

stituents in Halton, only found it necessary to criticise some details of the measure, resolutions at his meeting having been carried in favour of supporting the scheme as a whole! These resolutions having been moved by his eloquence. He had not before spoken, and it is easy to see that he may have been misunderstood and misrepresented, his objections having actually been to questions of detail. This point is not altered by the fact that every body misunderstood him, myself among others, and I hasten to make this explanation.

The proceedings during the recess are, as a whole, a sorry result for those excited gentlemen who stood immeasurably "aghast" at the millions which the Government were prepared to fling away, or fling at the Syndicate. The result, moreover, proves that the sober second thought of the people of this country is not to be whipped up into foam by merely excited assertions; and the fact will still remain, as I stated in a former letter, that whether this country builds the Pacific Railway by the medium of a Company, or directly by contracts let by the Department of Railways, that work will never be done for a less sum than \$53,000,000 in money, and 25,000,000 acres of land, which, without the railway, is utterly valueless. This is the length and breadth of the Government scheme; and all parties being committed to build this railway by the medium of a Company, there really is no substantial argument against the main features of the Ministerial scheme, whatever objections may be made to some of the details. The scheme which Mr. Mackenzie advertised in 1876, and to which his Government and party are irretrievably committed, to give \$10,000 and 20,000 acres of land, a mile, for 2,700 miles of railway, together with a guarantee of 4 per cent. on a further \$7,000 a mile, which involved a liability of \$18,900,000, was an infinitely more onerous undertaking for Canada than that of the Government of Sir John Macdonald. In the face of a fact of this nature, which is known to every body, the kind of opposition which one now hears is simply amazing.

You will find, too, that the more the alleged land monopoly in the hands of a Railway Company is criticised, the more will the objections to it vanish into thin air. There might be a land monopoly which would be dangerous, and I am one of those who think that the extent to which land speculation has already been carried in the Province of Manitoba is highly injurious to the public interests; but large blocks of land given for the building of a railway are an entirely different thing. The Company must sell its lands to get money to go on with, and it wants people to inhabit them to furnish business for the railway. The Company is, therefore, impelled to dispose of the lands for business reasons and on business principles, the public having the assurance that the commercial instinct will go more directly to its aim than is possible for governments, subject to party change. The land companies of the Western States actually spend three or four times more than our Government does to promote immigration, and they are, above all things, successful. This Syndicate will have to spend more millions of dollars to settle its 25,000,000 acres of land than our Government could get Parliament to vote, or, even if voted by Parliament, could spend to advantage, subject, as it is, to political influences.

I was prevented by the length of my last letter from noticing the speech of Mr. Ives, of Sherbrooke, in support of the Government scheme; but it is fair to say now that it was a marked feature of the debate, and contained a grouping of important facts which have not yet been answered, and which cannot be by simple declamation.

Altogether, in view of the sort of declamation we have had, the friends of the Ministry are jubilant at the course which events seem to have taken, and they will enter into the contest on Tuesday with renewed confidence. This is a favourable condition in which to make any modification that may be agreed upon, as respects details, and I have specially in view, in saying this, the Customs duties, and the form, at least, of the taxation clauses.

His Excellency the Governor-General is receiving visitors in the Privy Council Chamber, and every body is going to pay their respects to the head of the Government.

I may be allowed to wish a Happy New Year to the readers of these letters.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our first page will remind our readers "who live at home in ease" of all the discomforts and dangers which the late stormy weather has entailed upon those who are buffeted by the waves of the Atlantic. The very look of the vessel brings with it a certain sinking of the soul, and the feeling that on such a sea man is indeed "a thing of nought," as far, at all events, as his stomach is concerned.

The disgraceful scene in the French Assembly which culminated in the expulsion of Baudy d'Asson from the Chamber, will be fresh in the memory of most of our readers. The last scene in the farce, so far, is that M. Baudy d'Asson, nothing disconcerted by learning from M. Gambetta that he could not directly move in the Chamber to prosecute him for false imprisonment, has applied to the Senior Judge of Instruction, reputed a clerical, to issue a writ against M. Gambetta, the Questors, and the head usher. Nothing but ridicule can possibly come of this.

