

petus which the close of a great war always gives, there is a general complaint of high prices throughout Germany. In consequence, emigration continues in an ever-swelling tide.

SPAIN.

The Carlist cause is on its death bed. There is no doubt of the fact. The siege of Bilbao dealt the first mortal stroke. The siege of Irun completed the work of disorganization and demoralization. Not only has the vaunted line of the Ebro been abandoned, but the friendly Basque Provinces have been left to their fate, and the bulk of DON CARLOS' army is hemmed in within the narrow space, at the base of the Pyrenees, which divides the sea shore from the coast of France. Apart altogether from his merits, DON CARLOS has made a gallant stand, but the fates have been against him. It is to be hoped that he will bow to the inevitable, and spare his unfortunate country the shedding of further blood.

ITALY.

The recent elections in Italy have strengthened the hands of the Government and left the MINGHETTI-SELLA administration free to introduce or enforce their measures of financial reform. This is the one need of Italy. It is preliminary to the stability of her unity, and the harmonious union of all her population. Considering the heterogeneity of her people, with their different dynastic predilections, the work of Italian autonomy is herculean, and the friend of humanity can only hope that it will be prosecuted successfully.

THE DEATH ROLL.

Our space does not allow us to extend our review to other parts of the globe. We must close our retrospect study by an enumeration of the illustrious dead who were called to their account in the course of the year 1874. First stands the name of AGASSIZ, the chief naturalist of the century, the great successor of CUVIER, the founder of ichthyological research. Americans have to deplore the loss of ex-President FILLMORE, Judge NELSON, the poet John Edgar THOMPSON, and Chas. SUMNER, the notable but overrated statesman. England chronicles the loss of the diplomat VAN DE WEYER, the sculptor Baron TINGUETTI, and the antiquarian Howard STAUNTON. France mourns one truly great man, GUIZOT, and a prince of literateurs, Jules JANIN. Spain had a hero of the Cid order in old Marshal CONCHA, whose death on the field of battle will furnish the theme for many a future ballad and lyric.

In a recent editorial on the Representation of Minorities, we cited instances of very slender majorities ruling a country and shaping its policy for years. The article has attracted some attention and other papers have been enumerating similar cases. The examples cited by the *Chicago InterOcean* are certainly remarkable. One vote in the city of New York returned a republican member of the assembly, which made a majority in the Legislature of that State for Thomas Jefferson, and gave him the vote of New York without which he could not have been elected. The whole policy of the United States during the Jefferson and Madison administrations, a period of sixteen years, hung on that vote. One vote elected Marcus Morton governor of Massachusetts, in an aggregate popular vote of nearly 100,000. One vote elected Wm. Allan, in the Chillicothe district to congress in the year 1834, and one vote subsequently made him United States senator for six years afterward. The following case of the kind is still more remarkable: In 1830, Dan Stone of Cincinnati was a candidate for the State Legislature. Walking up Main street, on the morning of the election, he overtook an acquaintance going to the polls, who intended to vote the opposition ticket. Stone solicited his vote. "We are old friends," said he, "and I know you will show an old friend that mark of kindness." Party spirit was then comparatively

quiet. The voter replied; "Well, Dan, you are a pretty clever fellow. I don't care if I do." That one vote elected Stone, and gave a majority of one to the legislature, which made Thomas Ewing United States senator. Mr. Ewing's vote on the question of confirming the appointment of Martin Van Buren as minister plenipotentiary to great Britain enabled the vice-president to give the casting vote against it, and made Mr. Van Buren first vice-president and then president, and determined the general political policy of the country for four years.

