

SOLDIERS' RECREATION AND SMOKING ROOMS,  
HALIFAX.

The Soldiers' Club, or as it is now called, Recreation Rooms, was instituted in 1863, in a building at the junction of Gottingen and Cogswell Streets and midway between the Royal Artillery and Engineer Barracks, Citadel and Wellington Barracks. This Building had been formerly used as public offices, which were vacated for a house more convenient to headquarters. The patrons were the Earl of Mulgrave, Lieut.-Governor, and Major-Gen. H. Doyle, who took a warm interest in carrying out the working of the institute.

The management is carried on by a committee of officers, consisting of a Field Officer President (at present Lieut.-Col. Smith, R.E.), and one officer from each corps as members. Capt. Nagle, Town Major, is at present Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, and Mr. Huggins, late of the Royal Artillery, Manager, assisted by three men from the regiments in garrison, who reside on the premises.

The first secretary, Major Evans, 16th Regiment, before submitting the present Rules for the sanction of the Major-General, had got copies of Rules then in use in institutes at Woolwich, Gibraltar, Isle of Wight, &c., from which he selected such as were most applicable, together with those suggested by the managing committee, which are now those in use as per blue book. They have worked well and are quite a success, having been framed to suit the tastes and requirements of both soldiers and sailors. The refreshments consist of tea, coffee, lemonade, ginger beer, ginger ale, and Bass's pale ale and stout, Keith's ale and porter, light sherry and port wines in wood, biscuit, cheese, bread, butter, &c., all at nearly cost price. The subscription from all ranks is 4d per month; each member has a card signed by the secretary, and by returning his card becomes a non-subscriber. The number of subscribers at present is 800, and the credits last quarter were nearly \$1,200, after defraying all expenses. Each member receives note paper, &c., free, and there is a writing room on the premises coupled with the reading room, where all the leading gazettes and papers are taken in, together with the *Canadian Illustrated News* and local papers. The games consist of bowling alleys (2) and skittle alley (English), Bagatelle table, Cirri (Mississippi) table, chess, draughts, dominoes, cribbage, whist, &c. Playing for money is strictly forbidden. Attached to the institute is a spacious gymnasium and theatre with apparatus and scenery complete,—built by the aid of subscription and profits of the institute. This the men of the garrison take a great delight in. Every part of the building is well lighted with gas. There is an instructor (staff sergeant) in gymnastics, paid by the Imperial Government, with two assistants in the winter, to put squads through the course, furnished from the regiments in garrison. The institute is open for regiments—week days from 10 a. m. to 10.30 p. m., and on Sundays from 4 p. m. to 10.30 p. m. It is a well-known fact that for the small garrison, comparatively speaking, it is about the most flourishing of any that have been established for the welfare of the soldier. The gymnasium also affords spacious room for quadrille parties, one of which we have every week, given by the Royal Artillery, and one from each regiment; also reading, music, singing, &c., by the 60th Rifles every Tuesday evening.

## THE FIRE AT GARTH'S METAL WORKS, MONTREAL.

Between one and two o'clock on the morning of Wednesday week a fire broke out in Garth's metal works, in Craig Street, which at one time bid fair to have the most disastrous results, owing to the deficient supply of water. On the previous day the water, which for some days had been alarmingly low in the reservoir, was still lower, and in order to save the little that remained, at an early hour in the evening it was completely shut off from the lower levels of the city. It was when the water was so shut off that the fire was discovered, and before the water could reach the main in Craig street, the ten or fifteen minutes so precious to the experienced fireman had elapsed, and the flames, which could easily have been put out at their birth, raged unchecked. The alarm was struck at about twenty-five minutes to two, and although the engines turned out immediately nothing could be done for fully twenty minutes, and even then the pressure was too weak to allow of their doing much to stay the progress of the flames. Even when the full force of water was felt, so little of the precious fluid was there in the reservoir that the pressure did not exceed 43 lbs. to the square inch, instead of the usual 80 lbs. With such streams as they had the men dashed into the building from every side, and the fire was quickly got under and quickly extinguished. To say that the men worked well is to convey but a faint idea of the gallant manner in which they attacked their foe as soon as they had the means of doing so. In one case the men of the stations had got so far into the interior of the second storey, extinguishing the fire as they went, that it was not until the cracking of the beams above their heads gave them warning that something was coming down, when they backed out, and had hardly reached the ladder at the window when the roof fell in with a terrific crash, bringing with it the flooring and heavy machinery of the third and fourth flats. Another company who were on the roof and another on the third flat, had a similar narrow escape. Our illustration, from a sketch taken on the spot, shows a party of these intrepid men at work on a ladder in front of a window on the top story.

