

NEWS ITEMS.

One hundred recruits for the Manitoba Mounted Police will leave Ottawa for the scene of their labors in the West. The men are all said to be of fine physique and young.

Communications.

For the "Agriculturist." Fredericton Inundated in 1831. Sir,—In looking over some old letters of my father's recently, I met with several written to him from Fredericton in 1831, by Mr. Cottrill of the Rifle Brigade. A portion of these, dated April 13th, will be interesting to many of your readers:—

The Zulu Campaign.

The eagerly expected intelligence of the result of the advance of the relieving force was received on Monday, and was, happily of a cheering nature. On the 4th of April (pronounced Echwau) was relieved, and the success of the movement to his aid, has lifted a load of anxiety from many hearts, and will further rouse the spirits of the inhabitants of Natal, which were much depressed after the disastrous day of Isandula, and which only recovered a better tone on the arrival of the British reinforcements.

Sugar Beets.

The Sugar Beet Seed imported from Germany by the Department for Agriculture was being pretty well distributed, so that farmers can obtain it with as little trouble as possible. Agricultural Societies and others who have not already sent their orders to the Secretary for Agriculture would do so as soon as possible. We would urge every farmer in the Province to give the Sugar Beet a fair trial, so that they may know from actual experiment the cost of raising it.

City Council.

There was a special meeting of the City Council on Monday night. An order was passed for the issue of debentures, to the amount of \$4,000, for permanent Exhibition Building, stating mode of payment; and an assessment of \$500 was ordered to provide for payment of interest on loans and debentures in aid of said building. The city officers, (the same as last year,) were appointed with no change in salaries. Ald. Gunter making a single and desperate effort to have them reduced. Constables and surveyors of lumber were appointed. No action was taken on report submitted by the Mayor with regard to the St. John Relief Fund. A motion was made by Ald. Burchill to grant a wholesale license to sell liquor to Mr. Alex. Burchill, and it was carried 7 to 3—Aldermen G. H. Simmons, Smith, and Babbitt voting in the negative. The license was granted by authority of sub-section 8 of Section 99, of "The Canada Temperance Act," as follows:—

"A Stranger."

Some busybody who signs himself "A Stranger," wrote to the Morning News on Monday, after the fire on Brunswick Street that morning. "Stranger" is no stranger, for what object could a veritable stranger have in writing to St. John about a matter that did not concern him, that took place in Fredericton? The stranger pretence is evident. The letter is no doubt, the production of some one in the habit of cooking up sensational bits of news for the "dailies," careless as to what wrong statements he makes or what wrong impressions he creates. He exaggerates in saying, that the fire that morning threatened to spread disastrously, but if he had not commenced on that key, he could have had no excuse for abusing the Fire Department, and alarming the citizens of Fredericton. He tries to throw ridicule on the tardiness shown in turning out the engines, and their being dragged by men and boys to the scene of the fire, which he arrived ten minutes after the alarm was given. He thinks it especially funny that the horses were not available at the time, and were brought at a hand gallop by the teamster in time to be too late to draw the engines. With regard to the horses we may say, that nine times out of ten fires break out at night, and are not of frequent occurrence at any time. It is absurd to suppose that the city could keep the horses always in the stalls eating their heads off, for the chance of a fire occurring; so that there was nothing to be done on Monday morning, when the killing at work that the engines were dragged to the tanks, it must be remembered, that it necessarily took some little time to carry the alarm from Brunswick Street to the Engine House, yet the heavy engines were not dragged by "men and boys" to the tanks according to "Stranger's" own statement in ten minutes from the time the fire was discovered. As the fire never was alarming, and was all but extinguished by hand by the time the engines were ready to work, it would only have been playing with the horses, and making them make fun of several silly young fellows for the slow and clumsy way they forced a ladder against the house, the fact being that owing to a quantity of snow by the door against which the ladder was placed, it was difficult to obtain a steady footing for it.