Supplementary to a late article of ours, on Labor and Capital, we may cite the following statistics from recent works bearing on this subject:—In 1829 the Manchester spinners struck. They lost \$1,250,000 in wages before the dispute was at an end. The next year their brethren at Ashton and Staleybridge followed their example in striking and losing \$1,250,000. In 1833 the builders of Manchester forfeited \$360,000 by voluntary idleness. In 1836 the spinners of Preston threw away \$286,000. Eighteen years afterwards their successors, seventeen thousand strong, slowly starved through thirty-six weeks, and paid \$2,100,000 for the privilege. In 1853 the English iron-workers lost \$215,000 by a strike. Such losses marked, too, the strike of the London builders in 1860 and tailors in 1868, and the northern iron workers in 1865. The strike of the Belfast linen weavers, which was ended a few weeks since by the mediation of the British Association for the Advancement of Societies, cost the operatives \$1,000,000. In France, efficient and enlightened means have been used to prevent strikes and satisfy the workmen. The State long since established courts of arbitration for the settlement of labor quarrels. They are composed of six members, chosen by employers and employed, and a President and Vice President, who must belong to neither class. Mr. Thomas Brassy, in his 'Work and Wages,' says of these courts: 'The result in 95 out of 100 cases brought before these tribunals is a reconciliation between the parties; and though appeals are permitted to the superior courts of law, they are rarely made. In 1870, 28,000 disputes had been heard, of which no less than 26,800 were satisfied.'

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

CHRISTMAS TIDE.

I.

Christmas comes but once a year, and when it comes it brings good cheer, or, at any rate, it ought to; for at what period of the year are we more inclined to enjoy ourselves than the time when, schools having broken up for the Christmas holidays, all the youngsters come trooping home with the tales of battle, conquest, and defeat of the preceding "half," when families, the members of which, perhaps, have no opportunity of seeing one another for the rest of the year, manage by various stratagems to meet once more round the old fireside, which once saw them as they now behold their children, young, bright, rosy, and buoyant, with little or no care for the morrow? The only shadow across their path is the recollection of a certain day which is fixed for their return to "labour and to strife," or, in other words, to the series of morning lessons, play hours, and evening studies, which constitute school life. How thoroughly they enter into any scheme for amusement; what enthusiasts are they in every fresh idea; how knowingly the youngsters tell their elder brothers, just verging into "incipient moustache and stand-up collar" days, that they are regular bricks, and think themselves no muffs either. Then the expectation of the Christmas tree, that cornucopia of pleasure! But this is anticipation. We are but now beginning to make our calculations as to how much we shall be able to spare for our own and our children's amusement. The Civil Service clerk is now waxing eloquent over the distribution of "that bonus." Ah! he thinks, what a little the Ministry know of our requirements, how little they imagine the depths of anxiety into which some of us are plunged. If they did, would not the stoutest heart amongst them melt with sympathy—would they not instantly come to a settlement of the bonus—would not each of them subscribe a thousand dollars from their salaries to augment the fund, and buy up all the turkeys in the market to send to the homes of the clerks in their departments? He is quite sure they would do this, but he fancies they are afraid of hurting the feelings of their subordinates.

The forlorn bachelor bethinks himself what he will do on the eventful day, when those of his friends and acquaintances who are lucky enough (?) to possess wives and children, shut themselves up in their domiciles, and luxuriate in the bosom of their families. Any one from the Old Country who has passed a Christmas in the most delightful manner it can be passed, namely, in some country hall or "seat" in one of the shires of England, at the very mention of the word Christmas goes off at once into a long and pleasant reverie, which when it terminates leaves him a very miserable and home-sick man. Alas! Well do I remember the old house where all my Christmases were spent before I ventured "in foreign lands to stray." From the moment I drove up to the door in a vehicle resembling nothing on earth save a cross between Noah's ark and a family hearse, to the moment I drove off again six weeks afterwards in the same machine to reach the nearest railway station, some eight or nine miles distant, all was jollity, fun, and excitement. I can imagine it now. As I jump off the box, where a love of gymnastics and danger had placed me, I see my mother at the door; three bounds and I am in her arms, I am wept over, and laughed over, as though I had just returned from the antipodes, then I am free again for a moment, and I see my father waiting for me, a grasp from his hearty hand, and a loud and cheery "How are you, Charlie, old fellow,"—my father always called me old fellow when he was pleased with me. Then a rush from my sisters and little brothers, which nearly takes me off my legs, and a general and indiscriminate kissing and a dozen questions in a breath, none of which, I am sorry to say, I ever thought it necessary to answer, as I might commit myself in assertions which, perhaps, might not suit my plan of the campaign. Then off wraps and comforters, and everything that impedes my action, a race out of the door to follow my father to the stables to see my favourite "Stella," and the rest of the day spent in scampering about the old house and grounds, to see the familiar places made dear to me by many a well-remembered incident. In a day or two my elder brother comes from London, where he has been dissipating, and the house begins to fill with visitors and relations from all parts of the country.

