

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1873.

The debate on the Address was of an extreme partisan character, and, as such, not on a level with the important questions at issue. But it was relieved, nevertheless, by the speeches of several independent men, who boldly pursued that course in words which we have endeavoured to follow in writing. They studied the evidence of the Royal Commission carefully and impartially, and they came to the conclusion that while the main charge was not proven, sufficient was elicited to lay the Government open to blame and censure. Having formed this opinion, these gentlemen did not conceal it, neither did they shirk the responsibility of expressing it. We hail such conduct as a good omen. It is an example which will produce beneficial results. The present crisis is the most seasonable opportunity to burst asunder the fetters of party, and assert one's political independence. The Opposition have conducted the campaign, during the whole summer, in such an ignominious manner, that they really present no better record than their adversaries. Both parties are heavily charged with questionable acts, which weigh them down as so many incubi. Prominent men on either side, especially those who have been in public life a number of years, have rendered themselves obnoxious and forfeited a large share of popular confidence. The times point to younger men and new leaders. The two parties—Conservative and Liberal—must survive, because they represent two necessary phases of national policy. But they must be remodelled. The effects of debate, the ancient rancours, the personal complications of past years, must be thrown aside. A fresh start should be made, with a clear, well-defined and purely patriotic programme. There has already been question of a union of moderate men, such as we suggested, weeks ago, and spite of the derision of strict party organs, we are of opinion that it will yet be formed. The indications are that the new and minor provinces of the Dominion will claim a full share in shaping the future policy of the country. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are strangers to the petty strifes which have agitated Upper and Lower Canada so long and they will insist that these contentions shall no longer be made the criterions of party allegiance as they have been up to date. Manitoba, British Columbia, and Prince Edward Island are likewise entitled to figure in our councils. They hold the balance of power in their hands. Let them exert that power towards this much needed consummation. The press, throughout all the provinces, should also exert its potential influence. Independent journalism is destined to do a work in Canada, and that work will also be found profitable. The example of the United States press is there to point an encouragement. The very best papers of the chief cities, sick unto death, of party warfare, have boldly run up the ensign of independence and in each case, they have been liberally rewarded for the venture. We need only instance the *N. Y. Tribune* and *Daily Graphic*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Cincinnati Commercial*, *St. Louis Republican*, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, *Boston Globe*, and *Springfield Republican*. These papers rank as the most authoritative in the United States and they are the best paid. It will certainly take time to get out of our routine and to lose our narrow affection for mere parish politics, but as the country grows its ideas must expand, and the very necessities of its national existence will force a healthful change.

The situation in France has undergone an abrupt change. At the last moment, when all the plans of fusion were perfected and the way to a Monarchical restoration seemed clear the Count de Chambord issued a manifest in which he distinctly states that he must adhere to the white flag and maintain, without shadow of compromise, all the principles of pure, undefiled legitimism. His adherents on learning his determination, tried every means to alter his resolution, but he was inexorable and the consequence is that, for the present, all hopes of bringing Henry V. to the throne of France, have been abandoned. The Right, in order to make the most of the altered circumstances have agreed to vote, at the next meeting of the Assembly, for a prolongation of Marshal MacMahon's term of office and for the indefinite sitting of the Assembly itself. This is virtually retaining the present provisional system so distasteful to the majority of the people of France, with the view of gaining time and maturing other arrangements. That the Republicans have thus gained a most material point is unquestionable. They too have no objection to the prolongation of Marshal MacMahon's term, but they will strive to have the present National Assembly dissolved on the plea that it does not represent the state of feeling in France, and they will insist on having the present Parliamentary vacancies filled. There will therefore be no crisis in France, at the next meeting of the Assembly on the 13th, and this is a matter for congratulation inasmuch as it will give further time for popular opinion to manifest and declare itself.

"IRONCLADS" are discussed in these days sufficiently to satisfy the most ardent constructor. "Iron Ships" have lately come in for a certain share of study, and with what must be

