

the weak and ill managed banks have been cleaned out. The "*Hochelaga*" got into a disreputable gold-ring lately, and the Cashier has had to *packet* the loss; they took phosphate deposits. The "*Mechanics*" failed to *Bridge* over their attempt at transatlantic circulation. It is said *Beaconsfield* had something to do with the trouble. "*Consolidated*," as the name implies, is now among the most permanent stocks, and is hard not to *bear*,—Verdict: Died hard, of plethora of President. The Banque "*Marie*," true to her sex, has been coquetting with "*Jacques Cartier*"; they will probably soon become one. The "*Exchange*" has been *telegraphing* furiously lately, which looks ominous. Notwithstanding the reduced number of banks, there is still ample capital for all the legitimate business of the country.

The issue of a National Currency is still bruited, but no action taken. I am glad to chronicle the establishment of a Government Life Insurance system, which ought to have been done years ago.

Already much material progress is apparent in our city. Population is returning. New buildings and widening of streets projected show that new life has been instilled and great expectations formed for the future. Already a mammoth beet sugar factory is being started at Back River, with a capital of a million dollars. Flax mills and attending works are also being arranged for; thus two of our most important products, peculiarly suited to our climate and people, will be developed with the happiest results. Iron works are projected in several places, and our cotton and woollen mills in full blast everywhere. We are glad to record, as the earliest mark of reviving local intelligence, the removal of those relics of barbarism, the toll-gates, from our country roads; already the results are apparent in farmers discarding their fossil one-horse carts and crowding our streets with double teams. A new and handsome passenger depot for the G. T. R. has been commenced at the city limits east, covering ten acres of ground, with offices, engine-house and all the conveniences for conducting their growing business compactly, instead of the present divided and extravagant system. The Victoria Bridge is to be stripped of the tube and a modern iron truss substituted, wide enough to accommodate four railway tracks and a carriage road. A new hotel is to be built on the old Crystal Palace grounds on St. Catherine Street, and still another at the east end, near the Quebec Barrack station. All these improvements have been demanded by the increased travel that is pouring in from the west through the completion of the Toronto and Ottawa Railroad just opened. The City Passenger Railway has changed owners and character, and become, with double tracks and small cars, a real convenience to the public. The Fraser Institute, long famous for not being built, is to be proceeded with. The *scently* environs of Cune-gonde and Henri are to join waterworks, with a reservoir large enough to supply leaks.

The tide of emigration, which had entirely left us or gone to the States for the last two years, is returning, and the prospects are most encouraging that our great North-west will soon teem with life and energy. Thus I have endeavoured succinctly to recite some of the palpable evidences of new prosperity, such as our people never dreamed of under our old tutelage, and we have given the highest proof of our capacity to govern ourselves by the vigour with which we have entered upon our new life, relieved from the incubus which we have long and patiently borne. It would not be just to close this hurried review without referring to the signal service the SPECTATOR has rendered the country during the last two years. Its marked intelligence and well-earned popularity has met its due reward in placing it at the head of the Canadian press.

Amongst the most important measures that will engage the first Parliament will be the reconstruction of our Provincial legislation, with a view of reducing the absurd expenditure under the old system. Instead of eight Local Legislatures, the Lower Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and probably Newfoundland will form one Legislature.

The salary of President is to be \$30,000, and Vice-President \$10,000, who is also to be Speaker of the Senate. The residence of the President will be at Rideau Hall, which is now *supposed* to be finished, and it is to be hoped that the country will not be subject to the costly changes which have hitherto prevailed.

We give the following list of President Macdonald's first Cabinet:—

President of Canada....The Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, P.C., K.C.B.  
Vice-President.....The Hon. Luc Letellier de St. Just.

#### CABINET.

Minister of Justice and Atty.-General.....The Hon. Edward Blake (Premier).  
" Foreign Affairs and Sec. of State " Alex. Mackenzie.  
" Interior..... " L. H. Holton.  
" Finance.....Sir A. T. Galt, K.C.M.G.  
" Militia and Defence.....Sir A. J. Smith.  
" Public Works.....Sir Samuel Tilley, C.B.  
Postmaster General.....Hon. D. Masson.

Messrs. Mowat and Joly retain their present positions as Premiers in their respective Provinces.

Sir John Rose, Bart., has been named as Minister to Great Britain.  
Goldwin Smith, Esq., " " " United States.  
Hon. George Brown " " " France.

