

country for a distance around. Telegraphic messages have been sent to Sheffield and this place for a number of fire engines, some of which have now arrived.

The cause of the explosion is as yet involved in mystery. The overlooker states that when he went round the pit before the day men descended this morning all was then perfectly safe.

**Further particulars.**—The fire began to blaze from the air-shaft about four o'clock, and sent up an immense number of sparks and pieces of burning wood, which had a most terrible appearance. About seven o'clock the proprietors and managers of the pit had a conference, and decided to stop up the mouths of the working shafts with planks and earth, as the only way of stopping the draught up the air main and subduing the fire. This plan was attended with partial success, and about half-past eight o'clock the flames ceased to ascend above the surface of the ground.

Previous to this, several miners had entered the pit, and penetrated some distance along the main tramway, but found the workings so full of sulphur as to preclude all entrance into them. The stoppings by which the workings were ventilated had been blown down, and the greatest havoc made with the works generally, so that there is not the slightest expectation of any of the miners who are yet in the pit being rescued alive. Twelve or thirteen dead bodies were picked up in the main tramways, and carried to the bottom of the shaft, but it was found so urgent that the mouths of the pit should be closed that they were allowed to remain there several of the miners taken out alive are dangerously injured.

The pit has only been in work two years, and was considered one of the best ventilated mines for miles around. It is supposed that a fall in some part of the works has led to the explosion.

It is expected that some days will elapse before the fire will be sufficiently extinguished to permit the pit to be entered.

**Latest particulars.**—Lund-hill Friday afternoon.—Later inquiries confirm and amplify the horrible details already given. I append a list of those in the pit, to the number of 155. But this is not a complete list of the killed. Several were there whose names have not yet been ascertained, and the total number of lives destroyed will be swollen to the number of 170 to 180. In some instances the whole of the male members of a family have been swept away—father and two or three sons. There is scarcely a household in the neighbourhood which has not been made desolate.

The brave men who risked their lives to rescue those who had escaped death in the pit were Mr. Coe, (underground steward in the pit), John Warhurst, (foreman), Wm. Bevors, M. Webster (manager of the Hoyland and Elscar colliery), Mr. Maddison, John Hoyland, (foreman of the Rawmarsh colliery), Benjamin Hoyland (foreman of Darley Main colliery), John and James Ellis, Wilcock, William Duchworth (of Wombell), James Cookson (of Hoyland colliery), and James Warris. Although the explosion occurred soon after noon, the descent was not possible till four. The gearing used for the descent had been destroyed by the explosion; and though the most strenuous exertions were made to put it right, they did not succeed till the time mentioned, when Mr. Coe, Warhurst, and Bevors, got into a 'cof,' and proceeded on their perilous journey into the pit. Before they had gone far they heard the noise of a slight explosion in the pit; but they proceeded till they found that the lining of the shaft had been so discomposed by the explosion that further progress was impossible. They returned to the mouth of the pit, and the efforts of all were now directed to getting the lining in order. In about twenty minutes everything was ready to descend, and they went down again, and arrived in safety at the bottom, followed by the other men. These brave fellows spent nearly an hour in exploring the pit; and they did not quit their task till they saw indications of imminent danger. They explored the pit to within about forty yards of the extremity of the northern level—a distance of about 400 yards. They also traversed about twenty or thirty yards of the southern level; but at this point they were stopped by the fire which had broken out as one of the results of the explosion. They went far enough, however, to ascertain that a bed of coal, comprising an area of fifty or sixty yards, was in flames.

They discovered, however, that nineteen human beings were still alive, all near the working shaft. These were immediately taken to the mouth of the pit, and conveyed to their homes. It is believed that none of them are fatally injured.

The explorers found ten corpses on the northern side of the pit. These were blackened by the explosion, and fearfully mutilated, evidently having been driven with great violence against the displaced masses of coal. Seven of these bodies were brought to the bottom of the working shaft, but the explorers had not time to remove any of the others before they found it necessary to quit the pit.

The decision which was come to by the proprietors to stop up the pit while so many persons remained in was not arrived at without the most anxious and prolonged deliberation. Had it been delayed longer, there was danger of the fire spreading and burning with such intensity as to cause the fall of the bed of coal and the superincumbent earth, and the consequent falling in of the shafts. Had this been allowed probably none of these bodies would ever have been recovered, but as it is the fire having been checked in time, a large number of the bodies will be got out unburnt. It is hardly necessary to add that there was not the

lightest possibility of any of those in the pit being alive when the stopping up was decided on.

