

THE death of Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, on April 17th, removes from our midst one of Canada's most remarkable men. He was born on January 8, 1822, in the village of Logierait, Scotland, and came to Canada in 1847. He entered Parliament in 1861, and in 1875 became the First Minister of the Dominion, which office he held till the fall of his administration in 1879. The tremendous responsibility he took upon his own shoulders during his tenure of office so shattered his health that for years he had been an invalid. He abhorred wrongdoing, and in every position of trust that he filled he acquired a reputation for ability and honesty that even his political opponents could not venture to question. He served his country with all the order and fidelity of a patriot, and was one of whom it might be said that he loved his nation, and controlled his life on the strictest principles of righteousness. His death is sincerely mourned by all classes and creeds, and he will live in the memory of this generation as a true type of one of God's noblest creations—an honest man.

CONSIDERABLE indignation has been aroused amongst fruit growers, by a statement in a horticultural paper published in Great Britain to the effect that Canadian apples contained a small quantity of arsenic, and were consequently poisonous. The statement was widely circulated in the British press, and was calculated to do a great injury to the Canadian export apple trade. Prompt steps were taken to give the statement a flat and emphatic denial. It seems that this is not the first time a rumor to this effect has been set afloat, either by interested or ignorant people, and been proved to be without the slightest foundation by scientists and practical men in Canada and the United States. On the present occasion Mr. Fletcher, Dominion Entomologist, procured a sample of apples that had undoubtedly been sprayed with Paris green, and these were submitted to a careful chemical analysis by Mr. Shutt, chemist of the Dominion Experimental farm. Mr. Shutt in his report of the results says: "Though all care was exercised, not a trace of arsenic could be detected, thus showing the complete absence of this poison in these apples that had been twice sprayed with Paris green. I am of the opinion that further experiments of this nature would only serve to corroborate this negative result, and to prove that there are no grounds on which to base a suspicion that sprayed apples are poisonous. The insoluble character of this poison, precluding its assimilation by the apple, if such were possible, the infinitesimal part of Paris green that can remain on any apple, the frequent rains subsequent to the spraying, and the fact that apples are pared before using, all go to substantiate the argument that there is not the slightest danger of poisoning in using sprayed apples."

In our last issue we referred to what is being done in France in the way of agricultural education. It is a subject that cannot be too prominently kept before the farming community, if the products of our farms are to compete successfully in the markets of Great Britain and elsewhere with the products of other lands. The technics of agriculture are as intricate as those of any other occupation—much more so than the technics of many skilled trades. A farmer who has learnt his work by rule of thumb, without having the slightest perception of the reason why certain things are done, finds it impossible to meet and contend successfully with unexpected and unfamiliar difficulties. He plods along, and grows crop after crop in regular rotation, whether prices are up or down, and finally finds himself confronted with an empty purse and foreclosure of the mortgage. Then someone else knows better—thanks to having the advantage of technical teaching—steps in and makes a profit where the first man, with all his assiduity and hard work, came to grief. England is now thoroughly awake to the vital importance of this question. County Councils through the stimulus given them by the monies placed at their disposal by Parliament, as well as by adopting the provisions of the technical instruction Act, by which local assistance given from the rates, are now vying with each

other in formulating schemes for furthering the promotion of technical and secondary education. For example the Cheshire County Council during last year granted to various authorities within the county £8,460, which included a grant of £250 for lectures on fruit culture, to be delivered in ten different places in the county, including practical demonstrations in planting, pruning, etc.; £1,000 for classes for instruction in cheese and butter-making; £1,000 for peripatetic lectures on agriculture, cattle breeding, etc. A farm of 164 acres has been acquired near Crewe, the County Council granting £1,000, and the Cheshire Chamber of Agriculture £500, for the purpose of establishing a school or college for the teaching of all branches of agriculture and dairy work. In addition, £800 has been provided for instruction and £160 for scholarships. An eminent professor recently declared that the practical farmer had generally a large store of knowledge which he had gained mainly by experiments, and therefore by empirical means; he had consequently, no grasp of the principles which underlay his practice. The professor saw one serious blemish in this empiric knowledge—a man in such a position is "obliged to work in grooves which he has made for himself, and is under the disadvantage of being unable to impart the fruits of his experience to others in an intelligible manner." Thus a father, though himself a reasonably good practical farmer, is quite unable to educate his son to the business, and the son has to go through the "mill" himself, and find out by disastrous failures and expensive experiments, the rudiments of his calling. The profession or power of teaching is an art in itself, and we have persistently urged the importance of having specially trained teachers for giving agricultural instruction in our rural schools. A trained teacher has not alone the necessary knowledge, but he has that knowledge systematized, and consequently it is always available, and always in a condition to be intelligently imparted to others. In urging the necessity of better local facilities being given for the acquirement of a proper agricultural education in our schools, we cannot do better than quote a few words from a recent pamphlet by a well-known English authority, Mr. Arthur Smith. He says: "The idea of special education being of any practical value to the farmer has been treated by many as a palpable absurdity; yet of all the professions, none can gain more benefit from it than agriculture. It is certain that in future the farmer who has been technically educated will take the lead. The merely practical man, whose mind can only hold a few ideas, will give place to one who, while thoroughly well versed in every practical detail of work and management, is at the same time a man of education and scientific skill."

