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TEMPERATURE

As observed by HEARN & HARRISON, Thermometer and Barometer Makers, Notre Dame Street, Montreal.

THE WEEK ENDING

May 1st, 1881.			Corresponding week, 1880		
Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.
Mon. 63°	40°	51°	Mon. 54°	34°	44°
Tues. 60°	45°	52°	Tues. 50°	42°	46°
Wed. 63°	39°	51°	Wed. 50°	40°	45°
Thur. 64°	45°	54°	Thur. 53°	31°	42°
Fri. 62°	46°	54°	Fri. 53°	37°	45°
Sat. 50°	34°	42°	Sat. 50°	37°	43°
Sun. 55°	35°	45°	Sun. 48°	25°	36°

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, May 7th., 1881.

THE WEEK

THE *Canadian Monthly* for May is noticeable for an article on the Future of Canada by Mr. N. F. DAVIN. Mr. DAVIN is always an enthusiast, but his enthusiasm in this case will find an echo in the feelings of most of us, and we shall not hesitate to endorse his glowing descriptions of the resources of the Dominion. It is time we did let people know that we have got a good thing here in Canada, and that we are not ashamed, but proud of our country and its surroundings. If our neighbours on this side or the other of the Atlantic have anything at all to reproach us with it is our youth, and the drawbacks which ever belong to a young people. This, at any rate, is the least of faults, since it grows less day by day, and there are many things in youth which old age grudges the loss of.

BUT Mr. DAVIN is not concerned alone to eulogize our resources and linger lovingly over the glories of our climate. His principal object is to criticize some modern suggestions as to the political future of the country. Federal union is a dream, which the Federalists never tire of dreaming, but which we shall assuredly never see realized in a country where dreaming is at a discount. There are two courses then open to us, if we must change. Independence and Annexation, and as between these Mr. DAVIN unhesitatingly gives us his adhesion to the former. That Independence is a possibility to us, it seems strange that any should doubt, but Mr. DAVIN combats the arguments advanced against it with all the skill of a practised lawyer. The real objection to Independence is that we are thoroughly satisfied with our present condition as a nation. That we ought not to be content, that we ought to rise and agitate and throw off the British yoke may be very true, but in this misguided world there are always people who will not behave as they ought to, and the fact remains that this nation is not discontented with the present state of things at all.

WE are thoroughly with Mr. DAVIN once more in the position he takes upon the Annexation question. Apart from the advantages which many Americans even see in our system of Government as opposed to one which has all the difficulties of a Republic, as well as the dangers of an irresponsible head, we fail to see in the future of the United States any guarantee for that permanency which alone would justify our ranging ourselves under their

banner. "If geography points to anything," says Mr. DAVIN, "it is to three or four Republics instead of one." The interests of the South and North are as antagonistic to-day as before the war, and a fresh element has been introduced in the development of the West with its separate interests, pointing, as it seems to us, to a divided future. To say that Independence must come to us in the future, whether we will it or no, is to say that natural causes will operate to-morrow as they have operated yesterday and the day before. Meanwhile it is the theorists alone who have found a grievance for us, and we cannot do better than to leave its solution to them for the present.

THE ORIGIN OF MAN.*

The latest contributor to Darwinian, or rather anti-Darwinian literature is Mr. WM. DENTON. To begin with the praise that is legitimately due to him at the outset, Mr. DENTON has succeeded, as it seems to us, in avoiding the Scylla of dry physiological investigation without getting into the Charybdis of unscientific over-popularity. The book is easily to be "understood of the people," but is none the less on that account the result of accurate scientific study. Starting from the now acknowledged facts as to the earth's origin, and going as far with DARWIN as to refer the appearance of man to evolution from the lower animals, Mr. DENTON finds his first point of difference in the unqualified adhesion which he gives to the theory of spontaneous generation. Writing unscientifically, we have ever considered that this is the only logical end, or rather beginning, of the doctrines of evolution. If man by a series of natural operations is the legitimate descendant of the *protozoa*, from what came these *protozoa* themselves? And conversely, if an external power (call it what you please) created the *protozoa*, how is it more unreasonable to suppose that the same power was capable of creating, or did, in fact, create man?