I. O. O. F. Celebration.

Last night the Victoria Lodge of the Independent Order of Oddfellows celebrated the sixth anniversary of the foundation of the institution of their Order in this city, by a Grand Promenade Concert and Bonnet Hop. The attendance of members of the Order from St. John and Moncton was not so large as was at first anticipated. Gilbert Murdoch, Esq., Grand Master of the Lower Provinces, and a few brethren from St. John were present; otherwise the attendance was large, the members of the Victoria Lodge being there in full numbers, and the ladies of Fredericton largely represented. The interior of the building was well lighted with large reflector lamps in addition to the gasaliers, and decorated with words of "welcome," and the watchwords of the Order. Banners with the names of the different Lodges throughout the Province were hung around the galleries. On the floor were drawn the hand and the three mystic circles of Fidelity, Love, and Truth, connected by lines.

Self-Acting Machinery.

We find the following in the New York Bulletin of a late date. As our contemporary says the "facts" are certainly rather astonishing:—

The Agriculturist.

FREDERICTON, N. B., APRIL 20, 1879. A Sort of Political Parallel. Political parties act very much in the same manner everywhere. The outs when the condition of the country is bad, charge the government with bringing it about, either by doing nothing, or intermeddling policy, as the case may be, and in the next breath, when a large force of Zulus surprised Colonel Woods camp, and a fierce hand to hand combat ensued, but the attackers were repulsed with great slaughter. The loss of the British is variously estimated at 400 killed and wounded; that of the Zulus at 2,500. The officers killed were—Colonel Weatherly and his son, Captain Barton, Baron Vonlehn, Major Walker, Captains Nelson and Bright, and Messrs. Pender, and Lieutenant Smith. It may be expected that future dispatches will correct some of the statements made; but the general impression that, the news from South Africa leaves on the mind is, that whatever hard fighting the British troops may have yet to encounter, the Zulus are likely to repeat Isandula, and that the success of the British army is likely to depend upon a disposition that the Boers of the Transvaal, who have been demanding complete independence, may have to make common cause with the Zulus.

The New Brunswick Penitentiary.

Among the numerous "Bluebooks" compiled from Ottawa, is the Report of the Minister of Justice as to Penitentiaries of Canada, 1878. J. G. Moyle, Esq., Inspector of Penitentiaries, reports an increase of crime in 1878, over the preceding year. In 1878, there was a convict population in the several Penitentiaries—Kingston, St. Vincent de Paul, St. John, Halifax, and Montreal—numbering 11,300, against one in 1877, of 10,819, an increase of 481. He attributes the increase of crime to the increase in the number of convicts in the several Penitentiaries, which has prevailed all over the Dominion, and the consequent dereliction of employment. He found the St. John Penitentiary much overcrowded. 163 convicts and common prisoners were registered on 15th of August 1877, though there are only 88 cells in it. This overcrowding raised apprehensions of an epidemic during the hot weather, and of deeper demoralization among the unfortunate inmates, owing to the difficulty of exercising a strict and continuous supervision with a limited staff, over a large number of evil-disposed persons brought into close contact and associations under cover of night. When the Dorchester penitentiary, the first wing of which is opened, the convicts in the St. John institution, will probably be transferred to it. Owing to the large increase of convicts since the Dorchester penitentiary was first commenced, all the convicts in the Maritime Provinces cannot be taken to it until another wing is built, and Mr. Moyle recommends that it should be commenced immediately.

The New Jerusalem Elm.

The Queen's County Agricultural Society has done a good work during the last two or three years, by furnishing lime to the farmers of New Jerusalem, at a very low price, and of an excellent quality. Mr. Webb, the Secretary, has sent us an account of the lime, and the cost of producing the lime which may be interesting to others, and induce them to adopt a like course. The Society intend building a new kiln, which is to be constructed of good stone and in workmanlike style, and to be finished by the 1st of May. It will be sixteen feet high, five feet round at the bottom, widening to ten feet at half the height, sixteen feet to the top. The walls will be five feet thick at the bottom and 2 feet at 8 feet high and to the top. The contract was given to the lowest tender for \$101. The kiln, on what is known as the Clowes lot, has been lengthened nearly three feet, and it will now burn from thirty to forty hogheads more than before. The cost, including repairs, &c., was in all \$54. It is the opinion of some people, that the form or plan of the new kiln is not good; that it will not burn all the lime; that more or less raw stone will be left after each burning. The Secretary says if these opinions prove to be correct he will not fail to make the fact known for the good of others.