II.

To-morrow is Christmas. We all sit round the fire after a heavy day's sport, recounting our adventures, telling proverbial ghost-stories, and working ourselves as near a fit of insanity as is possible, till at last we are all so frightened with the grisly spectres and ghastly apparitions which we have conjured up before us during the evening, that after sitting like mice for five minutes, that seem like hours, the old clock outside suddenly runs down in a most unearthly manner, and commences to strike twelve. The sudden sound elicits an involuntary yell from all the younger members of the party, and the elders seem to have forgotten something by the spasmodic way in which they bound to their feet, and then, ashamed of being so betrayed by the youngsters, sundry cuffs and scoldings are distributed promiscuously around, one accidentally falling on the ear of a younger brother, who, having been fast asleep for the last two hours, imagines himself attacked by some dream-monster, begins to kick and scream terribly, which, affecting the shins of the party, scatters them right and left, and these horrifying the ears brings him a shaking for making such a noise. This has, however, broken up the party, and we all prepare to go to bed, so as to be in good time for the next morning. It is some time before any one moves, nobody wishing to be the first to explore the long passages and echoing halls after the soul-stirring legends we have been listening to. At last, however, the lead is taken, and as every one is anxious not to be left last in the hall, there is nearly a block in the wide old staircase. So we all go to bed. Not to sleep, though, for we have most of us made up our minds to see a ghost. I know I have, and also to heroically clear up the mystery of its murder. For, of course, the original was murdered, perhaps in the very room I am sleeping in, for by this time I am in bed. What a thought! I involuntarily put my head under the bed-clothes, and break out into a cold perspiration. I can now understand why so many people get married. I wonder if there are any trap-doors or sliding panels in the room. I wish the wind would not moan down the chimney so. Perhaps the dead body was hidden up the chimney, and if the wind was much higher it may come sliding down into the room. However, after another hour of mortal agony, I think I must have gone to sleep; not that I recollect doing so; I was ready to swear I did not sleep a wink all the night, but the fact of my waking up in the morning involved the necessity of my having done so. Then out of bed I jump, rush to the window to see what sort of weather we are to have for Christmas, and finding everything white with glistening snow, at once go into ecstasies of delight.

III.

Then the breakfast. What a glorious reunion—what a happy gathering! It serves the purpose of a general parade; everybody is present, all our intended visitors have arrived, and we can now look forward to a fortnight or three weeks of complete enjoyment. After breakfast those who like make up a party for the village church some two miles distant across the fields; others, generally the young people, make up a skating party; others go for a tramp, and everybody seems to be able to find something suitable to his taste. Off we go, I with the skaters, with

