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TEMPERATURE.

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

THE WEEK ENDING

Table with columns for Feb. 8th, 1880, and Corresponding week, 1879. Rows include Max., Min., and Mean for each day of the week.

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, February 14, 1880.

THE LESSONS OF THE TAY BRIDGE DISASTER.

Canada is proverbially the land of high winds and should, therefore, learn a lesson from the mass of scientific literature which has accumulated on all hands within the few weeks that have elapsed since the terrible disaster to the Tay Bridge. We are first informed by a writer in the London Times that a few hours after the accident the most powerful steamers were unable to proceed against the wind, although it had considerably fallen. The London Meteorological Office reports that during the Sunday night of the catastrophe a small but very deep depression travelled swiftly across Scotland in a north-easterly direction, and by eight o'clock of the Monday morning its centre had reached the central part of Sweden. This distance represents 600 miles, and thus the velocity of the wind must have been 50 miles an hour, nearly double that of an ordinary cyclone. At Dundee itself Professor GRANT estimates that the hurricane blew at the rate of 90 or more miles an hour. The Engineer, perhaps, the highest technical authority in Britain, states that the pressure of the wind was 60 pounds to the square foot, that 17,004 square feet of expanded surface was exposed to the gale, and that the strain from the lateral effort tending to overturn the thirteen girders that gave way would be in round numbers 455 tons or say 35 tons on each of the thirteen girders. The same authority goes on to say that a pressure of 60 pounds per square foot corresponds to the impact of a wind blowing 110 miles an hour, a rate that is often exceeded in the gust of great cyclones, and the rule employed by meteorologists for calculating the wind pressure from the wind velocity, as observed on the anemometer dial, is confessedly not reliable, but empirical, and based on insufficient experiments. "In fact, the bridge must have been in imminent peril many times before."

The Americans have not been slow in making use of this information for their own country, as we assert that Canadians should do for theirs. It appears from figures supplied by the Signal Service Bureau of the United States that there have been recorded American windy days

exceeding the 90 miles per hour estimated by Professor GRANT, at Dundee, on the night of the destruction of Tay Bridge. In the Iowa and Illinois hurricane of May 22, 1873, the velocity of the gale was estimated at from 119 to 146 miles an hour, with corresponding pressure of from 71 to 107 pounds per square foot. In the Southern tornadoes of March 20, 1875, the wind blew at some points 151 miles an hour, representing a pressure of 114 pounds to the square foot. In the winds of Mount Carmel, Illinois, on June 4, 1877, 156 miles an hour were registered, and in that of Connecticut, August 9, 1879, 150 miles were recorded. In the August storm of 1879, the anemometer registered 138, when it was blown away, and a subsequent velocity of 165 an hour was estimated, making a pressure of over 130 pounds to the square foot. On Mount Washington, April 1, 1879, the tremendous rush of 182 miles an hour was reached.

These figures are not merely dry statistics for scientific men to study; they appeal to the intelligence of every traveller and resident on elevated points in Canada; they must also be taken into account in the construction of public works, such as the contemplated Coteau Bridge, for instance, and the erection of very high buildings in cities. We would also recommend the matter to the attention of the Signal Service Officials at Toronto, although we have no doubt that those gentlemen are quite alive to its extreme importance.

THE PROGRESS OF EVOLUTION.

It is a remarkable circumstance that while there has not appeared until now any pronounced literary movement in Canada, a distinct circle of writers exists who take an active interest in the "advanced philosophy" of which DARWIN, HERBERT SPENCER, HUXLEY and TYNDALL are the hierarchs. These writers are few in number, but both ripe in scholarship and ready in the advocacy of their particular views. The Canadian Monthly seems to have been their accredited organ, and it is to the pages of this clever periodical that readers must look for the opinions of Canadian evolutionists. Of late, however, we have noticed a lull in the discussion attributable probably to the rumour that TYNDALL had abandoned his favourite theories and was not disposed to follow out to their logical results, the utterances of his famous Belfast address. If this were the fact, it would be an event of the highest scientific importance, but we are hardly prepared to give it entire credence. Indeed, there is sufficient evidence adduced in a late number of the Fortnightly Review to throw quite a different light on this interesting matter. It is there stated that the theory of evolution is not a thing complete in itself, but one which grows asymptotically, as it were, toward certainty. When DARWIN startled the world with his system nine or ten years ago, such acute and ardent disciples as HELMHOLTZ and HOOKER distinctly admitted its fragmentary character and the necessity of gradual development as a necessary condition of its ultimate acceptance. But other writers have since contended that this progress has been made. "Fissures in continuity which then existed, and which left little hope of ever being spanned, have been bridged over, so that the further the theory is tested the more fully does it harmonize with progressive experience and discovery." How far this statement is strictly true is certainly a question with thinkers, but there is no use denying that the theory of evolution has acted as a fascination on thousands of cultured minds in Europe and America, and that the best energies of scientific men have been bent toward its development. It is true that TYNDALL himself, the most brilliant, original and intrepid of the Darwinian school, has been less active in this particular field than might have been expected from his exceptional opportunities of observation and daring in putting them forth, but it must be borne in mind that the Professor has been deeply occupied of

