

Telegraphic News.

OTTAWA, Dec. 14.
Mr. Vanderbilt has obtained a controlling influence in the Canadian Southern Railway: he purposes to make it a through working line in connection with the New York Central. Orders have been given directing western bound freight to go by the Canadian Southern.

LONDON, Dec. 14.
The British Parliament will re-assemble February 5th.

Vessels have been wrecked off Santander, and 8 lives lost.

The Bishop of London has prohibited Bishop Colenso from preaching in his diocese.

The court for the trial of Von Arnim met in secret session, on Saturday, and most important documents alleged to have been abstracted, were then read.

Barques *Arena*, from St. John's for Sligo, and *Brialey*, from Demarara for Liverpool, foundered at sea. Their crews were rescued by the steamers *Indiana* and *Silesia*, and landed yesterday.

NEW YORK, Dec. 14.
It is reported that seven sailors were recently flogged to death near Calcutta.

The steamer *Amstel*, from Antwerp, went ashore on Boner shoals last night. She lies in a dangerous position. The passengers were brought to New York.

Five children, 6 to 15 years old, were drowned while sliding on a pond near Peek-ness, New Jersey, yesterday.

Gold 111½@111½.

Extraordinary Phenomenon at Sea.

The captain of a Sunderland vessel writing to his owner, under date "Off St. Helena, 11th October, 1874," gives the following account of an extraordinary phenomenon which he witnessed at sea:

"Left Totocorin on the morning of the 12th of August, with moderate S.W. winds, and on the 13th and 14th noticed a great quantity of blood-red matter in the water in long streaks, extending for miles; and at dark on the evening of the 14th began to notice how milky white the sea was becoming and wondered what it could betoken. By 8 o'clock the whole sea was a livid white color; and though no movement could be seen in the water, it was quite evident by the motion of the vessel that the sea was considerably agitated. The horizon then began to look dark, and shortly the sea had more the appearance of a field of snow than anything else; the air also felt hot and stifling. About nine p.m. a strange moaning noise was heard as if wind in the distance. This, combined with the blackness of the heavens and the peculiar whiteness of the sea produced an extraordinary and horrible effect. The moaning sound increasing, I thought some unusual weather was coming, and so took nearly all the sail off the ship, but midnight passed and brought no change. The vessel was going forward in an hour, and she must have traversed from 20 to 30 miles of this fearful looking sea, and it was only the appearance of daylight that relieved us from the awful sight. During the night the barometer was standing at 30.00 inches, and the thermometer at 83 degrees, the wind being S.W. all night.—English paper."

THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.—The Cairo (Egypt) special to the New York Herald says of the transit of Venus, as taken there, that the apparatus worked splendidly. The first and second contacts of Venus with the sun were noted with precision, and very many micrometric measurements of the line joining the cusps were made with very great success. In the meantime, and at the instant observers were busy taking negatives of the phenomenon, the clouds kept away, rendering their observations peculiarly successful. During the progress of the planet across the sun several images were obtained. The apparent track of the planet as seen from this place is, therefore, beyond the hazard of mistake. When Venus reached the western portion of the sun's limb her contact was observed under highly favorable circumstances, the micrometric measurements of the cusps' time were obtained similarly to those made during the stage between the first and second contacts, and finally the planets' egress from the luminary was observed, and the eventful moment of the closing stage recorded by the cinematograph.

Excavations now being carried on among the ruins of the City of Anuradhapura, in Ceylon, have brought to light a number of sculptures belonging to the best period of ancient Indian art. Several new rock inscriptions have also been discovered.

A new small planet, No. 139, was discovered by M. Palisa, at Pola, near Trieste on the 14th of October last. This is the third discovered by that astronomer this year, all of which are still unnamed. The one discovered by Mr. Peters, on February 18th (No. 135), has been designated *Herttha*; and that by M. Perrotin on May 19th (No. 138), *Tolosa*, from the place of discovery, Toulouse.

