

A hot wave seems to have passed all round the globe. In England and other parts of the Eastern Continent unusually high temperatures have been recorded, while in the Western Continent of America excessive heat accompanied by severe and painful prostration, with a heavy death rate in many parts, has been experienced.

The average temperature for the seven months ending July is still low, and the inference is that great and continued heat will be the order of the day for August and part of September. It behoves all City Corporations and health authorities to be zealous in their endeavours to mitigate the evils generally attended with such conditions, the more especially as dire diseases are ravaging lands not far distant, and neglect of ordinary precautions might be a serious affair. It is hoped that the early and persistent warnings thrown out already in every direction will have the desired effect, and if absolute prevention is impossible we may have at least little to fear.

NIAGARA FALLS MADE FREE TO THE WORLD.

On the 15th of July last the formal surrender of the Niagara Falls owned by the United States took place in the presence of an immense assembly of distinguished visitors. The surrender and transfer was by the Board of Commissioners to the Governor of the State of New York.

It is only about seven years since our late distinguished Governor General, the Earl of Dufferin, suggested the establishment of an International Park at the Falls, and the freeing to the world one of its grandest and most sublime wonders. He had then the good fortune to meet his Excellency the Governor of the State of New York, and suggested to him the establishment of an International Park by the Government of New York and Ontario or Canada.

The response and encouragement which was then given to the idea gave every hope of an early and practical plan for its accomplishment, as far as the United States was concerned, but financial and other reasons precluded Canada from moving as vigorously as her cousins across the line.

While the honour of bringing the matter before the public of both countries belongs to Canada, the Americans with their usual enterprise and speed can lay claim to the honour of giving and carrying out practically the idea.

Lord Dufferin, before his term of office expired, further supplemented his efforts by writing to Governor Robinson of New York State on this subject; the letter was dated from Quebec on October 1st, 1878, and a very encouraging reply was received in January 1879.

A commission was appointed in May, 1879, to consider and report to the Legislature, in the hope that it would lead to a great public benefit.

The Report was favorable to the project and urged the securing at once of interests involved.

The claims of owners aggregated about \$4,000,000, but the commissioners' awards amounted only to \$1,500,000, which were afterwards confirmed by the Court, and agreed to.

It is needless to refer in detail to the festivities and ceremonies of the day; suffice it to say that it was one of the grandest events in the history of the last few years, and was participated in by many distinguished Americans and Canadians alike.

The chairman, Hon. Erastus Brooks, who took such an interest in the project from the very first, referred briefly to the history of the event, and was followed by the Hon. Wm. Dorsheimer, who formally handed over the grounds to Governor Hill, of New York State, and, in doing so, spoke of the many blemishes and drawbacks flaunted upon the scene, all of which would shortly be removed, and nature's charms allowed free scope to clothe the slopes and banks of the mighty cataract with trees and bushes.

Governor Hill, in accepting the Park, made a stirring speech, and threw out strong incentives for Canada to perfect and accomplish what was originally intended, viz., a grand International Park, and thus free for all time one of nature's greatest and grandest beauties.

The great speech of the day was delivered by Hon. James C. Carter, of New York, noted as a great orator; his oration was long and exhaustive, being listened to from beginning to end with appreciation and applause.

In describing the scene he spoke of no writer having yet felt that justice had been done to it, and he closed with the conception of Father Hennepin who, 200 years ago, attempting to describe the scene, broke down, and merely said that the universe does not afford its parallel. Although great conquests and discoveries have since then been made, the statement stands true as ever.

The profound interest with which Niagara is beheld and remembered, and which gives it the first place among the great spectacles of nature, is due to a variety of elements nowhere else to be found united. It is not owing chiefly to the sublimity of the scene, for the great mountain summits in many parts of the earth surpass it in all the elements of the sublime. The loveliness of foliage and flower is displayed in more enchanting forms elsewhere in our own and in other lands. Finer examples of more picturesque beauty in falls or rapids may be found amid the wonders of the Yosemite and Yellowstone valleys, and in other parts of the world. Undoubtedly, the master feature of the scene is the near exhibition of overwhelming power. Nowhere else among the works of nature is such an amount of physical energy concentrated within so narrow a compass. Here the soul, confounded and bewildered by the overwhelming sense of resistless power, has but to turn for an instant and find recovery and relief in the spectacle of that same power, no longer let loose for destruction like the wrath of the hurricane, the eternally flowing, restrained, obedient, beneficent, and arrayed in every robe of the beautiful. It is this combined appeal to every sense and every faculty, exalting the soul into a higher sphere of contemplation, which distinguishes this spot over all others.

(To be concluded in next issue.)

LARGE shipbuilding contracts have been entered into on the Clyde. Messrs. John Elder and Co., of Govan, Glasgow, have contracted to build three steamers of 5,500 tons for the North German Lloyd's. The steamers will be fitted with all the latest improvements. The news has been received with great satisfaction in Govan, where thousands of men are idle.