late in different branches of scientific research, giving more attention to individual experiments than to the higher work of collocation and synthesis. Whatever any of us may think of TYNDALL—and he has been one of the most abused men of the day outside of politics—no one will deny his honesty of purpose. He is not an enemy of religion natural or revealed, but a sincere searcher after truth, and while he does not shrink from accepting and promulgating the result of the discoveries which he claims to have made, there is no symptom of intolerance in his teachings. He is essentially a progressive philosopher, but not a restrictive one, and while strictly maintaining that he and his colleagues have succeeded in throwing new light upon natural and mental phenomena, does not profess to have got at all the truth, or pretend that others are necessarily altogether in error. One thing appears very certain to us—that his comparative silence of late does not arise from any lack of interest in his system or doubt of its ultimate scientific demonstration, but from a halt in his career of investigation, either through the cause just assigned by us, or one of these dark solutions of continuity which occur in the history of every great discovery. We make no doubt that we shall hear from TYNDALL again. We make bold to affirm further that if he should recede from his views or even doubt their intrinsic worth, he will be the first to announce that fact to the world.

"COMIN' THRO' THE RYE."

There is nothing like your verbal critic to mar the sanctity of aesthetic tradition. Scholars of that class, not content with destroying the old classic and mediæval legends of our youthful credulity, and spoiling the simplicity of our faith in the literal interpretation of the Holy Book, are now swooping down upon the domain of literature, with the fell intention of submitting every dear old line of verse to the fire of their prosaic positivism. It is a delightful relief when we find them getting snubbed for their pains, as in the following case which has just come under our notice. A critic, having seen an illustration representing a lad and lass meeting and kissing in a field of grain, and thus interpreting the beautiful song of Burns, declares that it is all a mistake, and that the word "rye" refers solely and simply to a small shallow stream near Ayr, in Scotland, which, having neither bridge nor ferry, was forded by people going to and from the market, custom allowing a lad to steal a kiss from any lass of his acquaintance whom he met mid-stream. In confirmation of this view, the reader is referred to Burns' original ballad, in which the first verse speaks of the lass wetting her clothes in the stream:

"Jennie is a' wet, pair bodie; Jeany's seldom dry. She draggit a' her petticoats, Comin' thro' the rye."

When this sapient interpretation appeared in dogmatic print, a shrewd Boston lawyer cut out the slip and enclosed it with inquiries to the postmaster at Ayr, who submitted them to Rev. Dr. P. H. Waddell, of Glasgow, a high authority in Burns literature. The answer came categorically—first, that the Doctor never heard of any brook or burn in Ayrshire called the Rye; secondly, that if the words had referred to a river they would most probably have been "o'er the rye," and not "thro' the rye;" thirdly, no woman in her senses, crossing a stream, would "draggit her petticoats;" but in passing through a field of rye could hardly help doing so, after rain and dew; fourthly, it was very common long ago, and still is, to have small beaten foot-paths through corn and rye fields; fifthly, the typography of the word "rye" sets the whole controversy at rest. The word is spelt throughout with a small r, instead of a capital, which Burns would certainly have used had he meant a river, because the poet was addicted to the use of capitals, even where they were not required, and would scarcely have omitted it in the same word throughout the entire song if

it had been essential to the meaning of that word. Thanks are due to the learned professor for thus demolishing an iconoclast and preserving to us one of the prettiest pictures in our literature, that of bonnie Jennie

"Comin' thro' the rye."

In a recent issue of our paper we referred to the musical treat which Mr. BARNES had in store for music-loving Montreal, and we are glad to be able to announce that the subscription lists being almost filled, the first of the series of concerts will shortly take place. Among the artists who will take a part in the performance, are Messrs. A. DESKYE and quartett, Messrs. VILBON, Professor COUTURE, CHAS. REICHLING and LEBLANC, all favourably known to our concert-going audiences, as well as that talented young pianist, Miss Z. HOLMES.