SMUGGLERS BY MAIL.—The Collector of Customs at Bangor having complained to the Secretary of the Treasury that smuggling is carried on through the mails from New Brunswick, and inquired whether a customs officer has power to seize suspected mail packages in transit, Secretary Bristow informs him that under no circumstances is an officer of the customs authorized to seize or detain packages conveyed in the mails. If, however, a cus-

tom officer discovers packages which he has reason to believe contain smuggled goods and their destination to a particular post office in the United States be known it is his duty to notify the master of such post office and request the detention of the packages till they can be opened in the presence of the person to whom addressed; and in the presence of a customs officer, in order that the government duties may be paid, or if there be cause, forfeiture enforced.

A fire broke out at Woodstock, Monday evening in an old barn a short distance above the residence of Mayor Fisher. The Steam Engine was quickly out, but was not used. The barn burned quietly down without further mischief being done and is certainly better out of the way.

The Standard.

SAINT ANDREWS, DEC. 16, 1874.

The Transit of Venus.

On Tuesday, the 8th inst., took place an event of far more than ordinary importance. While our little mundane matters with much stir and noise absorb our interest, silent but mighty changes are ever going on in the majestic skies above us. In the course of her revolution Venus the planet nearest to us, and within the earth's orbit, on the day mentioned passed directly between us and the sun, and across the solar disc. It was observable only as a small black spot, slowly moving over the brilliant surface. It is 105½ years since the same phenomenon occurred before. No living man therefore had previously witnessed it, and no living man shall ever witness it again. The British, American, French, German and Russian governments fitted out expeditions, and despatched them to various stations, to take the most accurate observations possible, and we already learn that in most cases these observations have been entirely successful. From India, China and Java, and Thibet, New Zealand and China, telegrams announcing success have arrived, and we wait for more and fuller reports from other fields of view. We ought to know and be interested in the value of these efforts in connection with this rare event. Former observations were defective, and the results were correspondingly inaccurate; but with the immensely improved instruments now at our command it is expected that the utmost reliance can be placed on the deductions to be made. The great object in connection with these observations is to determine the distance of the sun from the earth, and our readers are aware that with the proper data this is a simple trigonometrical calculation. Taking the greatest distance between two stations a base line is obtained, at the points of which each angle made with the position of Venus can be exactly taken, and with these results we determine the distance of Venus from the earth. This being absolutely secured, other calculations of a similar character, with this distance of Venus from us as a base line, will determine the exact distance of the sun from Venus, and thus we shall ascertain the entire result. With perfect accuracy, on this point, we shall then be able to discover correctly the distance of the nearest fixed stars, as well as other stellar and planetary relations. Navigation, the tides, meteorological occurrences, and other departments of science and art will be benefited by these observations, and thus we can see the momentous importance of the event which has now engaged, and for years will yet engage, the interest of the scientific world. How wonderful is the march of human progress, and how much more engaging than many of the petty transactions of the day the grand and all influencing movements of the material universe.

The President's Message.

The Forty-third Congress began its Session on the 7th inst., when President Grant delivered his Annual Message, rather a lengthy one. Why these Messages should be so much longer than the State Speeches in other countries, is not apparent; however, that is not the point. Although not living under the government of the United States, nor having any desire for annexation to it, the people of our young Dominion look with a degree of interest to the Message as indicating the policy of that government, and foreshadowing the leading topics of debate during the session, some of which affect the trade of our own country. We can only give a meagre synopsis of the Message.

The President says that the nation has undergone a prostration of business during the past year, notwithstanding labor and capital were abundant. The debt abroad is represented as the cause of depression, it having been incurred to defray the expenses of the late war, and the national currency it being uncertain in value, a return to gold and silver value is recommended by repealing the legal tender clause in the act.

The friendly relations of the U. States with other powers continues. The payment of the Alabama claims are acknowledged and a Special Court is recommended to be enacted to hear and determine all claims against the United States. The strife in the Argentine republic, and in Cuba are deplored.

The financial affairs of the country are said to be in a satisfactory condition, the receipts over the expenditures have been \$2,344,882.30 for the fiscal year, and the recommendation of

the Secretary of the Treasury to restore the duties on tea and coffee is concurred in, and the readjustment of the tariff recommended. Postal matters—The Judiciary—Shipbuilding—Civil Service—Reform—and other questions are discussed. The Press generally on this continent and Europe eulogizes the Message.

SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS.—The half-yearly examinations of the Public Schools, St. Andrews, will be held on Monday and Tuesday, the 21st and 22d inst., as follows—Mr. Vroom, Advanced department on Monday at 10 a.m. Primary, Mrs. Rogers, same time. Advanced—Miss M. Dixon at 2 p.m. Grammar School—Mr. Corey on Tuesday at 10 a.m. Primary—Miss Morrison, same time. Miss Alger at 2 p.m. The public are invited to attend.

The Rev. Charles Nairn-Smith, A.M., who conducted Divine Service in the Presbyterian Church for the past two Sabbaths, is an earnest, zealous, and popular pulpit orator. His ministrations have been so satisfactory, that the congregation have resolved to extend a call to him to become their Pastor.

THE ELECTIONS IN THE PROVINCES OF QUEBEC AND ONTARIO, have fully realized the expectations of the Cabinet; in fact the only fear is that the majority is rather large. Some of the rejected candidates although opposed to the government, would, had they been elected, have offered no factions opposition.

NEW BELL.—The new Town Bell arrived in the *Ugler*, and is being erected in the tower of the new Engine house.

WINTER HAS REALLY ARRIVED, may be heard from every lip, and it is without doubt correct. The snow storm which set in on Monday morning, continued during the day, and the mercury fell to zero, and on Tuesday was eight degrees below. The general complaint was that it was decidedly cold weather and gloves and light overcoats gave way to kid mits and fur coats. The trains on the N. B. & C. Railway were well up to time, but the steamers were behind their usual time of arrival.

CUTTING WHEAT BY STEAM.—Lord Kinnaird, a large and enterprising farmer of Scotland, writes to Mr. Mechi that he has had a most successful and satisfactory trial of reaping by steam power. He attached his traction engine to an enlarged reaping machine; and though the ground was soft, owing to wet weather, and the crop laid and leveled so that it could only be cut one way, yet he has no doubt that, in ordinary dry, harvest weather, an acre could be cut down within half an hour, and he confidently expects to be able not only to cut, but, by the aid of steam power, to bind up the cut grain in sheaves, and thus gather in the crops—employing only some half dozen hands.

IMPROVED STUCCO.—M. Landrin recommends the mixing of the crude plaster in water containing 8 to 10 per cent of sulphuric acid. After allowing the compound to rest for fifteen minutes, he calcines the plaster. This gives a stucco of excellent quality in which all organic matters are burnt out leaving the material of exceptional whiteness.

"MAN'S UNSELFISH FRIEND."—There seems some probability that Mr. Charles D. Townsend, the artist, may within a few years become the American Landseer, at least in that department of art dealing with that second noblest of animals, the dog. Several fine examples of his treatment of this noble subject will be in the recollection of many of our readers—notably some of the pictures made for *THE ALBION*, and at least one bearing the reputation of being finer than even anything of the kind produced by the great English painters. It is the head of the dog which Mr. Townsend seems to have the exceptional mission to portray—in that particular assuming the same position, as compared with ordinary painters of the dog, that is held by distinguished portrait painters in comparison to those dealing with the full figure of man. Perhaps the very finest thing he has yet done, is shown in the chronophotograph of the dog, forming the annual premium offered by *THE ALBION*, and now just being supplied to those entitled to it. The very nobility of doghood is shown in this fine head and bust, those of a Newfoundland, with perhaps a shade of softening cross with the great St. Bernard, affording a subject quite as capable of being loved as of loving. How grand is the whole pose! how more than human are those eyes, full of a fixed and loving attention, how perfect is the silken gloss of that muzzle, with the clear nostrils, the tip of soft red tongue, and the mere hint of the strong teeth that could tear as well as defend, beneath it! How gracefully fall those fine velvet ears! How thoughtfully corrugates the noble brow that might be thinking out a problem instead of merely waiting the welcome commands of a master. How tastefully, and yet how naturally, is the neck encircled by that creamy, curled fleece, from which the head rises as proudly yet unconsciously as the daintiest lady's from her ruff! How perfect, in short, are all the details of this admirable picture, the mere possession of which, in any house, will be quite equal in effect to a long sermon by the most renowned professor, against cruelty to animals, and much

more lasting than one of the expostulations of Mr. Bergh. *THE ALBION* does well, both for its own prosperity and the good of its patrons, in executing and offering so exceptionally excellent a chronophotograph of its series for 1875; and as we have already remarked, Mr. Townsend, the artist, in it makes rapid strides toward the head of living artists in that class of delineation.

