

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE AT RIDEAU HALL.

I left the Grand Central Depot, New York, at 8.30 P. M., struck Utica at 5 A. M., changed cars, reached Ogdensburg at noon, crossed the St. Lawrence at one, arrived at Prescott at 1.15, where I was encountered by rosy custom-house officials wrapped in fur from head to heel, boarded the cars, and at 4.20 beheld the twelfth century Gothic State Buildings of the Dominion's capital looming up through a snow fog, strongly and strangely reminding me, in miniature, of England's Parliament Houses by the River Thames. My first duty was to announce my arrival in Ottawa, and, after the harmless necessary wash, I chartered a blooming sleigh, all scarlet and gold and bearskin, and spun cheerily along the two miles of snow-sheeted road that lay between mine hostelry and Rideau Hall, the official residence of John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, Marquis of Lorne, Lord Lieutenant-General and Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada.

The vice-regal domicile is not by any means a lordly dwelling-house, being a low, wide-extending private mansion, with two wings, one of which resembles a primitive Methodist chapel, the other possessing an undeniable *souçon* of a meeting-house. Rideau Hall was originally built by the late Hon. Thomas McKay, and named after the river and falls in its vicinity. The residence with about seventy-seven acres of the estate was leased to the Government in August, 1865, for the sum of \$4,000 per annum, with the right to purchase within three years for \$70,000, and subsequently within twelve years for such sum as might be determined upon by arbitration. An additional ten-acre lot adjacent to it was added at a lease of \$720. At the outset alterations and improvements to the property cost the Government over \$80,000. These improvements consisted of new buildings, comprising vinery, laundry, winter carriage-house, coach-house, ice-house, stables, etc. The Government purchased the property in 1868 for \$162,000. Since that date upwards of \$150,000 have been expended in additions and \$295,000 in repairs. The Hall is surrounded by thirty-five acres of artistically laid-out grounds, which, on the occasion of my visit, were "enshrined in seamless snow."

On my return to mine hostelry I found a letter from Major de Winton, private secretary to His Excellency, informing me that the Governor-General would receive me upon the following morning, and 10.30 saw my sleigh skimming into the *porte cochère* of the Government House.

The door was opened by a stalwart sergeant—formerly, by the way, in the Life Guards and at the relief of Lucknow as an artilleryman—who was attired in England's red. Another orderly-sergeant stood at attention, while a sentry gazed grimly at me as, Martini-Henry on shoulder, he paced backwards and forwards, reminding me of Brinsley Sheridan's luckless creditor who "walked fifty miles on this d—d carpet."

I waited, while my card was being delivered to Major de Winton, in a large hall, with short stairways right, left and centre, the latter giving a glimpse of a sombre interior. The hall is fitted up in oak, with high oaken dados. The paper above the dado is chocolate-color. The Visitors' Book stands at a desk beside a stove. On the desk is the following order:

"The A. D. C. in waiting will be much obliged if visitors will write their names and addresses, in Ottawa, in full."

The sergeant returned to the head of the central staircase, and requested me to follow him. I passed across the inner hall, wherein hangs a superb photograph of the Queen, done in 1875, the gold frame surmounted by the V. R. Here also is a bust—life-size, in bronze—of the Marquis of Lorne, in fur cap and fur collar, executed by Miss Montalba. The hall is furnished with oaken cabinets laden with real "bits o' Chelsea," statuettes and vases in majolica. The carpet is Brussels, a dull-red with white flowers. The hall leads to a corridor which runs the entire length of the building. This corridor, carpeted as the hall, is broken by glass doors, alcoves, and three sets of unimposing staircases.

In a snug and cheery room to the right I found Major de Winton, the most courteous and earnest of "swell" officials, who, after a brief but pleasant chat, proceeded to announce my arrival to His Excellency. Following the major along the gloomy corridor until we arrived at a door on the left, through which came pouring a flood of dayshine, I stepped into the presence of the Governor-General.

The Marquis of Lorne was seated at a cabinet-desk close to the window, a buffalo robe enshrouding his chair. He was attired in a blue shirt with a turned-down collar, a brown scarf, a blue coat with Atrachan collar and cuffs, and braided in black silk after the fashion of a hussar jacket. His trousers were of light plaid, his boots laced, with yellow tops and india-rubber soles. He wore no ornament save a massive gold watch-chain of the curb pattern, and two plain, lumpy gold rings.

"Welcome to Canada!" he cheerily exclaimed, as, starting from his chair, he advanced to meet me with extended hand.