It will no doubt interest our Montreal dilettanti to hear how our vocalists are regarded abroad. Mrs. THROWER, who sang in Ottawa quite lately, was greeted with a double encore, one of them emanating from His Excellency the Governor-General. We need not add to the praise of Montreal's favourite vocalist, as her triumph in the Messiah is still fresh in the ears of those who enjoyed hearing her. Mrs. BARNES has been charming Philadelphia, one of whose critics say she is the best artist, as to quality of voice, that has been seen in the United States in English Comic Opera.

HISTORY OF THE WEEK.

TUESDAY, February 3.—M. De St. Vallier has returned to Paris. Austria is to extend her present system of fortifications. General Skoboleff is to take command of the Tekke Turcoman expedition. The Casarin arrived in St. Petersburg yesterday, greatly fatigued after her journey. Favourable reports have arrived from Afghanistan as to the improved position of the British forces. The Spanish Government contemplates placing a loan on the European markets to cover the Cuban deficit.

WEDNESDAY, February 4.—A very destructive storm is reported to have taken place at the Philippine Islands, resulting in much damage to shipping. Fort Buford despatches say the Indians have been raiding stock. The same despatch says great apprehension is felt of a general uprising along the Yellowstone. The Home Rule League, at a meeting in Dublin, expunged resolutions of the Parnellites censuring certain members of Parliament. The treasurers of the League have resigned.

THURSDAY, February 5.—A London cable says the Prince of Wales is to visit St. Petersburg shortly. Governor Davis delivered his annual message to the Maine Legislature yesterday. Spain has promised to furnish Cuba with 20,000 troops to preserve her territorial integrity. It is proposed to devote the money annually expended on the celebration of St. Patrick's Day, in New York—computed at \$100,000—to Irish relief. The Imperial Parliament was opened yesterday by the Queen in person. The Obstructionists lost no time in opening the campaign, compelling an early adjournment of the debate on the reply to the speech.

FRIDAY, February 6.—Cuba and Porto Rico are to be made equivalent to Provinces of Spain. The Grand Duke Michael, of Russia, has asked for the command of the Merv expedition. The Great Council of the Swiss Canton of Appenzel has voted to re-introduce capital punishment. It is reported that James Keene, of wheat-corn fame, intends sending a ship load of grain to Ireland as his contribution to the sufferers. The election at Liverpool for the Imperial House of Commons, yesterday, resulted in the return of Mr. Whiteley, the Conservative candidate, by 2,221 votes. Serious trouble occurred at Athlery, in Galway, between the tenantry and a number of process servers. The latter were beaten off, several shots being fired in the melee.

SATURDAY, February 7.—Mount Vesuvius is in a state of eruption. Further desperate fighting is reported from Herat. Cattle plague and death of food are said to be causing fearful distress in Cyprus. Mohammed Jan has captured a train of supplies on the way to the British forces at Cabul. A Paris despatch says accounts from Milan state that Alboni's reception at La Scala was a signal failure. The Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria has been betrothed to Princess Mathilde, daughter of Prince George, brother of the King of Saxony. The Rappel, speaking of German armaments, says France only wants two or three good generals, being well enough off for soldiers and arms. The Blue Book just issued on Afghan affairs leaves no shadow of doubt that the hand of Russia has been the prime mover of the whole opposition which the British have encountered in Afghanistan during the present Eastern campaign.

OBITUARY.—Lieutenant-Governor Chandler, of New Brunswick, who was taken ill with a severe attack of bronchitis, on Wednesday night, died at Fredericton, on the 5th inst., shortly after 3 p.m., in his eightieth year.

Bernard Devlin, ex-M.P., in Colorado, aged 55. A portrait and memoir of the deceased will appear in our next issue.

THE King of Italy has conferred upon Mr. Samuel Smiles the rank of Chevalier of Saints Maurice and Lazare, "as a token of His Majesty's appreciation of your valuable works," and the insignia of the Order have been forwarded to Mr. Smiles, along with a complimentary letter from Count Visconti, Minister of the Household. The well-known works of Mr. Smiles have been translated into Italian, and have proved of much service by setting before the Italian youth examples of self-help, industry, and thrift. Of the book called "Self-Help," 50,000 copies have been sold, in its complete form, in Italy, and it has also been condensed into a little volume—sold at the bookstalls, along the streets for 15 centesimi—under the title of "Ajuraw ehe Dio l'ajuta."