It is understood that the original of this fine picture will be one of the many fine paintings held for distribution, through the new Art Union, to all subscribers for "The Albion." The subscription price is \$5.00, which includes "The Albion" one year; this Chrono, and one share in the Art Union distribution.

THE NEW DOMINION MONTHLY for December contains some interesting literary and political articles, reviews, poetry, household receipts, &c. Price \$1.50 per annum. J. Dougall & Son, Montreal.

DON'T FORGET the congregational meeting to be held in the Presbyterian Church on Thursday evening, at 7 o'clock. A full attendance of the congregation is requested.

EFFECT OF DAMP AIR ON COAL.—M. Varenstrass finds by recently conducted experiments on this subject, that the loss in weight, due to a slow oxidation and to the disengagement of gases which form the richest part of the coal, may equal one third of the original weight. The heating power in such coal was lowered to 47 per cent of its former capacity. The same coal exposed to the air, but in a closed receptacle, did not lose more than 25 per cent of gas and 10 per cent of heating power. Bituminous coals alter most rapidly. This shows the disadvantage of damp cellars, and of leaving coal uncovered for long periods and subject to bad weather. Judging from the large loss incurred, it would seem much the better economy to provide suitable receptacles for the fuel, the saving in the latter being sufficient to compensate for the extra expense.

It is said in France that the quarries of lithographic stone in Bavaria are exhausted as regards the best kind, and that the only fine stones are now obtained by the Paris lithographers from Brunniquel, Tarn, and Garonne, in France. These stones are said to be well appreciated in the United States. There are quarries of the same stone at Vigan, France, but these are of an inferior description.

Electric Railway Whistles.

The French have lately introduced a system by which a stationary electric battery is made subservient to blow the whistle of an approaching locomotive, in case the road is not clear without the engineer having to give any attention to it. Such an arrangement is of course, exceedingly valuable at night, and especially during a fog, when signals cannot be seen at a distance. It is the reverse of the system introduced on the Hudson river railroad, by which every approaching locomotive sets a stationary electro-magnetic alarm bell at the depot in motion. In the French system, referred to, the obstruction at the depot starts the steam whistle on every approaching locomotive when the train is still far enough away to slacken speed and stop. It has now been in uninterrupted operation on the line of the Northern Company of France for some time, and has been found practically successful in use, regularly informing the engineer whether the way is clear or not. The signal tender turns a disk and sends an electric current in the direction of the coming train to a bar placed between the rails; when the engine reaches the spot, a metal brush, placed between the wheels, sweeps the bar, the current passes to the engine, and by means of an electro-magnet, presses upon a lever which opens the steam whistle, thus making it blow automatically. The rapidity with which the danger signal can be sent appears to be much in its favor.

American apples, says the *London Grocer*, are now selling at moderate rates in provincial towns, both in England and Ireland. The highly colored and well flavored Baldwin is the commonest kind as yet. As usual, they come in barrels, without any kind of packing materials, and come, as a rule, in excellent condition. That apples should be sent several thousand miles, and then be sold as cheaply as home-grown fruit, is a noteworthy fact. At this rate of progress, fruitless and cold regions will soon be supplied with the finest fruits at a cost that places them within the reach of all classes.

BALLOU'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE for January is on our table, and from it may be gathered what will follow during the present volume. It is a capital work for a New Year's present. Every subscriber receives a handsome chronophotograph. Among the contents are—*The Dudley Family*,—*Venice*,—*The Disinherited*,—*The Mystery of the Headlands*,—*Along the Mozambique*,—*The Glad New Year*—and several pleasing and instructive articles and humorous pictures. Published by Thomas & Talbot, Brookfield Street, Boston.

A despatch from Ottawa to the St. John *Globe* states that Brydges' report has been submitted to the Government, disclosing the most reckless expenditure of public money in connection with the Intercolonial Railway. The report shows that Messrs. Fraser, Reynolds & Co's., account is something like \$26,000 over the marked value

of goods supplied. He makes this statement deliberately, and has no doubt that its accuracy can be proved if it becomes necessary.

