

—The British house of commons having defeated the Palmerston ministry on the question of the hostilities with China, a dissolution of parliament has taken place.

—Lord Elgin formerly governor of Jamaica and during eight years Governor General of Canada is about to proceed as plenipotentiary to Peking.

—The Canadian Parliament has voted an address to the Queen, praying Her Majesty to select a place for the seat of Government. Since 1842, shortly after the burning of the Parliament buildings in Montreal, by a mob, the cities of Toronto and Quebec have been alternately capitals of Canada; parliament was held in Toronto from the fall of 1849 to the fall of 1851; then in Quebec for four years, until the close of 1855 when the Government offices were again removed to Toronto.

Several attempts have been made, at different times, to fix it permanently at one of the cities of Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, or Toronto, but without success, as the friends of each city were always outvoted by a combination of the friends of all the others. The same proceeding was repeated on the amendment of the motion of the Government in favor of a reference to Her Majesty when the largest vote was given in favor of Ottawa. The final division on the ministerial measure was 61 to 50. Since the address has been carried, the Governor General has invited the five cities, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, and Toronto to forward such documents and remarks as they may think proper in support of their respective claims.

—The Hon. Mr. Cartier, Attorney General, has introduced two bills, the one regulating the judiciary of Lower Canada, and the other to provide for a codification of the laws of this section of the province. The Hon. Mr. Spence has also introduced a measure to provide for a system of classification of the clerks in the several public departments, and to regulate promotion on the basis of competency.

—Great agitation prevails in Newfoundland, arising out of the negotiations recently entered into between France and England on the subject of the fisheries. It appears however that the Parliament of the colony is to be consulted relative to the measure, and that consequently the excitement is premature.

—The family of the eminent chemist Gay Lussac having resolved to erect a statue to his memory, the Emperor has given them leave to put it up in one of the public squares in Paris.

—The Emperor of Austria has ordered that the statue of Napoleon the first, by Canova, which was in the Academy of fine arts at Milan, be placed, upon a suitable pedestal, in the public garden of that city.

—The *Courrier du Canada* speaks very highly of a painting by Mr. A. Plamondon, a native of St. Augustin, near Quebec, who studied in Paris under the celebrated Paulin Guérin. This painting is a copy of the Assumption of the Virgin by Poussin, of a very large size;—it is intended for the church of the St. John's suburbs. The *Courrier* adds, with much truth "We have now four native artists of whom our country may well be proud, Messrs. Plamondon, Hamel, Bourassa and Falardeau; the latter however seems to have forgotten Canada and now resides at Florence, where, we are happy to learn he is thriving well. He can scarcely be found fault with for the preference which on that account he gives to a foreign country; with us the wealthy and the mighty do very little for the fine arts. We know of gentlemen who have spent thousands on their drawing rooms but who have never gone any length for either paintings or statues."

Strange to say, Mr. Plamondon, who as a pupil of Guérin is a colourist, has however shown a decided partiality for the works of Poussin, who as every body is aware, gave more attention to the purity of the lines than to the fascinations of the prism. Our Canadian artist has already successfully tried the *Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus*, a splendid copy of which he had obtained from the late Abbé Desjardins. It was generally believed by *connaisseurs* who had seen the original in the gallery of the Vatican, that Mr. Plamondon had one of the three copies made by Poussin himself. This beautiful painting was sold to a *brocanteur* at a high price, and sad to say, was lost in the gulf of St. Lawrence, where the vessel in which it was shipped, for England, was wrecked.

—We learn from the same paper, that four young men from Quebec are distinguishing themselves in the schools in France. Three of them, Messrs. Hamel, Légaré and Beaudet, who were sent to the celebrated *Ecole des Carmes* at Paris, are intended to be professors of the faculties of Arts and Theology in the Laval University. The other gentleman alluded to is Mr. Joseph Perrault, the grand son of the late Joseph François Perrault, protonotary at Quebec, who spent a great portion of his time and fortune in promoting education and agriculture. This young gentleman with his own means and of his own own accord left this country and studied during two years in an agricultural school in Scotland, and he is now at the *Ecole Impériale d'Agriculture de Grignon* where he is considered one of the best pupils. He was appointed by the Emperor one of the commissioners of the great Agricultural Exhibition of 1856 and is now selected as agent for the purchase of cattle for the Agricultural Schools. We understand that Mr. Perrault will soon return to this country where he will carry on agricultural improvements on a large scale, on his farms at Farences.

