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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, July 21st, 1877.

THE POETS WARNING TO FRANCE.

Marshal MacMahon's appeal to the army at the grand review at Longchamps, on the 1st July, has added very much to the feeling of uneasiness which is at present reigning in France. High-handed measures are feared, and what one year ago would have been deemed impossible is now regarded as probable—the employment of force to counteract the Republican majorities at the polls. Observant men cannot help recurring to historical precedents applicable to the present situation. Among these the great poet VICTOR HUGO may be said to have recalled the most startling and personal reminiscence. At a meeting of one of the committees of the Senate, at which the VISCOUNT DE MEAUX, Minister of Commerce, was present, the subject of the dissolution of the Assembly was taken up. At the close of the discussion, VICTOR HUGO stated that he had resolved to take no part in the debate, in the hope that an essential question would be put, and preferring that it should be put by another than himself. He availed himself of the presence of the Minister to address himself to him directly, and to this effect: It is impossible that the President and the members of the new Cabinet shall not have taken into consideration a possibility which we regard as a certainty—the event of the Chamber to-day dissolved coming back three months hence with an increased Republican majority, and—which is even more important—with its power and authority increased by its newly-renewed charter of existence and the decisive vote

of sovereign France. In the presence of this Chamber, which will be at once the old one repudiated by personal power, and the new one ordained by the popular sovereignty, what will the Government do? What are its plans? What line of action will it follow? Will the President simply do his duty, which will be to obey the nation and retire, and will the Cabinet disappear with him? He put this question to the member of the Cabinet present, categorically and absolutely. It was impossible to avoid answering it. Either the Minister would answer it and he would record his reply, or he would refuse to answer it and he would take note of his silence. In either case his end would be attained, for whether he spoke or remained mute, the sort of light he desired would be afforded.

In the midst of a dead silence, the VISCOUNT DE MEAUX rose and said: "The question propounded by M. HUGO should be addressed only to the Marshal. It exceeds the powers of his Ministers to answer it." This reply was received with marks of agitation by several of the Republicans present, and M. Hugo continued: "You have heard the answer. I will reply to M. DE MEAUX by citing a fact which has for him an almost personal interest. A gentleman nearly allied with him, a leading orator of the Right, my friend in the Chamber of Peers and my opponent in the Legislative Assembly, M. de MONTALEMBERT, after the crisis of July, 1851, though then having intimate relations with the Elysée, became uneasy as to the possible intentions of the then President, LOUIS NAPOLEON, who was, by the way, loudly asseverating his loyalty. M. de MONTALEMBERT desired me, in the name of our ancient friendship, to make, in his name and in my own, the inquiry of M. BAROCHE, then of the Cabinet, which I have just made of the DE BROGLIE Administration represented by M. de MEAUX. The reply was precisely that which has just been made to me. Three months after took place the crime which is known in history as the Second of December."

THE FATE OF TURKEY.

Whatever may be the issue of the war, it appears evident that, so far as British interference is concerned, that will hinge mainly, if not solely, on the fate of Constantinople. In his now famous despatch to Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, Lord DERBY indicated clearly enough that Russia must not calculate upon the occupation of the Turkish capital. A few days ago we learned by telegraph that Lord ODO RUSSELL, Ambassador at Berlin, repeated the same thing to BISMARCK. In his reply to the English Foreign Secretary, GORTSCHAKOFF gives very explicit promises on this and other points which it is well for those of our readers who follow the events of the war to have placed before them. The Russian Chancellor says that his Government will not interfere in any way with the Suez Canal, nor attack Egypt, although it might carry the war into that country as forming part of Turkey. The acquisition of Constantinople, it is further declared, is excluded from the views of the Czar, and the future of the city is a question of common interest, to be settled by a general understanding. The question of the Straits should be settled in like manner. With regard to the other British interests which might be affected, Russia will not extend the war beyond what is required for the object with which she undertook hostilities, viz., the amelioration of the condition of the Christians under Turkish rule. In conclusion, Prince GORTSCHAKOFF says that there is nothing in the views which have been exchanged between the two Governments which cannot be reconciled so as to maintain their amicable relations and the peace of Europe.

This reply has been variously interpreted in England, but it has not allayed apprehension in regard to the distinct challenge concerning Stamboul. It is understood that the Russians carried away by victory may not consider themselves bound to fulfil the

pledges of diplomacy, and may plead the force of public opinion as an excuse. Everybody remembers that Germany always repudiated the idea of territorial aggrandizement till the siege of Paris, when BISMARCK announced that the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine was so much of a necessity that he would not dare to return to Berlin if it was not consummated. And so it may be with Stamboul in the day of Russian triumph. What the feeling in St. Petersburg already is may be gathered from the following extract of the *Novoye Vremya*: "We must bestir ourselves to gain possession of Constantinople. It is only after solidly planting our foot there that the Eastern Question can be settled and the Christians freed. Constantinople is the limit of our desires and of our aim. There is the sun of Christian liberty. The West will always raise up obstacles against it. 'The conqueror of Constantinople,' said Napoleon, 'will be master of the world.' It is we who approach nearest to Constantinople, geographically and historically, and the Russian troops will enter there. As in former times, the West created there the Latin Empire, Russia will now erect the citadel of the domination of the Slav race in the East. Now that England is establishing herself on the Suez Canal, Russia takes up her position on the Bosphorus. The moment is propitious. What England acquires with her gold, we conquer by the valour of Russia's best children—by that valour of which the Russian nation has always boasted."

