPPOS of the death in Egypt of the *London Standard's* "special," the Metropolitan correspondent of the *Liverpool Mercury* has the following:—Poor Cameron is the chief of the newspaper correspondents killed in Stewart's desert march. He has for some time been our best describer of battle and military achievements, and his loss to journalism is irreparable. His energy was put forth without one touch of bluster or bounce. The *Standard* "discovered" him almost by accident after its correspondent had quarrelled with Sir Frederick Roberts. He startled everybody by his performances, and was made at once a regular member of the *Standard* staff. His description of the bombardment of Alexandria was incomparably the best produced. He did excellently well at Tel-el-Kebir. In a private letter from Suakim during the time of conflict there I read—and the communication came from a very high quarter indeed—"Of the correspondents, Cameron is first favourite. Everybody likes him; and his work is honest and sincere. Some of the men seem to think nothing of romancing a little, but Cameron tells the true story, and makes it much more interesting than the fictions of others." He had a quick eye, a ready pen, a graphic style, and a conscientious regard for accuracy. Cameron at one time edited the *Bombay Gazette*. A correspondent once sought to pierce his anonymity. "What connection has your writer with the army?" he asked. "He represents the *Hiderabad* contingent," was Cameron's reply.

THE wail of an English correspondent touching the irritating tendency of servants to leave doors open will strike a sympathetic chord in many a heart on this side the Atlantic. This is the sort of weather that finds out all the cracks, crevices, and joints in one's armour; when cold draughts, no one knows where from, come sneaking into the room, making themselves a home in the nape of your neck. Then why, oh why, is it, that servants fix upon this time of the year for leaving the door open and chilling one to the bone fifty times a day! How much better it would be, if instead of teaching geometry our Board Schools instructed the girls who are to become our domestics to shut the door when they quit the room! No branch of the education of a servant is more important than this, or conduces more to the comfort of her employers. To have to rise from the arm-chair every time the girl has occasion to visit the room, in order to shut the door after her, is not good for the temper, or likely to induce blessings to be called down upon her. But servants can, with a little trouble, and the weeding out of the careless, be trained to better habits, and made to leave the door as they found it, when their errand is accomplished. A servant who obeys this rule is worth much more than the thoughtless girl who seems to be in league with the demon draught, that fecund parent of neuralgia and influenza.

THE dastardly attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament by the dynamitard successors of Guy Fawkes recalls to mind an exceedingly good specimen of an Irish bull made by the beadle of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, when Dean Swift insisted on his giving him a sample of his poetical talents. It was the eve of the fifth of November, and the verses were to be *à propos* to the anniversary of Gunpowder Plot, whereupon the poetic beadle was inspired to produce the following couplets:—

To-night's the day, I speak it with great sorrow,
That we were all to have been blown up to-morrow;
Therefore, take care of fires and candle-light,
'Tis a cold, frosty morning, and so, good-night.

Needless to add, the Dean was delighted.

CONTINENTAL *habitués* are talking enthusiastically about the numerous cures that have been effected lately at Dr. Vidart's hydropathic establishment at Divonne, a little village on the French frontier, but an hour and a-half's drive from Geneva. The establishment, it appears, was founded nearly forty years ago by Dr. Paul Vidart, a well-known French physician, and is now carried on by his son with increasing success. The speciality at Divonne is the "Cold Water Cure," and the list of the patients who have been entirely restored to health after a course of treatment, is already a very long one. In addition to the advantages derived directly from Dr. Vidart's treatment, the patient is surrounded by the most delightful scenery. Sheltered by the Jura mountains, Divonne possesses a climate which is exceptionally mild and beneficial, and of the utmost assistance in the restoration of health. Baths there are in every variety; for such as are able and willing, gymnastics, fencing, billiards, and swimming, too, are available. The ball-room, theatre, library, and concert rooms are very popular, and altogether, life in the Divonne establishment is tranquil and pleasant.