Montreal, 1st July, 1881.

Progressed.

#### "ALL THE RAGE."

Emerson, in his attempt to paint the English character, hardly gives importance enough to one strong trait in it. He says, "After running each tendency to an extreme, they try another tack with equal heat." This deserved more emphatic dwelling upon, for it is a most striking characteristic. Our social history is a history of running things to extremes, and then dropping them at once and for all in favour of some fresh fancy or later freak. And this, like all other history, reflects ourselves. We are an impetuous and—if the truth must be told—a fickle people. Both these qualities contrive to drive us to extremes, and to that "other tack" which this implies, since no people can go to extremes without a fidgetty craving for change. The French laugh at the Englishman as one whose tastes are not regulated by taste. Offer him a glass of fine wine, and he wants to sit down and drink a bottle of it. The sip is not enough; the tickling of the palate does not suffice. He must go to extremes—with an inevitable result, that of nausea.

This tendency is particularly shown in the constant rise of fresh objects in public favour, which become, as the phrase goes, "all the rage." It does not at all matter what the nature of the thing may be; every season brings us something which is "all the rage."

As modern instances I might cite the "Pinafore" mania, the "walking-match" craze; and at the risk of being thought unpatriotic I might add the "Hanlan" fever; even our Volunteer movement has been, perhaps, from time to time a little overdone. Another noteworthy example is that of the Rev. Mr. Talmage, who, having had (to say the least of it) an uncomfortable experience in Brooklyn, resolves to travel, and on his arrival in England thousands flock to hear his vulgar jokes; but then as his agent says when asking a hundred pounds for a single lecture, "Perhaps you may consider this a high price, but Mr. Talmage is no ordinary man," &c. &c.

Does not Shakespeare put these words into the mouth of Trinculo in "The Tempest"?—

"A strange fish! Were I in England now, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver; there would this monster make a man: any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian."

Looking back over a few years only, it is curious to note the many objects which have such distinction. Sometimes it is an eccentric actor, like Romeo Coates, who used to be encored in the dying scene when he played in "Romeo and Juliet." Sometimes it is a singer like Jenny Lind, who, though not the greatest singer we have had, took such a hold on public taste that the "Lind fever" has become historical. People crowded to the Opera so on the nights when the Swedish nightingale sang that their clothes were torn from their backs; and it may be mentioned, as a curious effect, that whereas up to her time the ballet was the great attraction, the rage to hear Lind was so great, that it was found unnecessary to supplement the singing with dancing, the ballet was dropped, and it has never been revived as a feature. By way of variety, we had a dwarf "all the rage," and Haydon, the painter, committing suicide because while Tom Thumb drew everybody to his levees, nobody cared for the Art exhibition by which he sought to attract them. A preacher, a conjuror, a Blondin, a new book, a hippopotamus, a new fashion, or an old relic—it matters little what it is, so that by accident or "puff" it can be promoted to the distinction of being "all the rage." Society, which thirty years ago betook itself with a wild enthusiasm to learning "Pop Goes the Weasel" as an indispensable dance at every ball, followed the same instinct when recently it fell a-rinking, and made the fortune of the happy inventor of the best roller-skate!

The latest illustration from England of this tendency to extremes is the reception of the "Comedie Française." It is a good illustration because it includes some of the most absurd features by which a mania can be attended. To begin with, there are probably not two persons in a thousand out of average English society who know the French language enough to converse decently in it. I admit that more English study French and master the ground of it than there are Frenchmen who know anything about English; but a mere smattering, a mere capability of reading a book or asking a few questions is not in this connection of the slightest use. To understand and enjoy the acting of the Comedie Française Company it is necessary to have a complete mastery of the language, so as to relish the slightest inflections and the most delicate of witty playing upon words. This is hardly to be acquired except by those who have either lived in France or have made French a special study. Consequently, there happens the spectacle, night after night, of people sitting in a crowded house, trying to extract from what is going on before them some scrap of amusement or glimmer of intelligent acting to reward their patience. When, as sometimes happens, there is a little broad farce—like a couple of servants running against one another with trays of tea-things and smashing the lot—the roars of laughter are genuine. It is pitiable to think of audiences striving in vain to understand what is going on—wearied and exhausted, and making believe that they are entertained. Their only reward is that next day they can say they have been to the French plays, which sounds very imposing because it implies a knowledge of French, and they are careful *not to say* that they did not understand a word