Let me describe the Governor-General's study. The apartment is evenly proportioned and lighted by two large windows, which look upon the skating-rink and the tobogganing gallery. The paper is gray; the carpet, Brussels—green, covered with ferns. The grate is English, and brass-fitted; the mantel, white marble, sur-

mounted by a mirror. On either side of the mantel comes the gas through the heads of bronze Mousquetaires; on either side of the mirror are the portraits of the late Duchess of Argyle, the Governor-General's mother, and the splendid Duchess of Sutherland, his lordship's aunt, and to whom the Queen was so devotedly attached. On the mantel is a clock "ticking the minutes with a weird and skeleton hand." Two photographs of Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise stand on the mantel-piece, one in her wedding-dress, coloured, the other a head only. A superb piece of Gobelins tapestry adorns the northern wall. His Lordship's desk is very deep, very wide, and covered with scarlet cloth. A remarkable ink-bottle stands on the right hand—a horse-hoof shod in silver, the lid bearing the inscription, "The hoof of the charger that carried Lord Clyde through the Crimean War." Lord Clyde, it will be recollected, was the Sir Colin Campbell, who did such splendid service with the 93rd Highlanders at Balaclava. On the desk, confronting the Marquis, is a full-length photograph of the Princess Louise and another portrait of the illustrious lady set in a gold medallion. A miniature of the Queen in ivory, in a scarlet velvet open case, also ornaments a desk laden with—oh! blessed sight—quill pens, and with all the aesthetic *impedimenta* appertaining to scribbling in high latitudes.

A splendid photo of Inverary Castle, the seat of the Duke of Argyle, and an India ink drawing by the Princess Louise of the "home-coming," occupy the southern wall; but the place of honour is relegated to a superbly executed portrait of the late Duchess of Argyle, the intense sweetness of expression which rendered her tranquil beauty so exceedingly winning being admirably rendered. Here, also, are pictures in oil, by the hand of the royal lady of the house, right masterfully executed, the subjects being selected among scenes in bonnie Scotland. An open bookcase, painted white, runs along this wall like a dado, "Hansard's Parliamentary Debates" forming a menacing battery on the top. On a table in the centre of the apartment lay a large morocco-bound volume, inscribed, "Addresses, 1878," and, beside it, three of those scarlet morocco-bound, royal-armed, lion-and-unicorn despatch boxes, so dear to Ministers of State, and other high and mighty personages of Queen Victoria's Government.

On the eastern wall hangs a very large photo of the Princess Louise, and a bunch of red flowers, on a gray ground, painted by Her Royal Highness. On a cabinet stands a coloured portrait of the Princess in walking costume. A glass case of salmon flies and "spoons," terra-cotta vases, a number of breech-loader cartridges, a pair of snow-shoes, an outstretched morocco frame, containing photographs of the Argyle family, also adorn the cabinet.

The Governor-General, after having expressed regret at the death of Mr. Frank Leslie, plunged *in medias res*, chatting with vigorous animation upon many subjects, from the *Trocullis* of Mexico to the proposed Canadian Academy of Arts.

"I am very much interested in this proposed Academy," said the Marquis. "We have lots of talent in this country that requires to be developed and fostered. I want this Academy to be formed utterly independent of any Governmental or Departmental aid. It must make its own way, as did the Royal Academy of England. I have offered a medal for the best design in any art application of any Canadian plant, flower, or leaf for manufacturing purposes."

Apròpos of Mr. Parnoll's visit to the United States, the Marquis laughingly observed:

"If this sort of thing goes on, America will not only have to support the tenants, but the landlords as well."

After a brisk chat upon various topics, the Governor-General started to his feet, exclaiming:—

"Come out and see how we manage to pull through the winter here;" and, wrapping himself in a blue, blanket-hooded coat, lined and bound with scarlet, he strode along the corridor into the hall where the sentry presented arms, the sergeants saluted, and from thence out into the grounds to the curling rink.

"Curling is essentially a Scottish game," observed the Marquis. "We are very fond of it here, and we have some first-class curlers. I play the Vice-regal Club to-day against the Arnprior, a local club. You'll see some good play."

The curling rink is situated in a long shed, lighted at either side by windows—when dayshine fades, by gas-jets. The floor is of ice, forty-two yards long, as smooth as ice may be, and level as a billiard-table. The ice is marked at both ends by circles of "sets." The "stones" to be spun along the ice range from fifty to sixty-two pounds in weight. The walls and roof of the rink at Rideau Hall are painted white, relieved by toboggans, their scarlet cushions breaking the white. The ante-rooms at both ends are fitted up for spectators, who can witness the play in heat and comfort through plate-glass windows. The ante-room through which we passed is fitted up in scarlet, with racks for skates, rubbers and boots. Against the wall is a handsomely-framed printed notice, headed, "Vice-regal Curling Club of Canada," with list of members and officers, the Princess Louise being patroness. The following doggerel, in chalk, upon a black board, written by one of the staff, should not be omitted:

"In curling, there's one thing to be thoroughly known, And that is, that the 'skip' always goes it alone; Another thing is—save the 'skip'—'in' the 'tee' Is a place where no man ought ever to be."