—H. Latour, Esquire, vice-president of the Natural History Society of Montreal, has offered a gold medal for the best essay on Canadian Natural History to be read at the American Scientific Convention which will take place in this city in August next.

We are also happy to learn that Mr. Latour, has been elected a corresponding member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

—Dr. Larue, a young physician of Quebec has just returned from Europe, where he has been preparing himself in the schools of medicine of Paris and of Louvain in Belgium, for a professorship in the Laval University.

—Mr. de Humboldt, the great natural philosopher has been dangerously ill at Berlin. The King of Prussia called himself on this eminent savant doing thereby to royalty as much honor as to science.

—A new expedition is now preparing to go in search of Sir John Franklin and his companions. The distinguished french geographer, Mr. de la Roquette has nobly subscribed the sum of one hundred thousand francs towards the undertaking.

—Dr. Hoffman has discovered a new metal. At a lecture lately delivered by him at the British Royal Institution, he exhibited a bright glistening mass something resembling butter, and described it as the metallic base of ammonia. Much was said last year about the application of aluminium, the base of clay (*alumine*) to several purposes of trade and industry, we are not aware however that the anticipations of the french savans on that score have as yet been fully realized.

—The prize of thirty thousand francs instituted by the Emperor of France, for the most notable discovery in science, has been awarded to Mr. Fizeau for his experiments and demonstrations on the rapidity of the movement of light.

—The Smithsonian Institute is causing the meteorological observations of Dr. Smallwood of St. Martin, to be printed in one volume by Mr. Lovell of Montreal. It is to be hoped that our Government will secure a number of copies for our public institutions.

—The Montreal committee of the American Association for the advancement of science, has obtained from the Government, leave to hold the great scientific congress which will take place in August next, in the magnificent court house in Montreal. Invitations have been sent to savans in France, Great Britain and Germany, and a certain number of free berths have been handsomely presented by the several companies of Transatlantic steamers; they have been placed at the disposal of the great scientific academies of each country, so as to secure the presence of some of their most distinguished members.

—Mr. Edward Hames of Moorefield, Virginia, has killed an eagle, measuring three feet one inch, from the beak to the end of the tail, and seven feet in breadth across the wings.

—The origin of the popupal trick called the april fool, which in french is known under the name of the *poisson d'avril*, (april fish,) is accounted for in the following manner in a french periodical: In the early period of the history of France, the year commenced on the first of May; the new years gifts generally consisted of fish which are excellent in France towards the end of April, an ordinance of one of the french Kings of the second dynasty having declared that the year should begin on the first of January, presents of fish were no longer made. Thence arose a common expression "as a fish in April," meaning any thing that one could not expect to get, and the trick performed on credulous people on the first day of that month, according to that version, had its origin in a practical illustration of that expression.

—Paris during the past winter has been plentifully and cheaply supplied with, peas, artichokes, asparagus and all other kinds of vegetables. This abundance arises from the fact that the African possessions of France are now only at a distance of about seventy-two hours from Paris.

—Another artesian well is now about to be completed at Passy near Paris; it requires only thirty *mètres* more to attain the depth of the famous artesian well at Grenelle. It is thought that the perforation will have to be made twenty *mètres* deeper than that of the latter, the geological level of water at Passy being lower than at Grenelle.

—A *conversazione* was held at Burnside Hall, McGill College, in this city, on the 12th March instant. A brilliant assembly of Ladies and Gentlemen was in attendance, speeches were delivered by the Honorable Judge Day, President of the Board of Governors, and also by other gentlemen. Musical and scientific entertainments were offered to the company, and refreshments were abundant. The rooms which were filled with scientific apparatus and specimens of natural history looked remarkably well; every thing was the more admired when it was remembered that about the same time last year, the building then situated on the same spot, had been destroyed by fire, and that the present new one had been erected, and so completely furnished within so short time.

—His Lordship, Bishop Fulford and the Superintendent of Education, recently visited Lower Canada college conducted by Mr. Walsh in St. Urban street. The students stood their examination in a satisfactory manner and proved that they had derived great benefit from the lessons of their instructors. Greek, Latin, French and English are taught in that institution. The junior latin class passed a very successful examination,