The American Congress seem anxious to emulate the emotional style of proceedings in the French Chamber, to judge from the late occurrence at Washington. It seems a little difficult to reconcile conflicting accounts as to who was mainly responsible for the disgraceful scene which took place. A preliminary skirmish apparently ended in Mr. Weaver, of Indiana, somewhat too plainly intimating that Mr. Sparks, of Iowa, was a liar, to which the said Sparks promptly responded by calling Weaver a scoundrel and a villain. Weaver, who seems by the account to be a remarkably powerful man, was for executing summary vengeance on his opponent, and, but for the interference of members on both sides, a pitched battle would probably have taken place. Order was with difficulty restored by the Sergeant-at-Arms, when the House adjourned in a most excited condition. Weaver has since tendered an apology for his behaviour. Comment on the event seems needless. It may be compared only to the incident of which our next picture is an illustration.

The festival celebration at Vienna in honour of the Centenary of Joseph II's accession began on the night of Monday, the 29th November. Our illustrations, taken from the *Illustrated London News*, represent several incidents of interest in the life of the Emperor, besides those of the celebration itself. The story of the Emperor descending from his carriage at the sight of a peasant ploughing, and trying his hand at the work, is familiar to most of us.

FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE HURON AND BRUCE RAILROAD.—This melancholy occurrence, by which 4 persons were instantly killed, took place on Christmas night. The night express, going south on the London, Huron & Bruce Railway, one and a quarter miles north of Claudioboye station, while crossing the side road, ran into Mr. James McGrath's sleigh, which contained himself, wife and child, Mr. Matthew McGrath, Miss McGrath and Miss Blake, who were returning to their home in Bid-dulph, from spending Christmas with their friends in McGilivray. James McGrath and wife were instantly killed, and Matthew McGrath and Miss Blake lived for about one and a half hours after being struck, but neither of them spoke. The child was found in the ditch crying, and was taken to Mr. Grundy's residence near by, where Dr. Sutton, of Claudioboye, dressed its wounds. The little child is about one and a half years old, and is suffering from a fracture of the right arm, and is considerably bruised. The doctor, however, is not without hopes of its recovery. Miss McGrath jumped from the sleigh when within one rod of the track, and thereby saved her life. The engine-driver saw the sleigh on the track just as the engine struck it, and at once reversed his engine and backed up to the scene of the accident, when the trainmen were horrified to find that four souls had been launched into eternity without a moment's warning. Truly a melancholy ending to a day of rejoicing. "In the midst of life we are in death."

It would go ill with us if, in the holidays, we had not an illustration or two for the children. The new style of sleigh-riding, which our artist represents as coming into vogue, is not perhaps to be recommended on all occasions; but every child will appreciate the sketch of "Our Holidays." We only hope all our young friends are enjoying themselves as much as their representations in the picture.

AFFAIRS in Ireland still occupy a large share of the public interest. The illustration which we give this week represents the eviction of a recalcitrant farmer by the constabulary, and is from the pencil of Montbard, the talented artist of the *Monde Illustré*.

THE EARTHQUAKES IN SOUTHERN AUSTRIA.—Our readers have doubtless been made aware of the terrible nature of these recent convulsions of the earth, which began on the 9th of Oct., and continued with more or less violence nearly a month. The earthquake extended throughout Southern Austria, from Vienna to the Adriatic and the frontiers of Bosnia. Shocks were felt at Serajewo, Herwenka, Brod, Pola, Trieste, Zilli, Klagenfurt, Funckirchen, Odenburg, Marburg, Laibach, and Gross-Kanischa. It was in Agram, the capital of Croatia, however, that the greatest damage was inflicted. Three shocks of earthquake occurred on the 9th, a period of an hour intervening between the second and third. One of them, which lasted ten seconds, was so powerful that not a single house remained uninjured. The palace and country seat of the Cardinal Archbishop of Agram, the Military School, and the Government Cigar Manufactory have been half destroyed by the earthquake shocks, and terrible damage has been done to the farm buildings in the neighbourhood within a radius of about fourteen miles. The losses caused in Agram are estimated at 3,000,000 florins, without reckoning the damage done to the cathedral and churches. Competent authorities state that it will take years to repair the damage to the Cathedral, in which, besides other things, the whole of the vaulted roof over the Canons' stalls has fallen in. The Palaces Kerisvude, H-leua, and Paukovic are heaps of ruins, as are also some of the churches. The Emperor at once sent a donation of ten thousand florins for the most helpless sufferers. The last and most violent shock was felt on the 8th Dec. last. The illustration in our paper is taken from the pages of the *Leipsig Illustrated Times*.

MISCELLANY.