But unfortunately it does not seem within the province of physiologists to be logical. Of Mr. DENTON's failure in this respect, more hereafter. Meanwhile, those who deny the possibility of spontaneous generation find a strong support in the experiments of Professor TYNDALL, which, viewed by the rules of strict evidence, seem to outweigh those of WYMAN and others, and for this reason. Granting that the conditions in both cases were equally perfect, it is yet more reasonable to suppose that an accident may have introduced the germs of life into a sealed flask, or preserved them from destruction in the preparation of it, than to conceive it possible that life, if really capable of producing itself spontaneously, should have remained inert under any circumstances. To continue, Mr. DENTON traces the similarity in early forms of being, and points to the close resemblance of the *embryos* of man and the animals to support the theory of evolution. Evolution admitted, the question remains, then, of cause, and it is here that his theory branches from the doctrines generally propounded. Mr. DENTON sets aside natural selection, and for the most part sexual selection, as inadequate, in his opinion, to account for the changes. After tracing with painstaking care the various operations of variation, tendency, modification, hereditary transmission and natural selection in a modified form, he proceeds to account for their systematic action in the production of man. Man's origin is undoubtedly natural in the sense of owing its development to the operation of natural laws, but it is also—and here is, we take it, the new point of Mr. DENTON's theory—spiritual. The operation of building up from the first beginnings of life the most perfect expression of it which we have on earth, has been presided over by a Nature which has, we submit, all the characteristics of a God, and which may be readily exchanged

* Is Darwin Right? or the origin of Man—by Wm. Denton—1881, Willesby Mass. Denton Pub. Co'y—Montreal, Dawson Bros.

for Him, by those of us as are not yet ready to give up our old-world associations.

This theory, it seems needless to say, involves the future life of the soul.

"Why should millions of ages have been spent to produce a being to whom future existence is so desirable, and then deny him what he of all the world only craves? There is a life after death; the past teaches it, the present declares it."

Nature then, during the millions of years she has required to produce the present generation, has been striving after perfection. The result of those struggles is man as we find him to-day. The future is to bring infinite happiness not only to the race, but to each member of it.

"And what (Nature) has done for the race is an indication of what she will do for the individual."

Here, then, is the theory in a nutshell; and here, we conceive, the grand objection. Follow the argument to its legitimate conclusion. Putting aside the question, which naturally arises, of where the line of the future existence is to be drawn between man and his ancestors (for why the first man should be worthy of Heaven and his immediate progenitor, the last ape, and his existence on earth is not at all clear, nor does Mr. DENTON seem to insist upon it) granting that it is only men who are to have a future, we may ask, Are all men of all ages included in this grand promise? Are the gentlemen who dined off Captain Cook equally deserving of the exertions of Nature on their behalf with Mr. Disraeli or Cardinal Newman? There can be but one answer. They are alike men, they must alike be admitted to immortality. Well, then, Mr. DENTON, is it not all a failure? Here has Nature been for millions of years struggling after perfection. She has partially attained her aim in the nineteenth century, will, no doubt, attain to it more perfectly in the odd millions of years left her for her operations on this planet; and then this done, will she not have to begin all over again with Heaven? It has taken millions of years to fashion out of the primeval man a Huxley or a Lyell. And lo! this life ended, and the primeval man is back again in his original simplicity (for remember the future is for individuals), and it may be expected that Mr. Lyell will have to complete the course of instruction which Nature has failed to bestow.

Such is, we take it, the objection to the new system. That such an objection does not hold to the Christian doctrines of a future life, might be shown readily, though our space is too limited for present discussion of the subject. Meanwhile, in the general acceptance of the doctrine of a future life amongst our leading scientists is reason for congratulation amongst those of us who recognize in science the handmaid and not the mistress of revealed religion.

AMUSEMENTS.

On Monday night the Young Irishmen's Literary and Benefit Association gave a performance of Tom Taylor's drama "Lady Clancarty" at the Academy of Music, under the direction of Mr. Neil Warner. Everybody knows the pathetic story of the child marriage of Lord and Lady Clancarty, their separation, and their subsequent first meeting when the husband, who was implicated in the "assassination plot" had taken refuge in his wife's chamber from his pursuers, only to be tracked thither and torn from her arms. The story in real life did not end, it is to be regretted, as satisfactorily as in Mr. Taylor's version, who obtains for the happy pair the king's pardon of the husband, and full permission to "live happily ever after." Mr. Warner on whom, of course, fell the burden of sustaining the hero's part, added to his already well-known reputation, though his brogue was perhaps at times open to reflection. Mrs. Warner as the unhappy Lady Clancarty supported him well, but the success of the evening was reserved to Miss Beatrice Belville who, as Lady Betty Noel won all hearts. We must not forget to mention the really excellent and characteristic performance of Mr. Stanmore as King William III., "the little Dutchman." The house was not as well filled as it should have been, but, on the whole, we may congratulate the Young Irishmen on the result of their efforts, and wish them better success next time they come before the public.

