

MEN OF THE HOUR.

PRESIDENT ARTHUR.

Chester Allan Arthur, the new President of the United States, is a native of Vermont. He was born in Franklin County, in that State, in 1830, and graduated with high honors at Union College in 1848. His father was a Baptist clergyman, and came to the United States from the County of Antrim, Ireland, when only eighteen years of age. After General Arthur's election to the Vice-Presidency an attempt was made to show that he had been born in Canada and was consequently, ineligible to his high office. A large mass of evidence was produced upon either side, but it was conclusively proved that Mr. Arthur was born in Vermont. It appears that in the old family bible the record of the President's birth reads: "Chester Allan Arthur, born in Fairfield, Franklin County, Vt., Oct. 5, 1830." It has also been shown that General Arthur was named after Dr. Chester Abell, who was at the time of the President's birth the Arthur family doctor at Fairfield. Many of the old inhabitants of that out-of-the-way place were under the impression that the President's second name is Abell, not Allan, but it appeared upon further investigation that Allan was one of the names of his paternal grandfather.

After leaving Union College young Arthur determined to adopt the legal profession. He immediately began to study law; but his necessities compelled him to earn money, and he accepted the position of principal of an academy in his native State. In 1853 he came to New York and entered the law office of E. D. Culver as a student. He was admitted to the bar in the same year and thenceforward followed the profession with marked success. In the early part of his business career he became attorney for the State of New York in a suit involving the right of a Virginian slave-owner to bring eight of his slaves to New York for reshipment to Texas. On the petition of a free colored man, Judge Elijah Paine, of the Superior Court of this city, gave the slaves their freedom. The case was taken to the higher Courts, and the Legislature of Virginia assigned eminent counsel to conduct the appeal. Chester A. Arthur was thereupon authorized to appear in the matter as attorney for the State of New York, and the decision of Judge Paine was sustained by the Supreme Court and finally affirmed by the Court of Appeals. This historical case prevented slaveholders from attempting thereafter to use New York as a mart for the transfer of their "chattels." Soon after this decision had been reached a respectable colored woman, who superintended a Sunday school, while on her way home from her duties, was forcibly ejected from a Fourth Avenue car after having paid her



CHESTER A. ARTHUR,
THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

fare. Mr. Arthur, then in partnership with Culver & Parker, took up her case and recovered five hundred dollars damages from the railroad company. This decision put a stop to the exclusion of colored people from the street cars and was the occasion of much rejoicing among the colored population of the city.

Mr. Arthur took an active part in politics in 1856. He was a Henry Clay Whig and was prominent for so young a man in the formation of the Republican party. He was elected a delegate to the Saratoga Convention in 1856 and there came in contact with ex-Governor Edwin D. Morgan, who was impressed with his efficiency as a politician. A warm friendship sprang up between the two men and has continued undisturbed to the present moment. Morgan being elected Governor for the second term in 1860, he tendered Arthur the position of Engineer in Chief on his staff, and the offer was accepted. When the war of the Rebellion broke out, General Arthur was still filling that office, and he was at once detailed to perform the duties of Quartermaster-General. His vigor, industry and executive ability were valuable in the difficult work of quartermaster, sustaining equipping and transporting the New York quota of the Union army. The magnitude of the task cannot at this time be easily conceived. War was a novelty then; the details of preparation were mysteries to every civilian, and there was but scant time for thought, hesitation or experiment. A stern reality stared the nation in the face, and it required extraordinary nerve, steadiness and energy to meet the emergency. It is now well known that, in the Herculean labor of suddenly sending forward our own troops, and, at the same time, quartermaster and sustaining the troops of other States passing through New York, not a dollar was misappropriated or wasted, and to the honor of General Arthur it may be stated that his accounts were audited and allowed by the United States Government without the alteration of a single figure. In all his transactions during a season of lax morality, extravagance and temptation, when contractors were doing their best to corrupt all public officials, General Arthur's sterling integrity carried him through without the slightest shadow of suspicion resting upon his honor. He performed at once the duties of Adjutant-General, Engineer-in-Chief, Quartermaster-General and Inspector-General of the State, and his personal courage was instrumental in putting a speedy stop to the insubordination manifested by Billy Wilson's regiment, Ellsworth's Zouaves and other bodies while in the city. His efforts were not relaxed until the close of the war and the suppression of the rebellion.

After the reestablishment of peace, General Arthur again associated himself actively with



THE EXHIBITION AT MONTREAL.—SKETCHES IN THE HORSE RING.