THE new Rugby settlement in Tennessee was described in glowing terms by Mr. T. Hughes, Q.C., in a lecture which he delivered at the Working men's College, on Saturday last. In the "Central avenue" of the new town are the company's offices, a temporary church, a new hotel, lodging-houses, and a co-operative store, and the land already cleared swarms with melons, tomatoes, Irish potatoes, "liver beans," and other valuable produce.

THE "THIEVES' SUPPER," which has now become an annual institution at the Union Chapel, Little Wild street, Drury Lane, took place recently, under the presidency of Mr. Flowers, the Bow street Magistrate. About 200 persons who are or have been "known to the police" partook of the meal, and were afterwards addressed by the Chairman and other gentlemen interested in the movement. Mr. G. Hatton, the Secretary of the Mission, read a number of grateful letters from reclaimed criminals, and stated that during the past year 5,333 persons had been provided with breakfasts on the morning of their discharge, and 2,059 had been induced to sign the pledge.

THE Passion Play as presented at Ober-Ammergau, in 1880, was a paying piece. The forty performances brought in \$520,000, an average of \$13,000 for each performance. The every day theatre manager would be glad to secure a play that would bring him one-thirteenth of that. The proceeds have been divided into four parts, one-quarter being divided among such inhabitants of the village as are householders, one-quarter set apart for expenses of the theatre, one-quarter divided among the actors, and the fourth given to the public schools. The performances were attended by 175,000 persons, among them a king, a prince imperial, a grand duke, and many other distinguished people.

ASTRONOMICAL science has lost an eminent discoverer by the death of Professor James Watson, the astronomer of the State University of Michigan. He was a Canadian by birth, but settled early in the United States, and graduated at the Michigan University, to which his name was afterwards to bring much honour. In the list of places which have rendered good service to astronomy the name of Ann Arbor, the picturesque little town by the banks of the rapid Huron, stands high. In Ann Arbor is the Michigan University, and from the University Observatory Professor Watson made the numerous discoveries of asteroids which obtained for him in 1870 the gold medal of the French Academy of Sciences. In Ann Arbor, too, he wrote the scientific books and treatises which have given him an honourable place in the literature of science. In 1870 Professor Watson went to Sicily to observe the eclipse of the sun, and in 1874 he was at the head of the successful American expedition which went to Pekin to witness the transit of Venus, whose results the late Mrs. Somerville so much regretted that she should not live to learn. In 1877 he was appointed to the charge of the Observatory of the Wisconsin State University. His career was a laborious and a useful one, and he has left behind him a name that will hold a respected place in the history of scientific observation. His body has been taken back to Ann Arbor, and he is buried most fittingly in the place where he lived so long, first as student and scholar, then as writer and observer: the place from which he so often "out-watched the stars."

MANY years ago a young man made his appearance in Stratford, and spent a few weeks at the tavern which then existed, to afford shelter to stage-coach travellers. Whence he came, and what his business none could guess. Directly opposite the tavern stood the small cottage and forge of a blacksmith named Folsom. He had a daughter who was the beauty of the village, and it was her fortune to captivate the heart of the young stranger. He told his love, said he was travelling *incog.*; but, in confidence, gave her his real name, claiming that he was heir to a large fortune. She returned his love, and they were married a few weeks after. The stranger told his wife that he must visit New Orleans. He did so, and the gossips of the town made the young wife unhappy by disagreeable hints and jeers. In a few months the husband returned; but before a week had elapsed he received a large budget of letters, and told his wife that he must at once return to England, and must go alone. He took his departure, and the gossips had another glorious opportunity to make a confiding woman wretched. To all but herself it was a clear case of desertion. The wife became a mother, and for two years lived on in silence and hope. By the end of that time a letter was received by the Stratford beauty from her husband, directing her to go at once to New York with her child, taking nothing with her but the clothes she wore, and embark in a ship for home in England. On her arrival in New York she found a ship splendidly furnished with every convenience and luxury for her comfort, and two servants ready to obey every wish that she might express. The ship duly arrived in England, and the Stratford girl became mistress of a mansion, and, as the wife of a baronet, was sainted as Lady Samuel Sailing. On the death of her husband, many years ago, the Stratford boy succeeded to the title and wealth of his father; and, in the last edition of "Peerage and Baronetage," he is spoken of as the issue of "Miss Folsom, of Stratford, North America."