considered rather poor results, so far as the matter has hitherto gone. Certain grave and reverend seigniors forming a Royal Commission in the metropolis of the Empire have come to the conclusion that whatever the faults now chiefly prevailing amongst that Iron Fleet to which so many thousand poor emigrants commit their lives and their future, the government should not attempt to regulate the quality of iron or the mode of construction, "because it would be an interference with the maritime commerce of the country." These maritime Solons, who would doubtless not like to be made chargeable with all the lives lost in some future "Atlantic," have happened to light upon one of the crucial and truly representative questions of the politics of this present time, a question that gentle and simple alike will soon be learning to understand. We believe it may go hard with the government that appointed these gentlemen if this remarkable recommendation be allowed to prevail, even for a time. Mr. Plimsoll and Mr. Reed, it may be hoped, will form a powerful alliance in the interest of the people, and also make the whole movement a constructive one, and by no means content themselves with pointing out existing defects, but enable us all to understand fully what the ship of the future ought to be. They have our hearty, if humble, good wishes whatever success may attend their efforts. The following is a condensation of the facts at present affecting this national and Imperial question, which we have extracted from a contemporary: "The Royal Commission which was appointed in the spring, when public indignation ran high on account of Mr. Plimsoll's allegations respecting the unsoundness of British registered ships, has rendered a report. Amongst the witnesses called before the commissioners was Mr. Reed, so long connected with the construction of the Royal navy. He declared that there is a steady degeneration in the iron employed in ship building, and other competent witnesses state that many merchant ships are built with bad iron, that they are ill put together, and sent to sea in a defective condition. They were said, too, to be frequently lengthened without receiving additional strength, and, in consequence, were weak ships, yet the commissioners object to any attempt on the part of the government to regulate the quality of the iron, or the mode of construction, as an interference with the maritime commerce of the country. In fact the conclusions of the report are almost unanimously pronounced disappointing, and will not raise Royal commissions in popular estimation.

(For the Canadian Illustrated News.)

ALL HALLOW EVEN.

In the ancient calendar of the Church of Rome there is the following observation:

"Festum Stultorum veterum huc translatum est."

"The feast of all fools is removed to this day."

Hallow Even is the vigil of All Saints' day.

It is still customary on this night with young people, more particularly if they hail from the north of England or Scotland, to dive for apples, catch at them when stuck at one end of a kind of hanging beam, at the other extremity of which is fixed a lighted candle, and that with their mouths only, having their hands tied behind their backs. The catching at the apples puts one in mind of the ancient English game of the *quintain*, which is now almost forgotten, and of which a description may be found in Stow's Survey of London. Strutt, in his "Sports and Pastimes" gives a detailed account of the tilting or combating at the quintain, "a military exercise of high antiquity and antecedent." The Quintain was placed upon a pivot and so contrived as to move round with great facility. At one end was placed a figure of a Turk or Saracen armed at all points, bearing a shield upon his left arm, and brandishing a club or sabre with his right. In running at this figure it was necessary for the horse-man to direct his lance with great adroitness, and make his stroke upon the forehead between the eyes or upon the nose; for if he struck wide of those parts, especially upon the shield, the quintain turned about with much velocity, and, in case he was not exceedingly careful, would give him a severe blow on the back with the wooden sabre or club held in the right hand, which was considered as highly disgraceful to the performer, while it excited the laughter and derision of the people.

There is a peculiar "nut custom" on this night which is beautifully described by Gay in his "Spell":—

Two hazel nuts I threw into the flame,
And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name:
This with the loudest bounce the sors amax'd,
That in a flame of brightest colour blaz'd:
As blaz'd the nut so may thy passion grow, &c.

The Roman boys had some sport or other with nuts, to which Horace refers in these words:—

"—Te talos Aule nucisque."

In the ancient Romish calendar (on the 10th of August) we find some religious use was made of them, and they were in great estimation.

"Nucis in pretio et religiose."

Mr. Pennant tells us in his "Tour in Scotland," that the young women there determine the figure and size of their husbands by drawing cabbages blindfold on All-Hallow-Even, and like the English fling nuts in the fire.

The Rev. Mr. Shaw, in his history of Moray, seems to consider the feativity of the night as a kind of harvest home rejoicing. "A solemnity was kept," says he, "on the eve of the first of November as a thanksgiving for the safe ingathering of the produce of the fields. This I am told, but have not seen it, is observed in Buchan, and other countries, by having Hallow-Eve fires kindled on some rising ground." In an appendix to his work he further says: "On Hallow-even, they have several superstitious customs."

To our minds the idea of making the eve of the Festival of

* This paper was unavoidably crowded out of our last number.

All Saints, a day celebrated by both the Roman and Anglican churches a harvest thanksgiving is more appropriate than the fooleries of ducking for apples, and the spell of eating an apple before a looking glass, with the view of discovering the inquirer's future husband, who it is believed will be soon peeping over the lassie's shoulder. Or the unhalloved rite of wetting a shirt-sleeve and hanging it up by the fire to dry, and lying in bed till midnight, when the apparition of the individual's future partner for life will come in and turn the sleeve—a practice to which Burns alludes in one of his songs:—

The last Halloween I was waukin',
My dronkit sark-sleeve, as ye ken;
His likeness cam' up the house stankin',
And the very gray brooks o' Tam Glen.

A thanksgiving day in the olden time was a day of rejoicing, or a day for rejoicing, and properly so, when the fruits of the earth are gathered in, and when in some of the country places in England a plentiful supper for the harvest-men, and the servants of the family when they all sat at the same table, conversing freely together and spending the remaining part of the evening in dancing and singing, without any difference or distinction.

The old Jewish feast of Tabernacles was a time of returning thanks to God for the success of the harvest, a time of festivity, and joy, and gladness.—Deuteronomy xvi.