In connection with this subject it may not be out of place to quote the testimony of the Lieut.-Governor of Nova Scotia to the courage and intrepid daring of Canadian firemen. Sir Hastings Doyle writes to the firemen of Halifax handing them a supply of books as a contribution to their library. In his letter he says: "For many years after my first arrival here, when the troops were frequently called upon to assist in extinguishing the fires in the city, I always accompanied them, and had many opportunities of witnessing the acts 'of pluck' and daring that the men of the Fire Brigade exhibited in the performance of their arduous and frequently very dangerous duties, which has always caused me to entertain a very high opinion of them; and I had very great pleasure in making known these sentiments to Prince Arthur, who expressed himself in terms of high admiration of so fine a body of men, when they paraded before Government House to do honour to His Royal Highness during the period of his visit to me. The firemen of Montreal emulate their brethren of Halifax; and we hope the latter are never compelled to work with as short supply of water as those of Montreal have been this winter."

## GUERCINO'S "SEMIRAMIS."

"Semiramide risponde al nunzio: 'La mia bellezza calmera la sedizione;'" Semiramis replied to the messenger (who came, breathless and frightened, to announce to his royal mistress an uprising of her subjects): "The sight of my beauty will quell the riot." Taking these words of the old historian as his subject, Guercino produced a picture which, even in the seventeenth century, the Golden Age of painters, was no small credit to his genius, and would compare not unfavourably with the best productions of such masters in art as Domenichino and Guido Reni, Velasquez and Murillo, and Rubens and Van Dyck. The original of this picture is one of the gems of the Dresden gallery. The treatment of the subject is admirable. The bold, haughty air and proud carriage of the principal figure, the beautiful Queen of Assyria, offers a fine contrast to the scared look of the messenger, who, in his semi-shrinking attitude, seems to offer an almost unconscious tribute of respect and admiration to the courage of the queen. The attendant, who has been interrupted while engaged with her lady's toilette, seems to be animated with a spark of the same courage that inspires the queen, and though the suddenness of the news astonishes her, she is not a whit disconcerted.

Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, better known as Guercino da Cento (the latter being the name of his birth-place) was the immediate successor of Guido Reni in the Bolognese school, of which he was almost the last representative. He died in the year 1666.

## THE WATER-CARRIER OF MAJORCA.

"The Water-Carrier," or aqua-vendor, of Majorca, is a peasant woman of most distinctly marked Moorish descent, as is apparent from her jet black hair, peculiarly oval visage, strongly emphasised brow, and pallid complexion—the latter circumstance possibly owing to the women of her race utilising the ample folds of their linen head-dresses as veils or sun shades, something as their progenitors of Moslem faith used it for purposes of concealment. It will be remembered that on the subjugation of the Moors in Spain, a large number of them were permitted to remain in the southern portions of the kingdom, where there were certain territories allotted to them. Phillip II., however, in defiance of treaties, commenced a war of extermination against them: multitudes fell by the sword, others went through the form of conversion to the creed of the conqueror, while the remainder sought refuge either on the continent of Africa or in the islands on the coast; numbers settled in Majorca, where they, amongst other industries, established the famous potteries whence issued the originals of what afterwards became so famous in Italy under the name of Majolica ware. After a time, conforming to the Christian creed, they were allowed to remain on the island without molestation, and at the present day they afford to the artist the truest type of the old Hispano-Moorish character that is to be found in Europe.

