

PROGRESS.

EDWARD S. CARTER, EDITOR

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ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, DEC. 28.

WE AND OUR NEIGHBORS.

The day has gone by when demagogues and unscrupulous or ignorant writers can provoke a deep feeling of antagonism between the people of Canada and those of the United States. The day is long past when well informed people in either country believe that their neighbors across the line have all the bad qualities of mankind and that hatred toward them is a matter of duty.

There is no danger of war between England and the United States, and we of the provinces should be the last to desire to see such a calamity. Whatever might be the final result, and even though, as is more unlikely, such points as St. John should except devastation, there would be practical ruin, for a time, from a commercial point of view, and the recovery from it would not be in the lifetime of the present generation.

Next Wednesday will be the first day of the last leap year of the present century, and there will not be another leap year until 1904. The year 1900, though divisible by four, will not be a leap year, because its figures are not a multiple of 400.

In looking over the provincial papers of forty or fifty years ago, one observes now and then a tone of hostility to the American people very much out of line with the tone of the more influential papers at the present day. It was probably in accord with the ideas of many of the people at that time, and it is not to be wondered at.

Up to the time of the adoption of the Gregorian calendar the year question had been in a condition as mixed and unsatisfactory as is now the vexed issue of local and standard time in this part of the world. The theory was that the natural or solar year should be a guide to the regulating of the civil year, but the ancient Romans got so far out of the way that they were some months ahead of the real year, and were trying to make believe it was summer when the sun and the weather and the crops proved that it was only spring.

A notice in this week's Royal Gazette announces that application has been made for the incorporation of a company to be known as the Canada Drug Co. (Ltd.) with head offices in this city, and with a capital of \$100,000 of which over \$50,000 is paid up.

The feeling of many of the more intelligent people of all classes, of recent years, has been that while a political union is not desirable, every effort should be made to have our trade and social relations with the New England states as close and as friendly as possible.

should have unrestricted reciprocity with the United States, and that our dependence on the United States for increased prosperity was made the subject of many articles. While the political issue then raised was vigorously combatted by the conservative press and an alleged "loyalty cry" raised, yet on both sides nothing in the nature of abuse of the Americans as a nation appeared in any of the leading party organs.

The old issues raised by wars which nobody now living can remember died with the passing away of the generations immediately interested in them. The increase of railway and steamboat travel, the influx of the people of one country into the other country in growing numbers year by year, all tended to wipe away the old narrow idea of national prejudice.

The praiseworthy habit of swearing-off from liquor, tobacco and the like, at the beginning of the year, is probably as popular as it ever was. The joys and jags of Christmas are over and many who have been experiencing them are in a mood to be repentant and try to do better.

Over the River of Drooping Eyes, is the wonderful Land of Dreams, Where hills grow as white as snow, And the trees are green and the winds blow, And the tall reeds quiver all in a row—

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is so calculated as to allow for the gain over solar time by occasional omissions. This keeps the year where it ought to be. In the century year once in every 400 years, the leap year is omitted. Thus 1600 was a leap year and 2000 will be, but 1800 was not one nor will 1900 be one. This is why it is that those of us who may live for eight years more will see for the first time a year of which the figures are divisible by four, but which is not a leap year.

THE NEW YEAR RESOLVES. The new year is a good time to begin the execution of new plans, and a very large proportion of people are in the habit of doing so.

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VERSES OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Christmas, the day of gladness, Telling of the new born King, In the manger of the stable, Where the shepherds homage bring. O the great and glorious comfort, Here vouchsafed to fallen earth, Love beyond our comprehension, In this blessed holy birth.

Were all my wishes filled, How happy I would be, My sighs would be forever stilled, And life a sunlit sea. The birds would sing their sweetest songs; Life's wrestling would be o'er; I'd need no cure for right or wrong, O wish for something more.

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1896 inclusive, and the time limit good to leave destination not later than January 7th 1896. Passengers going to Quebec, Montreal and Toronto should be particular to see that their tickets read over the Intercolonial R'y.—The Popular Route—via Lewis.

DRIFTING TO NEW HOMES.

The fact that the earliest travellers on the Pacific Ocean found the hundreds of little islands inhabited has long puzzled anthropologists. Where did the people come from who lived on these widely severed little specks in the waste of waters?