In the meantime the fire is still raging in the interior of the pit. The stopping up and preventing the access of air will of course check, and probably in time extinguish the conflagration. For the present nothing can be done but wait the result of the experiment.

At a meeting of practical men connected with mines, held this morning, those present expressed their unanimous opinion that the stopping up of the pit was the most judicious course under the circumstances.

**FRANCE.**—Rheims is again busy about the emperor's coronation, which, it is now asserted will take place at Rheims in the month of August.—The period for the new elections is not yet fixed, but it is said that the present session will not last long; and, according to the information received with respect to the corps, the government will decide whether they shall take place before or after the harvest.

The movement for the cessation of labour on Sundays seems to be gradually gaining ground in Paris.

Wheat continues to decline in price, in consequence of the favorable accounts received of growing crops. It appears, further, that there has been a much greater breadth of land sown with wheat last year than during that of any former year.

**AUSTRIA.**—The military faction are intriguing how to get the present advisers of Francis Joseph removed. It has said his Majesty hesitates, but will take the subject seriously into consideration on his return to Vienna. When their majesties go to Hungary in May, the whole court will accompany them to Pesth, where there will be a series of festivals. The government, it is said, is willing to make some concessions to the Hungarians, but the latter are inclined to ask more than will be granted. The Hungarians complain bitterly of heavy taxation and of the total want of economy in the administration of the revenue, but these are points on which they and the emperor are not likely to agree.—An extremely energetic note has been addressed by Count Buol to the Sardinian government. The Austrian minister complained bitterly of the excessive license of the press, and expressed his indignation that the Turin government should permit papers which openly recommended regicide to appear in Sardinia. If the Turin government does not undertake to keep the press within due bounds, Austria is likely entirely to break off her diplomatic relations with Sardinia, but she will not endeavour to obtain satisfaction by force of arms.

#### PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND.

There seems to be considerable excitement raised by a letter of the Roman Catholic Bishop, complaining of the conduct of some of the school teachers, in causing sectarian hymns to be sung in the presence of Catholic children.—His lordship also objects to the reading of the Authorized Version of Scriptures in the common schools. In his letter to the Board of Education he says:

"I hope I shall not be understood to mean any disrespect to the justice, wisdom and judgment, by which all the acts of the Board are governed, if I avail myself of this occasion, before strife and bad feelings are raised, in a community hitherto so happily exempt from religious disunion, to respectfully but earnestly beg of the Board to reconsider the evil tendency of introducing religion in any shape into our mixed schools.

"If it be desired they should work well, the same system as that followed in the Irish National Schools, must be adopted here. Prayers and all religious exercises, as well as the reading of Scripture from any version not approved of by all, must be discontinued. Nothing favorable or unfavorable to any religious denomination must be inculcated. If the friends of education wish our mixed schools to prosper, their wish can only be realized by allowing those schools to be *godless* under the present circumstances of the country. The Catholics, I am bound to say, will be satisfied with nothing else; and I most ardently pray that the Board will deem it expedient to reassume the consideration of the vexed question, and inspire confidence to all in mixed schools, by proclaiming that in all mixed schools, whether conducted by Protestant or Catholic masters, no religious test shall be required, or the scholars forced to do or assist at any religious act, which their conscience (no odds whether right or wrong) may check them for. Hoping that you will have the goodness to lay the foregoing before the board at your earliest convenience, and inform me of the result.—I am &c."

The Islander of the 20th Feb. says that 'according to announcement, a public meeting (the largest we understand ever convened in this town) was held in the Temperance Hall, on Friday evening last, 'to take into consideration the introduction of the Scriptures into the public schools.' On motion of Com. Orlebar, Col. Gray was chosen chairman, who opened the meeting with a brief address. Several ministers of the different Protestant denominations successively addressed the assemblage present, each one delivered a pretty long speech and moving or seconding a resolution. The following was the most important:—

Whereas the time has come for making every effort to prevent the perpetuity of our present system of instruction, and to place the Holy Scriptures on the list of books now in use in the various schools of the Island,—it is resolved, that the following petition be adopted by this meeting, and circulated throughout the

country, with the view of its obtaining signatures and of being presented to the Legislature.