## SCIENCE AND THE CLASSICS.

It is becoming more and more a question, even with cultivated people, whether the old-fashioned college course, with its regular round of Greek, Latin, and mathematics, is the best course of education for a boy of ordinary abilities. The majority of parents cannot afford to bring up a son for elegant and cultivated leisure, but only hope to render him, in his mental training, so much of a complete man as to be able to make his way wherever he is, and to be the happier and more useful from his culture. If a lad start with only average capacities, it becomes a serious consideration whether it is worth while to harness him to a heavy course of Latin and Greek classics for four or six years. He leaves his college, not proficient in any of his studies, and he plunges into practical life, his only implement being a sort of general polite culture he has unconsciously acquired, with perhaps a degree of linguistic accuracy and nicety, which is everywhere useful. He starts at a disadvantage with his compeers trained in the outside world, as he has been cosseted and taken care of for a number of years, while they have had to work their own way. The competition in every branch of American life is now terrible, and the cultivated young man from the colleges, with no "speciality" learned, and only a general education, and the self-indulgent and careless habits of years of student-life, is soon left behind by his more specially trained and vigorous competitors, and at last falls into that miserable position held now by so many college-men in this country—of a waiter on chances and a dawdler in a world of activity.

If such a young man inherit wealth, or can step into an important business already made to hand for him by older and more vigorous brains, his nice culture and elegant tastes and scraps of education are of use to him. He soon leads in public efforts to promote taste or learning, and his education gives him a wider social influence, while the real work of the business house is done by more matter-of-fact partners, or by those invaluable possessions of business men—old confidential clerks.

On the other hand, if a boy is a natural student, or has the writing and speaking gift, there can be no question that the usual college course is just what will best fit him for any intellectual pursuit; and his long drilling in the grammar and literature of ancient languages, and in a moderate course of mathematics, and in all kinds of essay and other writing, and college debating, qualify him for editor, lawyer, preacher, professor, author, savant, or politician, as his mental bent may incline. But comparatively few lads are "natural students." What shall a father do with a son who shows no marked ability or taste for any pursuit?

Every generous parent who can afford it is inclined to give his boy all the culture which the lad can appreciate. He desires too—if he has had himself the four pleasantest years of life, the college years—to grant that pleasure to his son, and to give him the advantage of intimate associations with the best young men of the country during the freshest period of his youth. But he may well doubt the wisdom of the old college course. For such persons—and there are thousands of men—modern education offers a new choice. The "Scientific School," or the "Technological School," present a curriculum which affords at once mental training, culture, and practical preparation for distinct branches of business. Instead of long courses in the classics, the student is trained in French and the modern languages—never so good abstract educators as the ancient, but of more immediate use. The higher mathematics are let alone, unless they bear on a particular field.

Science in different branches takes the place of linguistic or literary culture. The student begins at once on one or more branches in natural history or natural science; as he goes on he chooses some favourite pursuit—such as botany, or mining, or chemistry, or palaeontology, or geology, or engineering. When he finishes his three years, he has an outfit which at once prepares him for practical life. He can enter soon on chemical work for manufactories, or on mining superintendence, or engineering, or exploring, or as an assistant in laboratories, or as a teacher of science, or on practical geology or botanical labour.