A BULLETIN issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, under date April 22nd, as to the condition of the crops and live stock in the province states, that with the exception of one county, the indications are that very little winter wheat will be ploughed up, and, provided the critical time—up to the middle of May—is successfully passed, the prospects for a good crop are promising. Rye suffered but little from winter killing, and its appearance is generally quite satisfactory. Indications are that clover will average a light yield over the greater portion of the province. Stock of all kinds have come through the winter in fair flesh condition, a little thinner than usual owing to the limited supply of fodder, especially of hay. Sheep have suffered considerably during lambing season, owing to the unfavorable cold, damp weather, and many lambs have been lost. The litters of pigs are not quite so large and promising as desired. As regards improvements in agriculture, most reports from correspondents refer to the introduction of improved tools and machinery, and the advantages of underdraining. The advantages of better stock and better systems of feeding are repeatedly referred to, and an increased interest is being manifested in regard to the silo. Although a few state that the supply of farm help will meet the demand, the great majority state that there is, and will probably be, a scarcity. The cause universally given is the removal of the young men to Manitoba, the North-West and the States. Their places are supplied principally by young men from towns and immigrants equally inexperienced.



1st.—*La Patrie*, the leading French Canadian Liberal organ, of Montreal, comes out fair and square for the annexation of Canada to the States. . . . Hon. Charles D. Drake, late Chief Justice of the United States Court of Claims, found dead in his bed at Washington, D. C.

2nd.—Death of Rev. Dr. Bidwell Lane, a prominent Methodist divine, at Morden, Man. . . . Over 100 lives reported lost and hundreds injured by a cyclone in Kansas and Texas.

4th.—Impeachment of Sir Adolphe Caron by Mr. Edgar, in the Dominion House of Commons, for receiving money corruptly from contractors, which he spent for election purposes. . . . The United States House of Representatives passes the Chinese Exclusion Bill.

5th.—The Supreme Court at Ottawa, gives judgment disqualifying Mr. Gorman, M. P. for Welland, Ont., for seven years. . . . Nine workmen blown to pieces by an explosion in a powder factory, St. Petersburg, Russia.

6th.—The Manitoba Government practically decide to have a plebiscite taken at the coming general elections on the question of prohibition. . . . Further dynamite outrages by Anarchists in France and Spain reported.

7th.—Peasants in Kieff district, Russia, reported to be selling their children for a few roubles prior to emigrating.

8th.—Report of the Militia Department containing a scathing criticism by Major General Herbert laid before Parliament. . . . The red flag of Anarchy displayed for the first time at a meeting of the unemployed in London, England.

9th.—Death of Charles Clackmeyer, for over forty years city clerk of Montreal. . . . Oxford wins the forty-ninth annual boat race with Cambridge.

10th.—Fourteen lives lost by floods at Columbus, Miss. . . . Conflagration in Tokio, Japan, destroying over 6,000 houses and causing great loss of life.

11th.—The English Chancellor of the Exchequer presents his budget to Parliament showing a surplus of £1,067,000. . . . The Amir of Afghanistan issues an address to his chiefs, declaring that an alliance with Russia is impossible, and that he prefers the friendship of Great Britain.

12th.—Earthquake shocks felt in New York State. . . . River navigation commences in Montreal, five days earlier than last season.

13th.—Death of William Edgar, general passenger agent of the Grand Trunk Railway, at Montreal. . . . Great strike in Lancashire cotton mills inaugurated; 65,000 hands idle.

14th.—Close of the last session of the Ontario Legislature in the old historic buildings on Front street, Toronto. . . . Announced that friendly relations between Italy and the United States re-established.

15th.—Good Friday. . . . Cholera reported to be spreading at an alarming rate in the Punjab, British India.

16th.—Death of Miss Amelia B. Edwards, the well-known English novelist and lecturer. . . . Coal discovered at Qu'Appelle, Man.

17th.—Death of Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, ex-Premier of Canada, at Toronto, in his 70th year.

18th.—Easter manoeuvres of the English volunteers held during a heavy snowstorm.

19th.—Anarchist plot to kill the boy King of Spain discovered. . . . First meeting of the Royal Prohibition Commission convened at Montreal.

20th.—Prorogation of the Manitoba Legislature. . . . Death of Right Rev. Dr. Williams, Bishop of Quebec, in his 67th year.

21st.—The Quebec Government institute criminal proceedings against ex-Premier Mercier.

22nd.—R. H. McGreevy, the notorious contractor for the Quebec Harbor Works, sentenced to one year's imprisonment, on the conspiracy charge.

23rd.—Independent Sheep-breeders' Association for the Dominion formed at a meeting in London, Ont.

24th.—First issue of a Sunday newspaper printed in Canada, makes its appearance in Montreal.

25th.—Reported that about one-third of the seedling in the province of Manitoba already done. . . . Death of William Astor, of New York, in Paris, France, whose estate is valued at \$70,000,000.

26th.—Opening of the Quebec Legislature. . . . Motion to place binder twine on the free list lost in the Dominion Parliament by a vote of 64 for, 107 against.

27th.—Central Theatre and the Times Annex Building, Philadelphia, destroyed by fire; seven lives lost and a large number injured. . . . President Harrison lays the corner stone of the Grant monument, at Riverside, New York.

28th.—A party consisting of one hundred male heads of Hebrew families, leave Montreal to found a Jewish colony in the North-West.

29th.—N. G. Bigelow, Q. C., Liberal, elected to fill the vacancy for Toronto, in the Local Legislature, and James A. Lowell, Liberal, elected M. P. for Welland, Ont.