many an injunction from the "venerables," who stop at home, "to be sure and make certain that the ice is strong enough," and "not to go too far away from one another," which of course we all faithfully promise, without, I am afraid, giving them another thought until our return. I make myself particularly agreeable to a pretty cousin, and what with one thing and another we all enjoy ourselves immensely until dusk, when, out of respect to the numerous sprites, hobgoblins, and fairies, who generally take their afternoon walk about that time, we all make a rush and a scramble for home. And now comes the awful period which is set aside for dinner—Christmas dinner, mind you, not an ordinary, every-day dinner—but that awful Scriptural and holy rite of Christmas dinner, with all its accessories, not forgetting the plum-pudding, which makes its appearance completely enveloped in the blue flame which proves its extraction from fairy-land. Who is there that does not tremble at this awful apparition—if not at the actual presence, still at the effects which parents know so well how to anticipate with nameless condiments? And then the dreadful and all-pervading anguish (?) which rises from the lungs of the little ones, as the pompous butler, self-important from the value of his burden, deposits it steaming and flaming on the board. Is that not enough to shake the nerves of stronger people than those who have been expending their energies on the preceding courses?

IV.

Then after dinner, when everybody has eaten as much as he could, and quite as much as was good for him, and drank, perhaps, more, then away, with a shout like a view-holloa from those most particularly interested, to strip the branches of the tree of all trees. Is not this simple act sufficient to occupy a philosopher for the entire evening? Is not one single instance of this lottery a complete picture of the failure of the best-laid plans of one in the outside world? See, yonder chubby boy of five years has drawn a silk embroidered cigar-case, which I have reason to believe was worked by a certain young lady with the intention that my brother should draw it, while the brother aforesaid has drawn a sugar cradle with twins in it. And so it goes on. The ball-room with its dancing winding up with dear old "Sir Roger" (not the Claimant, but "de Coverly"), the story-telling, and the nut-cracking, the card-playing, and the usual amusements, which, however enjoyable at other times, seem to take new features and assume new interest during the reign of jolly old "Father Christmas." There are certain sad recollections, too, combined with all this pleasure. You look amongst the crowd, and miss some well-known face, which perhaps added considerably to your enjoyment but one short year ago. In that house you had spent every Christmas that you had seen, and you had around you all whom you then held dear on earth. Your mother's loving look, your father's proud glance, the pressure of your well-loved sisters and brothers, relieved you of any and every care. But what a change is now! Will you see them all again this Christmas? Will your father once again greet you at the door? Will your mother's arms once more encircle your neck, and the joyous laugh of sisters welcome you back to the old house which you love so well? Alas, no—they are far away, some, perhaps, dead and others dying, some, perhaps, fighting the hard fight for life and existence, as you are yourself, and some, perhaps, so changed in love that they are as good as dead to you. That is the most unhappy thought of all. Perhaps by some rash act of your own you have estranged your family, and you stand out a stranger and uncared for, alone in the wide world. Or, again, you may have emigrated to a new country, to a new climate; you may have formed a new home for yourself, and created new household gods, and the scenes of your later life, although not surrounded by that mystic halo through which we view the days of our youth, may still present an aspect as dear to our hearts. And as we look back through all the long years which have flown since our last experience of an English Christmas in our father's house, our hearts gradually warm to all around us, and, with kindly remembrances of the past, and warm hopes for the future, we wish everybody "A merrie, merrie Christmas."

C. C.

HUMOUROUS.

BEN BUTLER wants to know if the newspapers have got through.

THEY don't bury coloured people in Georgia. They form de funeral obsequies, sah.

WHAT is the largest room in the world? The room for improvement.

A CLIENT is never certain about a lawyer, and generally takes him on trial.

LADIES should remember to keep their mouths shut when going out of a warm room into the cool air. In fact, it wouldn't hurt anything to keep them shut most of the time.

THE Milwaukee *Sentinel* has procured a new proof-reader, and says that neatly arranged on his desk are the silver plates of fourteen of his predecessors. The new man was doing well at last accounts.

A MILESIAN having returned to his native land, was asked to give an illustration of American enterprise. Made answer the Irishman—"If a Yankee was shipwrecked on an uninhabited island, the following morning he would be selling newspapers to all the inhabitants."

THE editor of a country journal in New York thus appeals to the better nature of his delinquent subscribers—"To all those who are in arrears one year or more, who will forward and pay up, we will give them a first-class obituary notice gratis in case it kills them."