THURSDAY was the long expected concert of the Mendelssohn Choir, attracting additional notice from the announcement that it was to be the last public concert given by this institution. I have before expressed the very high opinion I have of the capabilities of the choir and their leader; it is consequently with regret that I must admit that the performance was by no means entirely satisfactory, solely as I believe on account of the music selected. I question whether Bach, performed even under the most favourable circumstances, would be appreciated in Canada, at all event for some years to come, but, in fact, these circumstances were by no means present. In plain words the cantata was totally beyond the reach of the choir, whose special training has been in the direction of part songs and other music of the English and later German schools. Now Bach's music requires a special study on the part of chorus and conductor. Those who can remember the inauguration of the Bach choir in London under Prof. Goldschmidt will also remember that until that time the rendering of Bach's music, (with the exception perhaps of the Passion music, and I believe once or twice the Christmas oratorio) had been considered an impossibility in London, and the attempt to introduce it, it was felt could only be undertaken by a choir who had made it a special study under one of the most accomplished leaders in Europe. The cantata on Thursday was sung with truth and evenness, though a little lacking in spirit in parts, but it was not Bach in the sense in which alone Bach is delightful. It is not too much to say that Mr. Warren even did not thoroughly understand the music, which, it goes without saying, he played with his usual skill. Of the Schumann (the song of the New Year) a different tale can be told. It only wanted a little more strength to have made this really worthy of much praise, as it was the organ had the best of it throughout.

It is a comfort after what I fear may be thought ungracious remarks, to remember the two pieces Gounod's "Ave Verum," and Mendelssohn's "Vale of Rest," which redeemed the choir from all criticism upon their legitimate ground. The singing of either of these could hardly have been improved, and shewed conclusively that the Mendelssohn choir have lost none of their old skill, and that the failure to do justice to "My Spirit was in Heaviness," was more a misfortune in the attempt than a fault in the rendering. And those who heard Mr. Gould's recent lecture will not think that I am depreciating the work of the choir, if I say that part singing is their forte and should be their universal practice.

Any tribute to Mr. Warren's playing is almost unnecessary, save to record his having played like himself; while of the soloists the remarks I made upon the general performance may be allowed to include them, as having only failed where it was impossible or nearly so to succeed.

It is not often that such a dramatic treat is given us in Montreal as was enjoyed by the audience at the Academy of Music during the last three days of the week. "My Partner" is certainly one of the best plays of its class ever put upon the boards. Abounding in dramatic situations, and in parts with remarkably well written dialogue, it gives unusual opportunities for acting, none of which were lost. Joe Saunders, one of the Partners, and the hero of the play, is a study for one of "nature's gentlemen," and withal a queer specimen of the morality of the early settlers in California, to whom three or four men killed was an indispensable feature of "having a good time," but who held their plighted word as sacred as the most binding of oaths; who would shoot a comrade for an angry word, but held him as unworthy of the name of man, who would wrong a trusting woman. The part in Mr. Aldrich's hands has a true dignity which shines through the roughness of manner with which he never forgets to surround it, and is in reality a powerful piece of acting. Miss Dora Goldthwaite as Mary Brandon, the girl who has sinned and suffered, is good, though a little staid, and Mr. C. Parsloe evoked roars of laughter as the Chinaman Wing Lee, her faithful adherent. We must not forget Major Britt, the unsuccessful candidate for the legislature, whose impersonation by Mr. Frank Mordaunt was one of the best bits of character acting I have seen for some time.

I ought not to forget that a complimentary concert was given on Tuesday to Rosa d'Erina, at St. Gabriel's Academy. The chair was taken by the Rev. Father Salmon, who presided with his usual affability and made everybody feel quite at home. Besides the *prima donna's* numbers, other musical selections were contributed, among which Mr. Evans' comic songs were noticeable and received a hearty encore. An address by Mr. J. J. Curran, Q.C., was, it goes without saying, appropriate and witty.

I went on Saturday to hear the Holmans in "Olivette" and have felt more or less unwell ever since. With the exception of Mr. Dalton, whose acting and singing is very fair, the company have no redeeming feature. The opera itself deserves a longer notice which I must reserve for next week as this article has grown unconsciously long. The same reason leads me to postpone a retrospective view of Mrs. Otis Rockwood's chamber concerts, the last of which took place on Saturday afternoon with Mr. Oliver King as pianist, and Mrs. Rockwood and Sig. Bogdanoff as vocalists.