

THE BERLAND-DESBARATS LITHOGRAPHIC AND PUBLISHING COMPANY issue the following periodicals, to all of which subscriptions are payable in advance:—THE CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, \$4.00 per annum; THE CANADIAN PATENT OFFICE RECORD AND MECHANICS' MAGAZINE, \$2.00 per annum; L'OPINION PUBLIQUE, \$3.00 per annum.

All remittances and business communications to be addressed to "The General Manager, The Burland-Desbarats Company, Montreal."

All correspondence of the Papers, literary contributions, and sketches to be addressed to "The Editor, The Burland-Desbarats Company, Montreal."

When an answer is required stamps for return postage must be enclosed.

One or two good reliable carriers required—Apply to the MANAGER, BERLAND-DESBARATS COMPANY.

City subscribers are requested to report at once to this office, either personally or by postal card, any irregularity in the delivery of their papers.

**FIRST-CLASS AGENTS WANTED** for the advertising and subscription departments of this paper. Good percentage, large and exclusive territory, given to each canvasser, who will be expected, on the other hand, to furnish security. Also for the sale of Johnson's new MAP OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA. Apply to THE GENERAL MANAGER, The Burland-Desbarats Company, Montreal.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B. H. B., Franklin Co., Mass.—You will find the information which you require in an editorial article of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, February 13th, 1875.

NOTE.—All letters requiring an answer must be accompanied with stamps for return postage. This rule is absolute. Unaccepted MSS., unaccompanied by stamps for return postage, will be destroyed.

## CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, April 3rd, 1875.

### THE QUESTION OF DIVORCE.

It is a long time since we have had so healthy an exhibition of public feeling as was evinced last week in the House of Commons on the vexed question of divorce. Mr. DE COSMOS having moved the establishment of a Dominion Divorce Court, rallied only five voices in his favor, while one hundred and thirty-four declared against him. The speeches made were no less satisfactory than the vote. It is due to Mr. DE COSMOS to say that he based his resolution not on the merits of the abstract question of divorce itself, but on the desirability of transferring jurisdiction in the matter from Parliament, as at present, to a judicial tribunal nominated *ad hoc*. Mr. MACKENZIE argued the point on this same ground, questioning its opportuneness and stating that though he had personally no objection to the establishment of such courts, he did not desire to afford additional facilities for obtaining divorces. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD went on higher ground to the principle itself. He did not see that there was any necessity for divorce courts in Canada, and, while he would not go so far as to say that there should be no divorce granted, he thought they should not encourage divorce in this country. Happily we had very few divorce cases here, and very little time was spent over them in Parliament; but he thought that that time was well spent, if by spending it they could spare Canada the curse of a Divorce Court. In England there was a reason for establishing such a court, which was the enormous cost of getting a private bill through the Parliament of that country. Here there was no such reason, as the expense of getting a private bill through Parliament was very small.

But the ablest speech of the debate was that of Mr. CAUCHON. The member for Quebec Centre declared that divorce was a social disease, and that if we established a Divorce Court, as they had in England and the United States, it would prove a social epidemic. There was nothing so inviting as a court of that kind for people to marry without any consideration or reflection, and then to procure a divorce at ease. There was divorce in the Roman

Law, but it was not in accord with the feelings of the people, and was not during a long period carried into effect; but after the first case, it spread like an epidemic, and the consequences in Italy, the United States and England were very well known. He did not consider the subject from a religious, but from a social point of view. When BONAPARTE established the Code Napoléon, he pronounced, after a long discussion, in favor of divorce. But in 1816 CHATEAUBRIAND, the eminent writer, who was at that time Minister of the Crown, succeeded in abolishing divorce and establishing the old laws, not on religious but on purely social considerations, and after that the question was tried in the legislative body of France under LOUIS PHILIPPE three times. On the two first occasions a proposition to reverse the law was carried in the Lower House by an overwhelming majority, but it was rejected by the House of Peers, simply on social considerations. In 1843 and 1844 the question was again brought up before the legislative body, and, upon the simple considerations he had mentioned, was rejected by an overwhelming majority, and was never tried again. Its adoption now would result in a greater evil than the social evil, and he hoped the question would not be brought up again. According as the Dominion increases in numbers, and the complexities of modern civilization entangle us more than they do in our present young existence, there is not the least doubt that the question will be brought up, and finally decided in a different sense. But until then, we may rest content with the position assumed by Parliament, last week.