Much ado about nothing.

The times are very dull. Politicians, talkers, and newspaper correspondents are alive to the possibilities of every passing event. A rather laughable exhibition of great ado about nothing has been made within a few days by some wiseacres about the safety of two rooms in the Normal School Building. It seems that the Board of Education recently arranged with the architect, Mr. McKean, to level two floors in the building before the re-opening of the school. When these floors were built the architect recommended that the leveling should be done by the masons, and that the masons should be paid for the leveling. It was thought that two years' experience to the steam-heating had caused all possible shrinkage, and Mr. McKean went to work early in the week to level the floors as desired by the Board of Education. Some of us are told, hearing of this, either in joke or otherwise, hunted up the Mayor and represented to him that the floors were about to fall on the children in the Model School. His Worship was naturally alarmed, and, trusting, we suppose, implicitly to the statements made to him, wrote to the Chief Superintendent that he had just discovered that the floors were unsafe and "that something must be done." But all was done that it was necessary to do. As we said before, the times are very dull, and the report of the masons falling on the floors being capable of sensational treatment was eagerly seized upon by purveyors of news. But there was really nothing in it.

Call at Edgcombe's Dry Goods.

The public are invited to inspect the New Goods daily opening at Edgcombe's. All new, choice, and at very low prices. At five minutes past eleven, on Thursday night, the last of the tariff resolutions were passed in the House of Commons, Ottawa, amid loud cheering, which, we presume, came from the Ministerial benches. A Bill founded on the resolution, was afterwards introduced. EXHIBITION DEBENTURES.—The Debentures for the Permanent Exhibition Building to the amount of \$4,000, the order for the issue of which was made at the special meeting of the City Council on Monday, were all disposed of yesterday.

Mr. Eli Perkins has for sale a new patent chair, invented by Mr. George Barker, Sheffield, which seems well adapted for its purpose. It is worked by rotary motion, by junction of cog and balance wheels, so easily that a child might manage it.

PERMISSIVE BILL IN CARLETON CO.—On Thursday, the vote was taken in Carleton County on the Permissive Bill. The returns as far as given show 1178 for and 49 against it; and it was carried by a vote of 857 to 233.

ALARM OF FIRE.—On Monday morning about nine o'clock, fire was discovered breaking out on the roof of the dwelling house of E. A. H. Stratton, Esq., on Brunswick street. The Steamers "Alexandria" and "City of Fredericton," with hand engines 3 and 4 and Hook and Ladder Truck were quickly on hand but their services were not required, as the fire was extinguished with a few pails of water. As the engines were out and steam up, the opportunity was taken to try them, and it was found they worked in a most satisfactory manner.

ENORMOUS EGG.—A hen—a cross between a Plymouth Rock and a Brahma—owned by Mr. Isaac Stewart of this city, laid week ago, weighing 61 x 8 1/2 inches, and weighing 6 ounces. Match it who can.

ONTARIO ELECTIONS.—Writs will be issued in time to hold the nominations on Thursday, 29th of May, and the polling day on Thursday, the 6th of June.

READY FOR FIRE.—Edgcombe & Sons who purchased No. 5 hand fire engine from the city have it now in first rate working order, and supplied with 100 feet of new rubber hose in addition to the old leather hose which is perfectly serviceable yet. There is plenty of water about and around the premises. Judging by the trial performances, No. 5 will be able to do "yoeman's service," in case fire should unfortunately break out in the Edgcombe Factory, or any of the contiguous premises.

LEASE OF WATER.—Yesterday the lease of the city wharves for the year, 1879, was sold for \$270, being an increase of \$59 over the amount obtained in 1878.

NEW SERIAL STORY BY JEAN INGELW.—A new serial story by Jean Ingelow will begin in the number of Edgcombe's Dry Goods for the week ending April 28th. It is published from the author's advance sheets, and opens in a very interesting way. The progress of a new story by this popular writer will be eagerly watched.

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