

The National Prohibition Convention met in Lafayette Hall, Pittsburg, five hundred delegates being present, including a number of ladies. Telegrams encouraging the convention were received from various parts of the country.

Nearly the entire business portion of Cedar Spring, Mich., with two-thirds of the residences, was swept away by fire last Friday.

The Zell Guano Company's works at Locust Point were burnt on Tuesday. Loss \$200,000.

Fire started in a wheat field at Modesto, Cal., on the 21st. The alarm was instantly telegraphed and telephoned to all available points. Two thousand men from different sections rushed to the rescue. The old fashioned prairie way of fighting the fire was resorted to. At 3.30 p.m., after a desperate struggle, the fire was controlled. Six thousand acres of grain and several large dwellings were destroyed. The loss is \$150,000.

An excursion train with a thousand excursionists on board was wrecked on Saturday night on the Valley Railway, two miles east of Canton, Ohio. Twenty-five persons were seriously injured, and a dozen or more killed.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN.

Cæsar Henry Hawkins, the celebrated English surgeon, is dead.

The *Mark Lane Express* says the English wheat crop appears to be equal to the average.

Lord Randolph Churchill will probably make a tour of the United States during the recess of Parliament.

It is reported that Zebehr Pasha's messengers to Khartoum have returned, bringing letters from General Gordon, who says he is confident of holding Khartoum.

Nearly twenty mass meetings were held in various towns in England to denounce the action of the Lords regarding the Franchise Bill.

The health officers intend organizing a hospital service throughout the city of London so that in the event of the appearance of cholera, patients can be immediately cared for.

There were twenty deaths from yellow fever in Havana last week.

Eight cases of cholera were reported at Paris Tuesday.

Toulon is threatened with famine.

The public schools at Toulon and Marseilles have been closed.

Two deaths from cholera at Vienna are reported.

Two deaths from cholera occurred at Madrid.

The prospect of an abundant harvest of wheat and other food crops are favorable in Austria.

Torrid heat prevails in Vienna. Seven deaths from sunstroke occurred in the streets in two days.

Ferdinand Von Hochstetters, the German traveller and geologist, is dead.

Russia and Germany have adopted a treaty against the anarchists. In future, Russians will not be allowed to reside in Germany without the permission of Russia.

Tales and Sketches.

EARLY TEMPERANCE REFORM IN CANADA.

When one looks at the Canada of to-day, a leader in the work of temperance reform, setting the mother country an example she may well be proud to follow, it cannot be said that Canada has erred from ignorance of the pernicious consequences of strong drink. Originally, as we know, it was colonised from France, and at first the idea was to win the country for the Church of Rome. It is incredible almost the story of that mission. It is impossible to realize the ardor of the faith which led religious men and women, nuns and priests, to give up their pleasant life in France, to cross the stormy ocean, to plant themselves in Canadian forests, to yield up their lives for the glory of God, and as they believed, the good of the people. The history of Canada redounds to the glory of the Romish Church in a way of which we can form no idea. The colonists were settled at Quebec, Montreal, and the Three Rivers, and between and around them was a wilderness filled with cruel savages ever thirsting for their blood. In some cases these devoted priests made converts. "The Dutch," said the Indians on one occasion, "have neither brains nor tongues; they never tell us about Paradise or hell—on the contrary, they lead us into bad ways." But awful were the sufferings of the Jesuit missionaries nevertheless. "If we die," said one of them, "by the fires of the Iroquois we shall have won eternal life by snatching souls from the fires of hell."

But there were other things to trouble the priests than the cruelties of the savages. In 1662 we find the little colony torn by the temperance question. The inordinate passion of the Indians for brandy had long been the source of excessive disorders. They drank expressly to get drunk, and