"Now, then," exclaimed the Marquis, "come out and have a look at our toboggans."

Standing at a height of seventy feet from the ground is a wooden structure, enclosed on three sides only, of about four feet square, supported on a framework of timber. This enclosure is approached by wooden steps, one side of the stairway being occupied by a flat board, thoroughly iced, along which the toboggan is trailed by the tobogganist, as he or she ascends to the slippery starting-point.

The Marquis led the way, dragging his toboggan after him.

To the uninitiated it may as well be stated that the toboggan is a flat board of about five feet in length, eighteen inches in breadth, with the prow turned or rolled over. Upon the toboggan a cushion is placed, and upon the cushion the tobogganist either lies flat upon his stomach or assumes a sitting posture with stiffened knee-joints, the feet being firmly pressed against the roll of the prow.

When we gained the summit of this wooden structure the Marquis observed:

"I'm awfully sorry you weren't here on New Year's night. It was a vivid scene. I had the headlight of a locomotive just here," pointing to its empty frame, "and all along down there were Chinese lanterns."

The "down there" meant a strip of snow in a wooden groove about a quarter of a mile long, at an angle of forty-five.

"Now, then, I'll give you a toboggan experience."

The toboggan was placed on the floor of this tower, with its prow peeping over the icy steep.

"Just sit down, so," exclaimed the Marquis. "Put your feet against the prow there. Take hold of the rope. Lean back against me as much as ever you like;" and, turning to one of his staff, "Just tuck in that ulster for him, will you?"

My ulster, a real bit of Irish frieze, was duly wrapped around my legs, and I awaited my fate.

"All ready?" demanded the Marquis.

"All right, sir."

"Let her go!"

I have an indistinct recollection of darting through the air, of losing breath and vision, of a champagne feeling, glorious in its intoxication, of regaining mind and sight, of skimming like a bird along the pure white snow, of slowing, and—then I had my first tobogganing experience.

"We ought to have done better," observed the Marquis in rueful tones. "If it wasn't for the thaw I could have spun you out beyond that turn."

I had done seven hundred yards in twenty seconds, and was perfectly contented. In the second slide the Marquis caught my hat which had blown off, while we were in full career, and waved it above his head. This was a wonderful catch, rivaling his cricket experiences at Eton College.

An aide-de-camp having announced the arrival of the Arnprior Club, we returned to the Curling Rink, but not until Lord Lorne had graciously shown me a log-hut he had erected beside a new skating-ink out in the middle of a grove of pines. The view of Ottawa from this coigne of capital is especially picturesque.

The Arnpriors proved themselves to be good men and true, and the Vice-regals had to look closely to their laurels. Major de Winton, who is a capital curler, flung himself, *con amore*, as did also the Governor-General, into the game, and it was an exciting sight to behold the Marquis, in his turn, besom in hand, sweeping the ice with a rapidity that would put half a dozen spider-brushes to the blush, as his stone came curling slowly along to the "tee."

Leaving the curlers to their game, by permission of the Governor-General I returned to the house, where his lordship subsequently joined me, and honoured me by acting as *cicerone*.

Commencing with the billiard-room, with its English table, pockets, balls and cues, we turned into the tennis-court, admirably devised for killing the dead hours of a rainy day, and from thence to the smoking-room, an egg-shaped apartment furnished with luxurious easy chairs, the walls covered with coloured prints of the uniforms of the British service.

"Here is an old print I picked up, when I was over last year, in St. James street," observed the Marquis, as he pointed to a quaint, out of drawing coloured picture of the "Taking of Quebec." "This is rather good," nodding towards a water-colour sketch of a fancy ball given at Buckingham Palace by the Queen, the costumes being of the period of the Restoration.

Crossing the hall we repaired to the ball-room, a very handsome, lofty room and pale-green with a dais in scarlet at one end, the wall at the other being completely concealed by a magnificent piece of Gobelins tapestry in vivid preservation, although over two hundred years from the loom. Passing along the corridor, where the Montreal illuminated and emblazoned addresses shines from the wall, we entered the drawing-room. This apartment is papered in deal light-blue with gray leaves. It has three windows on the right looking upon a veranda. The cornices are blue and white. The carpet and curtains are of dark-blue. There are two English grates, with gray marble mantelpieces surmounted by mirrors. A grand piano occupies a post of honour, while *bric-à-brac* and countless and costly knick-knacks appear on gipsy tables and cabinets and brackets. The walls are rich in works of art. The Princess Louise, life-size, in her bridal dress, veil, orange-blossoms and all; a Doré, illustrating a passage in Tenayson's "Elaine," the quotation in the artist's writing;

a portrait of Prince Albert. Superb water-colours hang everywhere—Windsor Castle from Datchet Meade, Inverary Castle, Glen Shira, Venice, Como, Nuremberg. A charming photograph of the Princess Louise in walking attire, enshrined in a Gothic silver frame is especially noticeable, while the display of Sévres is as rich as it is unique.