CATASTROPHISM, OR THE EVOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENT.

Under this title, we have a new theory brought forward by Mr. CLARENCE KING, an American professor of natural science, on the history of geological formation and progression. We are indebted to the *Scientific American* for an analysis of this remarkable address, delivered before the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale College. Mr. KING's starting point and cardinal doctrine is opposed to the slow evolution of DARWIN and HUXLEY, and he holds that the surface of the earth and climate have been subject to sudden changes called catastrophes, which include in their environment all types of life. From this statement is derived the name of the new principle which heads this article. Mr. KING reasons that marine fossils are found entombed in rocky beds far remote from present seas; and that these beds were once sea bottoms that have been upheaved by convulsions of nature. The earliest history of mankind is pregnant with catastrophe, and we have historic story and biblical record of its sudden and destructive energy. He calls to mind the vast and massive eruptions of the Pliocene basalt as seen upon our own continent. The great obvious changes in the rocky crust are referred to a few processes; the sub-aerial decay of continents, delivered by streams of land-detritus into the sea, the spreading out of these comminuted materials upon a pelagic floor, and lastly upheaval, by which oceanic beds were lifted up into subsequent land masses. All these processes he declares to have been more rapid in the past than now. Suddenness, world wide destructiveness, were the characteristics of geological changes. Periods of calm, like the present, are suddenly terminated by brief catastrophic epochs. Successive faunas and floras were created only to be extinguished by general cataclysms.

He believes in recurrent, abrupt accelerations of crust change, so violent as to destroy all life on the globe. He declares the idea to be the survival of a prehistoric terror, and is backed up by breaks in the great palaeontological record.

Of the geologic features of our continent, he says that beneath our America lies buried another distinct continent, which he calls Archaean America, made up of what was originally ocean beds lifted into the air and locally crumpled into vast mountain chains, which were in turn

eroded by torrents into mountain peaks. The original coast lines of this continent we may never be able fully to survey, but its great features, the lofty chains of the mountains which made its bones, were very nearly co-extensive with our existing systems, the Appalachians and Cordilleras. The canyon-cutting rivers of the present Western mountains have dug out the peaks and flanks of those underlying, primeval uplifts and developed an astonishing topography; peaks rising in a single sweep 30,000 feet from their bases, precipices lifting bold, solid fronts 10,000 feet into the air, and profound mountain valleys. The work of erosion, which has been carried on by torrents of the quaternary age, brings to light buried primeval chains loftier than any of the present heights of the globe.

At the close of the Palaeozoic age, two enormous masses of what, probably, were then continents began to sink, and as they disappeared, the present Atlantic and Pacific oceans appeared, while the sea-floor of a then ocean emerged, and became the new continent of America. Dividing this new continent was a sea, but catastrophe removed this sea and resulted in the folding up of mountain ranges 20,000 and 40,000 feet in height, thereby essentially changing the whole climate of the continent. Of the land life of the Mesozoic age we have abundant remains. The wonderful reptilian and avian fauna of the Mesozoic age is now familiar to all. But after the catastrophe, and the change of climate which must necessarily have ensued, this fauna totally perished.

After criticising the opinions of HUXLEY, LYELL, HUTTON, DARWIN, and others, he returns to the effects of sudden terrestrial or cosmical changes, and conceives that the effects of these changes would be, first, extermination; secondly, destruction of the biological equilibrium; and thirdly, rapid morphological change on the part of plastic species. When catastrophic change burst in upon the ages of uniformity, and sounded in the ear of every living thing the words "change or die!" plasticity became the sole principle of salvation. And plasticity is the key to survival and prosperity.

Our journal is not the place to discuss so scientific a subject as the above, but we thought we could do better than lay the novel ideas before such of our readers as take an interest in this very interesting topic.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE 12TH JULY RIOTS.—The special value of our front page, depicting the scene of the murder of Mr. HACKETT, on the 12th inst., is that it can be relied upon as correct in the minutest particular. The artist who made the sketch was himself at the foot of Dunn & Co.'s stairs, hemmed in by the crowd, whence he could not extricate himself, and witnessed everything that took place. His testimony is given elsewhere. HACKETT was killed at his very feet. The picture can therefore be accepted as the only correct representation of the terrible tragedy.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD IN QUEBEC.—We give two sketches of SIR JOHN's recent visit to Montreal and the Eastern Townships. The first represents him addressing the great assemblage at Sweetburg, and the second delineates the torchlight procession in this city, on the night of the 7th inst. The procession is shown as it turned down from St. James Street into St. Lambert's Hill, and we vouch for its absolute correctness, as we witnessed the pageant from that point ourselves. The papers state that SIR JOHN's carriage was drawn by four horses, but at St. Lambert's Hill there were only two, as represented in the sketch.

ATTACK ON THE SENTRY OF THE MONTREAL CARBINIERS.—This is a view of the attack of a band of roughs, belonging to the Black Horse gang, on the sentry of the 65th Regiment, at the Quebec Barracks' gate. All the surroundings may be relied upon as correct.