STRANGE COINCIDENCE.—About 6 months ago a P. E. Island sea captain was drowned at sea from on board his schooner, when on the voyage home—a voyage which was to have brought him much happiness, for at its termination he was to have been married to a young woman at Charlottetown. The ship was taken home without him, and was handed over to his brother, who was also a captain. The brother sailed the ship, until about three weeks ago, when he too, was drowned at sea, while on his way home to marry the same young woman as his deceased brother had been engaged to—the acquaintance existing between them at the time of his brother's death having ripened into the "eternal passion," and their marriage had been arranged to take place in a quiet kind of way on his return.

People were not prepared to learn that a number of soldiers were frozen to death in a snow storm in the north of Spain in the engagement between the Carlists and the Republicans; but the report is confirmed by a newspaper correspondent at St. Jean de Luz, who says that sixty of a Basque battalion were frozen to death during a retreat from Oyarzun to Lesesa in their passage over one of the highest mountains in that part of Spain.

Arrangements having been perfected with Messrs. Allan & Co. (Montreal Ocean Steamship Company) to despatch two steamers from Portland weekly, shippers of European freight will be insured speedy transit. Cars loaded at the west will run along the steamers (one of which will always be in Portland to receive freight) and be discharged directly on board.

COUNTERFEIT BILLS.—A new counterfeit five dollar bill on the Traders National Bank of Chicago is in circulation, and several have been thrown out by the banks in the United States. They are admirably executed and well calculated to deceive, so that the public should be on their guard against them.

THE ST. GEORGE RED GRANITE CO. have elected the following as officers for the ensuing year: J. W. Lawrence, President; A. C. Fairweather, Sec.-Treasurer; P. McCormick, B. Fisher, C. H. Fairweather, Edwin Frost, J. W. Lawrence, F. T. C. Barrow, H. L. Sturdee, Board of Directors.

A HALIFAXIAN ABROAD.—A late English paper announces that "the Queen has been pleased to appoint William P. Binney, Esq., to be British Consul at the Greek Islands in the Mediterranean, to reside at Syra." Mr. Binney is a Halifaxian, son of the late Stephen Binney.—*Chronicle*.

STEAM FLOUR MILLS.—We understand that Mr. Harding Carter and others seriously entertain the proposition to erect a steam flour mill at Oxford Station, not only to do what Custom work the country will supply but to import wheat from Ontario and elsewhere and manufacture and put it up for the market of the Maritime Provinces.—*Maritime Sentinel*.

DR. McMONAGLE'S DEATH.—We regret to learn that Dr. McMonagle died 13th inst., after a brief illness, of diphtheria. Dr. McMonagle was a native of Sussex, K. C., and graduated with distinction at Edinburgh a few years ago. He had many friends who will regret to hear of his untimely death, almost at the outset of his medical career.

The reduction of ten cents per barrel (on flour from Chicago to Portland in the tariff rates of the Grand Trunk Railway will prove of no little benefit to the trade. A corresponding reduction has also been made on other merchandise from the west, and the great gain cannot be estimated in dollars and cents.

Colonel Forney announces that he has official information that the British government intends to recognize the Centennial celebration at Philadelphia and has resolved to appoint a commissioner to the exhibition.

DIED.

On the 9th instant, of consumption, Mr. William Cunningham, aged 79 years, a native of the County Carlow, Ireland, and for fifty years a resident of Chamcook, leaving a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn their loss.

On the 12th inst., after a short illness, Mary Ann, aged 42 years, wife of Mr. Jas. Summers, leaving a husband and five children to mourn their bereavement.

Ship News.

PORT OF ST. ANDREWS

ARRIVED.

Dec. 3, Matilda, Stinson, St. Stephen, gen. cargo.
5, Willie, Carson, St. John, Flour, &c., T. Black.
7, Esther, Maloney, St. John, Tea &c.
Alice C. Fox, Rowe, Boothbay, ballast.
12, Onward, Whalen, Eastport, Flour, &c., J. Beckerton & Co.
14, Utica, Maloney, Boston, gen. cargo.
15, Matilda, Stinson, St. Stephen, gen. cargo.

CLEARED.

Dec. 14, Julia Clinch, Maloney, Boston, 2563 sleepers, Goodnow & Co.