when drunk they were like wild beasts. Crime and violence of all sorts ensued; the priests saw their teachings despised and their flocks ruined. On the other hand, the sale of brandy was a chief source of profit, direct or indirect, to all those interested in the fur trade, including the principal persons in the colony. The Church was prepared to meet this evil. The Bishop Laval, who belonged to one of the proudest families of Europe, and in whose veins there ran the blood of the stern Constable of France, whose name still adorns the Catholic University of Quebec, launched an excommunication against those engaged in the trade—for nothing less than total prohibition would content the clerical party; and besides the spiritual penalty, they demanded the punishment of death against the contumacious offender. Death, in fact, was decreed. On one occasion two men were shot, and one whipped, for selling brandy to Indians. As is usual, there was a reaction against such Draconian severity. A woman had been condemned to imprisonment for the same offence. One of the Jesuit Fathers pleaded on her behalf. Said the brusque old governor Avangour, "You and your brethren were the first to cry out against the trade, and now you want to save the traders from punishment. I will no longer be the sport of your contradictions. Since it is not a crime for this woman, it shall not be a crime for anybody." Henceforth there was again full license in liquor-dealing, and brandy flowed freely among French and Indians alike, and what was the result? In the words of the historian Parkman, "The ungodly drank to spite the priests and revenge themselves for the restraint of conscience of which they loudly complained. The utmost confusion followed, and the principles on which the pious colony was built seemed upheaved from the foundation. Laval was distracted with grief and anger. He outpoured himself from the pulpit in threats of Divine wrath, and launched fresh excommunications against the offenders; but such was the popular fury that he was forced to yield and revoke them." Half dead with grief—worn to a shadow—he sailed back to France.

Under the reign of Louis XIV. Canada ceased to be a mission and became a colony. He had heard of the vast political possibilities of Canada, and he had its interests at heart. His first plan was to despatch there a governor-general, with whom went a throng of young nobles sailed eager to explore the marvels and the mysteries of the western world. Soldiers were sent to clear off the Indians, men to till the soil, and women selected to become their wives, and a royal bounty was given to the fathers of large families; but then there was the brandy question again. It was impossible for the colony to flourish if, as the governor wrote to Colbert, a hundred thousand livres a year were spent in the purchase of wine and brandy. To keep this money in the colony he declared his intention of building a brewery. Colbert approved the plan, not only on economic grounds, but because the vice of drunkenness would thereby cease to move scandal by reason of the cold nature of beer, the vapors whereof rarely deprive men of the use of judgment—a testimony to the virtue of beer not borne certainly by later experiences, either in the Old World or the New. At times the drinking of brandy nevertheless flourished at a furious rate. For instance a great annual fair was established by the King at Montreal. Thither came down a host of Indians with their beaver skins to sell, while the merchants came with their goods from Quebec. We are told that the prohibition to sell brandy at such a time could rarely be enforced, and the fair often ended in a pandemonium of drunken frenzy. A similar fair was held on the Three Rivers, but these yearly markets did not fully answer the desired end. There was a constant tendency among the colonists to form settlements above Montreal to intercept the Indians on their way down and drench them with brandy. Again there was another difficulty in the colony by reason of the brandy. Hundreds of young men would go into the woods hunting. After roving some months they would return to Montreal. As long as their beaver skins lasted they would set no bounds to their riot. Every house, we are told, in the place was turned into a drinking-shop. There was gambling and drinking night and day. When at last they were sober, they sought absolution for their sins; nor could the priests venture to bear too hard on their unruly penitents, lest they should break wholly with the Church, and dispense henceforth with the sacraments. Worst of all, when the self-devoted Catholic priests had planted a mission among the Indians in the forest, there the dealers in spirits followed. "Our missions," writes one of them in despair to the governor, "are reduced to such extremity that we can no longer maintain them against the infinity of disorder, brutality, violence, injustice, impiety, impurity, insolence, scorn, and insult, which the deplorable and infamous traffic in brandy had spread universally among the Indians of these parts. In the despair in which we are plunged nothing remains for us but to abandon them to the brandy-sellers as a domain of drunkenness and debauchery."

We now come to the first temperance meeting held, perhaps, anywhere—at any rate in Canada. It was held in the summer of 1648 at Sillery. The drum beat after mass, and the Indians gathered at the summons. Then an Algonquin chief, a zealous convert of the Jesuits, proclaimed to the crowd a late edict imposing penalties for drunkenness, and in his own name, and in that of the other chiefs, exhorted them to abstinence, declaring that all drunkards should be handed over to the French for punishment. One of the French fathers looked on delighted. "It was," he says, "the finest public act of jurisdiction exercised among the Indians since I have been in this country. From the beginning of the world they have all thought