Mr. C. M. Woodward, who has travelled much on the Pacific, has written an account of the Gilbert Islands, in which he tells the tradition of the natives as to their origin. They say that the first people who came to the islands reached them in two canoes from an island which they call Baneba, lying far away to the southwest.

Mr. Woodward says he believed the native story is probably a fairly accurate account of the origin of the islands. He says that, considering the habits of the natives, it is no wonder that the islands, remote as they are, received their population by chance carriers from distant islands.

A sudden squall from an unexpected quarter would be sufficient in a few hours to carry them out of sight of land, and the winds and currents would do the rest. Who can tell of the tales of the sea, of the suffering and death that must have occurred before these little ocean specks received their first inhabitants?

HOW LEECHES ARE CAUGHT.

The leech is a strange, unlovely creature. Fortunately it has gone out of fashion. But thirty or forty years ago, when medical men had a pleasant habit of bleeding every patient who fell into their hands, the little blood-suckers used to be in great demand.

Leech fishing is not a pleasant occupation. It condemns the fisher to foggy mists, foul, muddy waters, and most fetid odors. And, worse than this, the fisher has himself to be the bait. Blood for blood is the motto of these sanguinary beasts, and nothing but a pair of plump, naked legs will tempt them from their stagnant pools.

The leech lives a semi-aquatic existence; it must have plenty of air, and plenty of water, and it likes them foul. They are caught in the spring and early summer. The men turn up their trousers and wade knee deep into the water. The sight of the legs acts like a magnet on the leeches.

It is a funny, almost uncanny, sight to see the unhealthily looking men wading through marshes and swamps and dirty streams, their arms and legs bare, poking about among the rushes and turning the mossy pebbles over with their toes in the hopes of stirring up some colony of leeches.

the help coming is red or yellow, and the helpers for the yellow or red cars make no attempt to leave their place except as the cars of their own lines appear. The horses have been watched for some time and tested in many ways and proved conclusively that they know color, and that they attend to their business.

That horses should know color seems no more wonderful than that they should learn to know a voice or a footstep. I knew a gray horse who had been petted by two members of a family. One always gave him sugar whenever he went to the barn and the other always gave an extra handful of oats. The experiment was tried many times, and it was proved every time that, without seeing either of his friends, he knew, when he heard their voices, or even their steps, which he was going to get, and prepared for it. Not only did he know what he was going to get, but he greeted each one with a different neigh.

PRESERVED IN AMBER.

In many museums may be seen in the most perfect state of preservation in amber fossilized remains of plants and animals. The science of Egypt in its highest development did not succeed in discovering a method of embalming so perfect as the simple process taking place in nature. A tree exudes a gummy, resinous matter in a liquid state. An insect accidentally lights in it and is caught. The exudation continues and envelops it completely, preserving the most minute details of its structure.

The coasts of the Baltic are, and have been from the days of the Paeonian traders, the great source of the amber of commerce. It occurs in rolled fragments, in strata known to geologists as oligocene. These are tertiary rocks of a date little more recent than those of the London basin and equivalent to the younger tertiary series of the Isle of Wight.

Fragments of hair and feathers have been caught in the sticky resin and preserved. Among others a woodpecker and squirrel have been recognized in the Baltic amber.—Gentleman's Magazine.

Blessing In Proportion.

A. M. Cleland of Dayton, O., tells a good story of a gambler from that city who has made a large fortune out of a saloon and bar room. Last winter he was in Florida with some friends, and visited a church where a few colored people were engaged in worship. The roof leaked, and the pastor prayed most fervently that the Lord would provide a way to repair the roof.

The pastor rolled his eyes up, and, raising his hands, said in a voice choking with emotion: "Twenty dollars—gambler from Ohio. May be good Lord's bress and prospah de noble gambler from Ohio."

Mark Twain's lecture tour in the antipodes is proving highly successful, but, according to the Australian papers, he had a series of setbacks at the start, which probably have afforded him some quiet chuckles since. His agents had engaged all at Honolulu in which he was to lecture while the steamer he was travelling to Australia was in port. Eight hundred seats were sold. But when Mark Twain arrived he found he could not land at Honolulu on account of the cholera.

Miss Antique (school teacher)—What does a-b-t-a spell? Class—No answer. Miss Antique—What is the color of my skin? Class (in chorus)—Yellow! China has a war god to whom they have turned in time immemorial, and who has over 3,000 names.