Why not have the festival of All Saints set apart as a Day of General Thanksgiving—if it was so dedicated and observed it would not be felt incommensurate to the commonwealth. Let the day be kept throughout all generations as holy; "severed," as Hooker says, "by manifest notes of difference from other times, adorned with that which most may betoken true, virtuous, and celestial joy." Let all the Churches in due consideration consecrate voluntarily unto the religious use of thanksgiving this day, and let the people cheerfully and willingly accept it as such. It would be infinitely better than having separate days for so good a work capriciously appointed by each sect or church, or the rulers of each Province. Thus saith the Scripture:—"Thou shalt observe the feast of Tabernacles seven days, after thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine, and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou and thy son and thy daughter, and thy man servant, and thy maid servant; and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widows that are within thy gates."

LONDON MEMORIES.

Somebody once held that London was bounded on the north by Piccadilly, on the south by Pall Mall, on the west by St. James's street, and on the east by the Haymarket. And the wit had a meaning in his description. But London is more extensive than this. Out of the 3,500 streets which compose the territory known as London, a vast number, at least of those having a respectable age, are consecrated by some event which makes them dear to those who cherish memories of past generations. Exclusive of the city proper, there are innumerable streets and houses made sacred in connection with men and women who have become illustrious. It is regarded as an evidence of the refinement of continental nations that they honour the memory of an eminent fellow-citizen by the erection of a memorial on the house of his birth or in memory of his death. Thus in rambling through Boulogne we read, "Ici est mort l'Auteur de Gil Blas," in Geneva, "Ici est né Jean Jacques Rousseau." Were the custom observed among ourselves, the number of houses thus distinguished would be great indeed. One by one they disappear; but enough are left to gratify the curiosity of the antiquary as well as the student of human nature. The other day we alluded to the demolition of Maidenland, Covent Garden, as an instance of the sweeping effect of time upon places historically interesting, and every day adds to the catalogue. A glance at the history of London in the handbooks will show that were we to mark each house wherein eminent persons have lived, the number of tablets would have to be greater than might at first be supposed. Fleet-street and Ch.apside would have a goodly number. Keats wrote his sonnet on Chapman's "Hower" in the second floor of No. 71, Ch.apside; Sir Thomas Moore was born in Milk-street, and Milton in Bread-street, Ch.apside. Dr. Johnson completed his dictionary in the garret of No. 17, Gough-square, Fleet-street, and died at No. 8 Bolt-court. Goldsmith, who lived for some time in Wine Office-court, died at No. 2, Brick-court, Temple. Locke dates the dedication of his "Essay on the Human Understanding" from Dorset-court. If we go west or east of Temple Bar, we shall find mementoes of departed greatness crowding before us. Peter the Great lived on the site of the last house on the west side of Buckingham-street, Strand; in Hartshorne-lane, just by, Ben Jonson first saw the light. Further on, in 24, Arlington-street, Piccadilly, Horace Walpole was born. Were the practice to which illusion has been made pursued in London, a slab would have to be let into the front wall of No. 16, Holles-street, Cavendish square, as the birthplace of Byron. Another would have to be placed on No. 43, Gerrard-street, Soho, to mark it as the deathplace of John Dryden. In No. 27 off the same street, Edmund Burke lived for some time. Sterne died at 41, Old Bond-street. During the struggle for Catholic Emancipation, Daniel O'Connell lived in 29 Bury-street; in 27 of the same street, Tom Moore resided, and in 37 the poet Crabbe. Gibbon composed his defence of the "Decline and Fall" at No. 7, Manchester-street; Byron, who spent his short married life at 139, Piccadilly, wrote his "Lara" in the room of the Albany 2A, facing Saville-row. Sir Isaac Newton made several interesting discoveries at his residence in St. Martin-street, Leicester square, where his observatory is still to be seen at the top of the house. This square is noted also for having been the residence of Sir Joshua Reynolds, on the west side, and Hogarth on the east. Were we to celebrate foreigners as well as our own countrymen, the list of persons to be honoured would be indefinite. To name a few,—Handel died in Brook-street, Hanover square, and Weber at 91, Upper Portland-street; Joseph and Lucien Bonaparte lived, while in London, at 23 Park crescent, Portland-place; Charles X. of France, at 72 South Audley-street; Louis Philippe's last London lodging was Cox's Hotel, Jermyn-street; and the Emperor Napoleon III's, No. 3 King-street, St. James's. Philip Egalité resided at 31 south street, Grosvenor-square; Madame de Staël, at 30 Argyll-street, Regent-street; Talleyrand was located for a while at the House of the French Embassy, then on the north side of Manchester-square; M. Guizot lived at 21 Pelham crescent; and Don Carlos, grandfather to the present prince of the name, at 5 Welbeck-street.