#### PETITION.

We the undersigned, inhabitants of a Protestant colony, and subjects of the British Empire, being convinced that no system of Education, National or otherwise, can be good, or suited to the rational and immortal nature of man, which is not based on the Word of God, and being called on to pay by far the larger portion of the revenue for the support of the State and the maintenance of its public schools and being unable to obtain for our children generally any other means of instruction than that provided by the Government who have taken into their hands the management of, and prescribed the course of instruction that is given in, the several schools, of which the Word of God forms no part,—humbly beg your Honorable House, now that the Education Act is about to expire, to take into consideration our wishes on this subject, especially if it be the intention of your Honorable House to frame any new law, or also to make any amendment or alteration in the present Act.

We seek not to interfere with the rights or liberties of others, or in any wise to compel others to adopt a course of instruction for their children which we think it right to pursue with regard to our own.

We feel that we cannot any longer be a consenting party to the exclusion of the Word of God from our public schools,—a book which is the standard of our faith, and the source from whence all Christians derive those doctrines which make man wise unto salvation, and prepare his soul for the kingdom of God; and therefore pray that your Honorable House will direct that the Holy Scriptures be placed on the list of books now in use in the public schools, and that it be introduced into the Academy and Normal school; and that the children of those parents who desire it, or do not object to its use, shall have the privilege of reading a portion of Scripture the first exercise of the day after the opening of the school with prayer to Almighty God, and of being taught therein by such teachers as the parents or guardians approve of. We beg further to assure your Honorable House, that, in asking these things, we are actuated by no political motives, or with an desire to stir up strife or religious controversy, but simply with the view of promoting the peace and prosperity of the colony, and furthering the real and lasting interests of the people.

#### CANADA.

**Dreadful Railroad Accident.—Fearful loss of Life.**—Hamilton, C. W., March 12.—Another of those fearful accidents which human forethought appears inadequate to the task of preventing, took place this evening near this city. The train from Toronto which is due at 5-45 had scarcely touched the Swing Bridge over the Desjardine Canal, when it gave way, and the whole train was precipitated into the water, falling a distance of forty feet. The engine, tender and baggage cars, were all completely buried in the water. The forward passenger car in descending was turned upside down, leaving but little of it above the water. The forward end of the last passenger car rested upon either the engine or passenger car, and falling back upon the wall, supporting the bridge, remained in an upright position. Immediate assistance was rendered from the different shops and persons engaged on the works. All that were in the last car were taken out mostly wounded, and we are sorry to say, too many are dead. A hole was cut in the bottom of the car which lay across the canal, and the bodies were taken from it as soon as possible. This could not be otherwise than a slow operation when it is considered how cold the water is at this season of the year, and that the depth was sufficient to hide an engine, tender and baggage car from view.

Mr. Maer, the Traffic Superintendent, was on board, but fortunately was in such a position at the time as allowed him to jump on Terra Firma as the car took the leap into the frightful abyss, while so many of his fellow-passengers were hurried into the presence of their Maker. Mr. John C. Henderson, we are sorry to say, was among the killed. Mr. Barrett, conductor on the train, escaped without injury. The Express Messenger, Post Office Clerk, and Conductor, escaped from the baggage car when submerged in the water, by climbing to the top. Among the killed is Mrs. S. P. Stevenson, of Hamilton. Seventeen bodies were taken to the baggage room and laid side by side, and all, with the exception of two, were recognised.—The following is a list, as near as can be arrived at:—

Donald Stuart, of Hamilton. A man with a grant made in his shirt bosom. Mr. Russell, of the firm of Meilish, Morrell and Russell, of Brantford. A very large amount of money and a number of papers were found on the body of a man unknown, of about 20 years of age, with light hair and dark dress. Joseph Barr, of Niagara. In the pocket of this man was found a note, due yesterday to Prince and M. Marrieh, of Toronto, for £245; other memorandums were found, making it certain who he was. A female with some American gold in her pockets and two rings on the second finger, one of which was marked 'D.' James Danin, a stout light complexioned man, had a grey undershirt and no whiskers. Samuel Zimmerman, Railway Contractor, of Clifton. Thomas Benson, Merchant, of Port Hope. John Sharp, a book vendor at the Depot. Rev. A. Booker, father of Major Booker, of Hamilton. Erastus

W. Green, of Hamilton. A little boy 3 years of age. A little girl, daughter of J. N. Clare, of Hamilton. John C. Henderson. A female about 30 years of age—had on a slate coloured silk dress, and cloak nearly the same colour—unknown. A tall man about 40 years of age. Beside the foregoing, the flour store, we believe contains 19 bodies laid side by side, 16 men, 2 women, and 1 child. The sight is heartrending. Three of these bodies have been recognised at the close of the Coroner's examination, at 15 minutes past 10 o'clock. These were Edward Duffeleck, of Hamilton; Richard Dhezar, of Hamilton; John Morley, of Thorold. Six more bodies have since been discovered, which makes the total number of bodies found—40.—It is difficult to arrive at the number on the cars. It is stated that 80 persons left Toronto, but what change took place we have no means of ascertaining. Only about 10 or 12 persons uninjured.