Between the drawing-room and the boudoir of the Princess Louise is the library, a bright, cheery retreat, the open bookcases being white. I found the floor piled with *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* and French pictorial papers neatly arranged preparatory to binding, while the table was littered with all the British and foreign quarterlies. The literary contents of the bookcases betrayed a varied and cultured taste, the French and German elements being strongly in force. On a writing table near the window lay the Bible. Coloured prints of religious subjects—from the old masters—cover the walls, and a bronze clock, crowned with a bust of the Queen, ornaments the mantel-piece. From the library we entered the boudoir of the Princess Louise. It is in this sanctum that the aesthetic tastes of Her Royal Highness reveal themselves. The apartment is all blue—walls, carpet, curtains. The white doors are exquisitely painted over with branches of apple trees in full leaf and fruit, the handiwork of the Princess. Again, we have two pieces of superb Gobelins, and between the windows, of which there are three, glowing flowers on dead-gold panels. A painting of a brick wall covered with peaches is also from the brush of the Princess, the picture having been finished but two days before the fire at Inverary Castle. A very enlarged photograph of the Queen occupies one corner of the room, an old silver casket of quaint design supporting it. Two canaries in gilded cages sing blithely in the windows, and immediately beneath the cage of the sweetest singer stands the *escritoire* of the Princess, laden with its gorgeous blotter and its gilt inkstand, bearing the royal arms, and facing the glass door leading into the conservatory, rich in the most luxuriant ferns. A Capo di Monti clock in ebony and blue tiles stands upon one mantel-piece, while the other groans under grotesques in Sévres. The chandelier is of glass. A cabinet edition of Shakespeare and Tenyson, together with some French novels, lay scattered on the principal table, while on a small stand opposite the crackling fire are spread the latest French and English newspapers. A portrait of the Duchess of Kent, the mother of the Queen, holds a conspicuous position in the boudoir, as do also photographs of the Princess of Wales and the Princess Beatrice.

"These are very rare prints," observed Lord Lorne, pointing to three framed engravings. "They give one an admirable idea of Quebec prior and subsequent to the storming by Wolfe;" and the Marquis, as though he had been in command on that eventful occasion, went through the entire plan of attack.

"The frames are valuable," he observed, from the fact that up to three months ago they formed part of the timbers of a ship sunk during the siege."

I would recommend to the notice of my lady readers the antimacassars in this boudoir, which are of the roughest and the whitest bath toweling, with pink and yellow and blue dog-daisies worked in upon them.

A gong announced luncheon, and presently the curlers filed into the dining-room. With Thackeray, I hold the mahogany to be inviolable, so I shall content myself by merely stating that His Excellency's cook is a *cordón bleu*, and his wine merchant worthy of being canonized.

The dining-room is a large oblong apartment. The walls and carpets are in dull red. Portraits, after Winterhalter, of the Queen and Prince Albert, adorn the end walls. The buffets, right and left of the entrance, are of black walnut, with game subjects in relief. Gold salvers stand *en plaque*, three on each buffet. Claret jugs of horn, mounted in silver, with the Argyle arms emblazoned thereon, support the salvers. A silver biscuit box in the shape of a drum, is a notable object as it bears the inscription "From the soldiers of the Ninety-first Argyleshire Highlanders, presented, by the kind permission of Her Majesty, to Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise, on the occasion of her marriage, March 21st, 1871." Two very fine specimens of Van Goyen, village scenes, overhang sideboards standing in recesses at either side of the fireplace, wild ducks shot by the Marquis, and stuffed being suspended on the centre panel of each, with the date of their destruction. There are also two oil paintings of Highland scenery in the room, and a large and imposing landscape. The furniture is of black walnut, upholstered in claret-colored morocco leather, plain, heavy and useful.

The bracing air of Canada would seem to be on good terms with the Marquis. He has become both stalwart and stout. His yellow hair is less *en évidence* than when I last saw him in England, and health and contentment reign in his bright, intelligent face. There will be no Court at Rideau Hall, all reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

It was late in the evening when I took my leave of the blue-blooded Laird of Lorne.

THE first messages of the new telegraph line to South Africa were sent by Queen Victoria to the Sultan of Zanzibar, Sir Bartle Frere, and Sir Garnet Wolseley on the 25th of December. They were received on the 27th, and the replies arrived in London on the 29th.

D. J. Stewart mag. N.P.N. 127