If Mr. F. W. Myers is to be trusted, the phenomena of Spiritualism are explained. They are not produced by spirits from another world at all, but by the power of mind over mind. In certain psychic conditions, what one person unconsciously thinks—what is stored up in his mind but he cannot reach by the exercise of his memory—may be projected, also unconsciously, into the mind of another person. Mr. Myers has been investigating the planchette, which writes what the writer himself knows nothing of. From Mr. Newnham, rector of Maher, Devonport, he has received a story of long investigations, the particulars of which are published in the *Contemporary Review*. Mr. Newnham sat with his wife, and found that she read in his mind the things that he knew or the things which he once knew and had forgotten. As the planchette, or writing instrument, makes anagrams which require a very great deal of arrangement to be understood, this is a more wonderful tale than the other. What I have forgotten, I can unconsciously tell you, who will unconsciously receive it and give it back to me by aid of the planchette written in riddles, which both you and I have to take a great deal of trouble to read. Such is the theory of the author of "St. Paul." "It wants a great deal of believing," as the song says.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed: EDITOR OF THE WEEK, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto. Contributors who desire their MS. returned, if not accepted, must enclose stamp for that purpose.

MR. HAGUE ON CONFEDERATION.

To the Editor of The Week:

SIR,—There cannot possibly be a higher authority on Banking questions than Mr. George Hague; and what he says as to the closeness of the financial relations prevailing between the different Provinces of the Dominion may therefore be taken as correct. But I think no one can possibly go among the people of the Maritime Provinces without being struck with the total absence of any warm feeling towards Canada, of which they speak almost as if it were a foreign country. The tone of the Press is, as might be expected, in accordance with that of the people. As to Quebec, Mr. Hague cannot fail to see that it is an exclusive nationality by itself, and has no parallel among the States of the American Union. Is its conduct in blackmailing us as it does on every occasion a sign that it regards its own interests as identical with those of the Confederation? SCRUTATOR.

SNOW BLOCKADES IN THE NORTH-WEST.

To the Editor of The Week:

SIR,—In your notice of the February number of the *Century* you bring Mr. George Beers to task for inaccuracy, instancing his graphic description of a snow blockade between Brandon and Winnipeg. In justice to Mr. Beers I think it only right that your criticism should be noticed, and any erroneous impression it might create as to the truthfulness of what Mr. Beers states be set right. As a resident of Brandon for nearly four years I can testify to the fact that what Mr. Beers says in connection with the snow blockade in which he was a prisoner is in the main correct. The only inaccuracy he can be charged with is in mistaking the time at which the blockade occurred. It was not two but four years ago. In the winter of 1881-82 we experienced several blockades on the Canadian Pacific Railway between Brandon and Winnipeg, but I am glad to say none since. If I remember rightly the blockade referred to by Mr. Beers took place between Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg, on the old line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It is well known that that piece of the railway was badly constructed, the ties being simply laid upon the prairie without any grading, and in consequence the snow drifted right upon the track. Since the Syndicate straightened the line from Portage to Winnipeg no difficulties from snow have been experienced.

In justice to our much-maligned climate and the management of the Canadian Pacific Railway, I may say that since the winter of 1881-82 we have experienced no difficulties or delays on account of snow blockades. So far this winter our mails have arrived as punctually as in summer, and the same may be said of last winter. Wherever there is a likelihood of snow drifting on to the track fences have been erected constructed out of blocks of snow laid one upon the other to a height of four or five feet, creating an effectual barrier against drifts. It is the "packing qualities" of our snow, referred to by Mr. Beers, that enables the Company to utilize it for these fences.

Before closing I would add that I well remember the great praise that was at the time bestowed upon Mr. Beers and his "companion in snow-shoes" for their noble and indefatigable efforts to provide food for their fellow-passengers on the occasion referred to.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

Brandon, Man., Feb. 7th, 1885.

ST. GEORGES.