#### MR. DOYLE'S REPORT.

It is well known to almost everybody in Canada that for a number of years past two benevolent ladies Miss RYE and Miss MACPHERSON, have been engaged in the work of bringing pauper and "gutter" children to Canada; and for two years past, Mr. MIDDLEMORE of Birmingham has been engaged in the same work. In Canada the impression has been that this work, with a very slight percentage of failure, has been beneficent. But accounts in a different sense appear to have reached England; and last year, the Imperial Government sent out an Inspector, Mr. ANDREW DOYLE, to make a report on the condition of these children in Canada. He has made an adverse one which has created sensation among all those interested in this species of immigration; and the Government and a Committee of the House of Commons at Ottawa, are now engaged in making an examination into his statements.

Mr. DOYLE'S report is altogether too long for publication in these columns, or even to give a full abstract of it. But we may say generally, that he states he visited about 400 of the children, that is, not more than about one-eighth of the whole of those who are settled throughout the country. He alleges however, that such an inspection enabled him to judge of the character of the whole. His judgment is very unfavourable. He states that neither Miss RYE nor Miss MACPHERSON have lived up to their professions; that they have in fact obtained the workhouse children under false pretences; that the training of the children previously to putting them in places has not been sufficient; that sufficient care is not taken of them on ship-board; that on their arrival at the Home they are got rid of as soon as possible; that many of them are made to suffer hardships in their situations; that many turn out badly and run into vicious ways; and in some neighbourhoods their presence is regarded as an evil and a nuisance. Further, Mr. DOYLE more than insinuates that the two ladies we have named, make a lucrative trade out of the emigration of this kind of pauper and "gutter" children. He states that in the case of the former they get £8. 8s., stg., from the Poor Law Guardians with each child; and then get Passenger Warrants from the Dominion Government for £3. 5s., and £2. 5s.; also

£1 4s. 8d., from the Ontario Government; and Railway fare from Quebec to their points of destination free.

Such is the general purport of Mr. DOYLE'S report; and, as a whole, we are satisfied that it is very unfair. Both Miss RYE and Miss MACPHERSON have been up before the Immigration Committee to rebut the statements contained in it. Miss RYE admitted that about 3 per cent. of her children had turned out failures. Miss MACPHERSON denied that the proportion in hers was even so much as this. But such a proportion of failure would not be a large one. We should have expected more, and been yet prepared to call the scheme successful. Both ladies denied that they had made any money out of their emigration labours. Miss MACPHERSON presented her accounts to the Committee; and Miss RYE promised to furnish hers.

The Hon. Mr. VAN, Minister of Militia, introduced Miss RYE to the Committee, and declared that the efforts of this lady in Nova Scotia had been eminently successful. He said that the demand for the children was in excess of the supply; and that the people of Nova Scotia greatly desired to have the movement continued. Mr. JAMES YOUNG, M. P., the Chairman of the Committee of Public Accounts, made similar statements with respect to Miss MACPHERSON'S Home, at Galt, Ont. Mr. WHITE, M. P., for Hastings, and the Hon. BILLY FLINT made similar statements with regard to the Belleville Home. And Mr. THOMPSON, M. P., Mr. PLUMB, M. P., and other members spoke in the highest terms, from personal observation, of the working of Miss RYE'S Niagara Home. Mr. PERRIS, M. P., was scarcely less enthusiastic in his testimony as to the working of the Miss MACPHERSON Home, at Knowlton, Que. And later Mr. JUSTICE DUNKIN appeared before the Committee. His testimony was very valuable as to the thorough efficiency of the Knowlton Home and the care of the children after being placed out.

So far then Mr. DOYLE has been considerably damaged by the Committee; but in view of his official position and the nature of his report, it may be doubted whether a more detailed reply, founded upon an inspection, will not be necessary to meet its allegations, and so induce the Guardians in England to allow the work to which we have referred to continue.