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

HEAVY snow has been falling in Scotland. SERIOUS floods have caused loss of life in Cyprus. SHOCKS of earthquake are reported from Roumania. FOOT and mouth disease is spreading very rapidly in England. AN army corporal is under examination at Limerick on a charge of drilling Fenians.

TWO arrests have been made at Clonbar for complicity in the murder of Lord Mountmorris.

MR JUSTIN MCCARTHY has been elected Vice-President of the Home Rule Conference in Dublin.

THE first detachment of workmen for the Panama Canal leaves Paris for Panama next week.

DISASTROUS floods have broken down a number of dykes in Holland, submerging eighteen villages.

INCOMING vessels at New York report having experienced severe weather on the Atlantic.

GREAT excitement is reported in Orange Free State, and it is feared the Dutch will join the Boers.

THE Land League professes to have information of a deep-laid landlords' plot to excite the labourers against the farmers.

THE trial of the Traversers commenced in Dublin on the 28th ult. but seems to cause little excitement. It is believed that Mr. Parnell and his colleagues will insist on presenting themselves at the opening of Parliament.

THE French ironclad *Richelieu*, an 8,000-ton vessel carrying ten guns, has been burned in Toulon Harbour. A number of the crew were injured.

AN Australian steamer just arrived at San Francisco brings news of the massacre of the captain and four of the crew of the *Sawfly* by South Sea Islanders.

PROFESSOR T. HAETING, of the University of Utrecht, has drafted an address to the British nation, which is receiving numerous signatures in Holland, praying for the re-establishment of the independence of the Transvaal.

A WASHINGTON despatch says there is a possibility of complications with Great Britain, on account of the larger privileges to be granted to the United States by the new commercial treaty with China.

QUITE a scene occurred in the French Chamber of Deputies on M. Loissant submitting papers accusing M. Girardin of having been a Prussian spy. The Chamber finally voted confidence in M. Girardin's innocence.

"GEORGE ELIOT," the authoress, was buried last week in the Highgate Cemetery. There was a great assemblage of literary men. The weather was wet. The mourners included her husband and Profs. Tyndall, Risley and Colvin.

HUMOROUS.

ON the meeting of two friends the following colloquy ensued:—"Where have you been?" "To my tailor, and I had hard work making him accept a little money." "You astonish me! Why?" "Because he wanted more."

At a great dinner given by many of the first rank, Lalande was placed between Madame de Stael and Madame Recamier. "How lucky I am!" said he. "Here am I seated between wit and beauty." "And without possessing either one or the other," observed Madame de Stael.

A MAN may denounce infidelity, in a spirit which is itself essentially infidel. David Hume once said to such a person, "You hope I shall be damned for want of faith, and I fear you will suffer the same fate for want of charity."

UNCOMPROMISING.—The Doctor's Daughter: "I declare you're a dreadful fanatic, Mrs. McClellan; I do believe you think nobody will be saved but you and your minister." Old lady: "Aweel, my dear, I whistles hae my doots about the meenister."

A BACKWOODS preacher once elucidated as follows in connection with the parable of the virgins:—"In ancient times, my beloved hearers, it was the custom after a couple had been married, for ten virgins to go out with lighted lamps and meet 'em on the way home, five of these virgins being males and five females."

AN amusing end to a tragedy recently took place at the Music Hall, Lancaster. Mr. E. Fletcher was playing Hamlet before a large and appreciative audience. The play went off in good style till the last scene, when Hamlet, who had to kill the King, stabbed the unfortunate monarch and threw him back in his chair. But, to the horror and surprise of the melancholy Bang, he saw the throne-chair, on which lay the corpse of his guilty uncle, slowly wheel to the edge of the platform on which it had been placed, and then topple over. Down went the King of Denmark on his head, up went the feet of the now struggling living King, and vainly did the courtiers try to help him—he was wedged too fast in the chair. The audience roared with laughter, the actors chuckled, the musicians screamed. "Drop the curtain!" said Hamlet. But the scene shifter was too much taken up with the joke to obey the summons; at last however the audience, breathless with laughter, saw the drop scene fall on one of the most amusing episodes ever witnessed on the stage. After a short interval the curtain rose again, and Hamlet tried to regain the sympathy of the audience; but the ghost of the wicked King still cast a light over the scene, and it was with a hard struggle Hamlet regained his composure, dying in the usual orthodox manner.

GENTLEMEN, do you want nice-fitting, well-made garments at reasonable prices? Go to L. Robinson, practical tailor, late of London, England, 31 Beaver Hall Terrace.