#### NEWFOUNDLAND.

By arrival of the Merlin on Tuesday last, we have St John's dates to the 5th inst.

The all absorbing topic of discussion with the Newfoundlanders is the late convention by which it is proposed to convey important Fishery rights belonging to the people of that Colony to the French. This convention was signed by the Foreign and Colonial Secretaries and the French Minister, on the 14th of January last. Hitherto the British and French have had a concurrent right to catch and cure fish upon that part of the coast of Newfoundland extending from Cape John to Cape Ray. By the terms of this convention the British concede to the French the exclusive right of fishing along about one half of that distance—that is, from Cape Norman to Cape Ray; whilst for the remainder of the distance, with the exception of five harbours, the British are to have the exclusive right of fishing upon their own shores.—But it happens that these five harbours are the only good ones on that part of the coast and from the only points in which the fishery can then be prosecuted. At the same time, the fishing grounds upon the Labrador coast, those extending from Blanc Sablon to Cape Charles, and the coast North of Belleisle, with the right of curing fish upon Belleisle and other islands on the Newfoundland coast, are given away to the French.

This Convention cannot go into operation until laws for carrying it into effect shall have passed the Imperial Parliament, and the Legislature of Newfoundland. In that Colony, the news of the Convention has been received with a universal cry of grief and indignation. Both branches of the Legislature have unanimously passed Resolutions expressive of the regret and surprise at this concession of their dearest rights without any equivalent, and of their unalterable determination never to give their assent to a measure so unjust. At an immense meeting at St. John's, a string of resolutions, backed by some eloquent speeches, were unanimously passed condemnatory of the Convention. A delegation has also been appointed to visit Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Canada to invite the people of those Provinces to join with the Newfoundlanders in a remonstrance to the British Government against this infringement of their common rights. The St. John papers contain letters from both the Church of England and Roman Catholic Bishops expressive of their regret at the terms of this treaty and their condemnation of it. In short, all Newfoundland appears to be in a ferment about this subject.

#### NOVA SCOTIA.

**AWFUL CATASTROPHE BY FIRE.**—On the morning of Thursday, the 6th inst., the house of Mr. Allan C. Barnaby, near the Steam Mill in Cornwallis, was totally consumed by fire, and, dreadful to relate, four of his children perished in the flames. His family consisted of six children, one of whom was providentially absent. The eldest, a girl in her fourteenth year, was sleeping with her mother, who was confined to her bed by illness, in a bedroom on the first floor. Mr. Barnaby slept on the flight above, and the first intimation of danger he heard was the screams of his wife. When he rose the staircase was in flames, and he rushed down to the rescue of his wife, calling upon a servant man who slept in an adjoining room to open their bedroom door to call the children; but he, in the confusion of ideas naturally attendant upon such an awful moment, threw open a shutter in the gable, and leaped a distance of twenty feet to the ground, wounding himself severely. Mrs. Barnaby rushed to the staircase and succeeded in grasping two of her children, but, alas! the raging element overpowered her—she was forced to relinquish her grasp and fell senseless to the foot of the stairs, from whence she was rescued from the flames at the imminent peril of his life, by her agnized husband, who had in the meantime, by smashing in the bedroom windows succeeded in rescuing his eldest daughter. The children lost are a daughter aged eight years, and three sons of the respective ages of ten years, two years, and three months. The whole family had a narrow escape from destruction, for the lateness of the hour—it being between two and four o'clock in the morning—prevented the possibility of aid being at hand. The survivors are dreadfully scorched. Mrs. Barnaby's life being almost despaired of. It is not known how the fire originated.—*Chronicle.*

#### UNITED STATES.

**The Fisheries of Provincetown.**—We learn from the Provincetown Banner that about one hundred fishing vessels were fitted out from that port last year, averaging about 90 tons