Mr. DOYLE himself admits that under proper restrictions the emigration of these children may be of advantage to all concerned. But he thinks that there should be Homes in Canada under Government control in which the children should be trained for some months before being placed out; and that a regular Government inspection should be maintained after they are placed out. We doubt if the kind of Homes suggested would be at all adapted to the genius of this country; but there might not be any serious difficulty in providing for a periodic inspection of the children, for some time after being placed out.

#### THE GRASSHOPPER PLAGUE.

In the interesting account of our special correspondent, "Six Months in the Wilds of the North West," which has appeared in the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, for some weeks past, and which will be continued for some weeks longer, a graphic description was given of the ravages of the grasshopper in those distant regions. The subject is one which has attracted wide and painful attention. The devastation from this cause was so great in Nebraska, last summer, that subscriptions throughout the United States and Canada had to be made to offer some alleviation to the destitute sufferers. Chief Justice Wood, in his charge to the Grand Jury, at Winnipeg, a few weeks ago, attached so much importance to this plague, that he predicted the prosperity of Manitoba, only on the condition that the fell visitation of grasshoppers would not be renewed. In view of these circumstances, we were pleased

to find attention drawn to the topic by Professor BELL, of the Geological Survey, who saw these insects at their work in the North West, during the last two years. In a most interesting lecture which we hope to see published in pamphlet form and widely circulated—delivered before the Natural History Society, of this city, on the 25th ult., the learned Professor went into all desirable details concerning the grasshopper plague of the North West. He began by stating that among the hundreds of species of grasshoppers and locusts in North America, only three appeared to be migratory. Of these, the hateful grasshopper, *C. speciosus*, performs all the dreadful ravages in the Western Territories and Manitoba. Another species, closely resembling this one, is common all over Canada, and has occasionally done some damage in New England. The heaviest devastations in California are due to the third of the migratory species.

Professor BELL states that the movements and habits of the first of these insects, the one with which we are particularly interested, are not thoroughly known. It does not seem capable of propagating itself continuously when far away from its permanent home, among the mountains in the South West, and perhaps also on the high and plains of the Western Territories. Its visitations of the low-lying eastern and northern regions, approaching the Mississippi and the Saskatchewan Rivers, last only from one to three years. The old insects arrive one season and deposit their eggs in the ground, and the next Spring the young hatch out and destroy the crops. They fly only during a few hours on warm sunny days and rest at night and during cool or dull weather. Hunger is the cause of their migrations, which are guided by no kind of regularity. They prefer to follow river courses and the more verdant sections of country.

The lecturer then went into the history of the periodical irruptions of these insects. According to him, there have been seven grasshopper visitations of the North West Territory, since the foundation of the Red River settlement in 1812, most of them having occurred of late years, but there has been one period of exemption of nearly forty years, or from 1818-19 till 1857-58. The plague always lasted two years. The old grasshoppers arrived the first, and the young brood hatched out the second. The larvæ came forth in Manitoba, about the end of May, and the insects arrived at maturity by the beginning of August, soon after which they took wing and went South.

By far the most useful portion of the lecture is that which refers to the means of destroying these insects, or guarding against their ravages. Professor BELL tells us that they may be attacked in all the stages of their existences. They are absolutely dependent on the weather and have many living enemies, especially among other insects, which attack the eggs, the larvæ and the adults, destroying great numbers. The efforts of man can be most effectually directed against the eggs, and of all the means which have been tried deep ploughing has proved the best. It seems that experience has shown that in other countries, the pest is mitigated by extending the cultivation of the land. By sowing a greater area the farmers might enjoy plenty, even after suffering a certain amount of loss. Professor BELL does not think the grasshopper plague need be a bug bear in the way of the development of the North West Territory. The young insects may be looked for again this Spring, but the chances are that we shall next have a succession of years of plenty, and freedom from the scourge; and that, gradually, even when the grasshoppers do appear, their ravages will cease to be seriously felt.

This is certainly a consummation devoutly to be wished for. Still, after all said and done, we fear we have not heard the last of the entomological plague. Certainly, a few more such visitations, as those of last year, and the hopes of immigration to the North West will be in a great measure thwarted.