At the London Royal Institution Mr. Moncure D. Conway began a course of four lectures on Demonology, lately, with remarks to the effect that, in studying the personifications of evil, we should, as far as possible, translate our senses into that primitive and Oriental phase of our own humanity under which such conceptions originated, regarding the phenomena of nature as the results of arbitrary wills, not as the expression of normal forces. The most ancient records of human worship show that men's minds were kindled to adoration by the splendour of the heavens and the power of the elements. That the earliest worship began with things low, such as trees, serpents, and stones, and gradually ascended to the adoration of celestial phenomena, Mr. Conway said, is only in apparent accord with our ideas of evolution. The real progress was from the far to the near, from the great to the small. Plants, reptiles, beetles, and the like were probably not at first worshipped at all, their intrinsic sanctity beginning only after their symbolical character had been forgotten, and the superstitions regarding them still bear traces of the source of this sanctity. Witches drew the zodiacal circles and herbalists gathered their simples under supposed celestial influences; thus showing the influence of the ancient star worship. Fear gradually suggested the idea of demons, and thus broke up the primitive pantheism, and divided the visible and moral universe into two hostile camps. For a long period the demons were not generalised or personified in one centre or orb of darkness. It required an advanced stage of the moral sentiment to produce the conception of an evil principle. The forms and names it would assume were decided by various circumstances, climatic, ethnical, or political, the chief determining force being the collisions of races, and the consequent rivalries of their religions and opposing priesthoods. Sometimes fusion ensued, but generally the stronger religion prevailed. The antagonistic deity was invested with the attributes of evil and transformed into a devil, and nearly all the great devils of antiquity appear to have been originally deities. Our word "devil" is the Hindu "Deva," the shining one; "bogie" is the Slavonic "bog;" and "demon" in Plato's time was an angel; Lucifer, light-bringing, was the angel of the morning star; Belial and Beelzebub are word-caricatures of Baal, the Sun; the Mohammedan Eblis is probably "Diabolus" Arabised; and Satan in the book of Job is described as coming with the sons of God. Mr. Conway, among other illustrations, alluded to the widespread belief in the devil's lameness as traceable to his fall from heaven, and referred to Vulcan. The degradation of Pagan deities into Britain Mr. Conway described as historical. The saints and apostles were carved in beauty in churches beside horrible monsters, really carved imprecations. "What ideals our ancestors really worshipped and associated with the holy and the rose can best be gathered by studying the forms in which they linger—the fairies. That goddess whom the zealous missionary might depict as a hag riding through the air on a broomstick was to the early believer Hertha, giving the name for the hearth and its holiest associations—a kind mother, who, distaff in hand, aided the poor in their toil, hovering near the cottage, there, perhaps, to find some weeping Cinderella, and give her beauty for ashes."

The record of attempted assassinations goes to show that it is rarely successful when even skilled men attempt the lives of great personages. In 1857 Pianori, who was subsequently guillotined, actually seized the bridle of the Emperor's horse in the Champs Elysées, in spite of innumerable police agents in private clothes who constantly accompanied him in his peregrinations, and fired a pistol *a bout portant* in his face. The muzzle was so close that the shot burned the moustache, but missed its aim, and yet Pianori was reputed one of the best shots in Italy and France, and had practised constantly for two years. Orsini's bombs were hurled at the Emperor's carriage before the Opera at a distance of four paces, and produced no effect, except that of killing several persons who were standing at a considerable distance from the carriage. The Pole Berezowski's attempt on the life of the Emperor of Russia, which took place in 1866, during the Paris Exhibition, was made under equally favourable circumstances. Berezowski fired almost from under the wheels of the Imperial carriage with a six-barrelled revolver; but an equerry-in-ordinary, M. Raimbault, perceiving the danger, made his horse rear, and the bullet intended for the Emperor Alexander struck the animal in the chest. Even then the pistol was misdirected, and would have done no harm. Another striking instance to the same effect was presented by young Blind's attempt on the life of Prince Bismarck. Blind was a first-rate marksman—he had won the Wimbledon Cup—and although he discharged the six chambers of his revolver while grappling with the German Chancellor, none of them took effect. There are many more instances of attempted political assassination, admirably contrived, and executed by fearless persons, which have one and all failed on account of momentary emotion when the deed was being attempted.

On the borders of Lake Leman, almost opposite Nyon, there has recently been discovered a lacustrine station, which appears to be very rich in curiosities of the pre-historic times. This station is situated in the Gulf of Condée, near Thonon; the piles cover a considerable space, and the importance of this lake settlement seems to have equalled that of Morges, which faces it on the Vaudois shore. In the course of one morning's investigations there have been collected seven hatchets, two knives, two sickles, one lance, five bracelets, and a large number of pins, all in bronze. The waters being low at this season remarkably facilitate researches of this nature. Accordingly, these anglers of antiquities have taken good hauls of late at Eaux-Vives, at Hermance, Vernier, Versoix, and Nyon. In this last locality they found, last week, a bronze harpoon of an admirable configuration. This object is probably without an equal in lacustrine collections.