

THE LOUNGER.

HISTORICAL FANCY DRESS BALL.

THAT the Historical ball given by Their Excellencies the Governor General and the Countess of Aberdeen, on the seventeenth of February last, was the most successful affair of the kind ever given in Canada is cordially affirmed by all who are in a position to judge. But apart from its being a remarkably successful society event, even surpassing the expectations of all concerned, and fully repaying by this gratifying result, those who with Their Excellencies gave so much time and trouble to the carrying out of the idea; the significance of that idea gave an unusually interesting character to the affair, placing it at once above the level of the ordinary fancy ball or carnival.

This idea was the representation, by a series of characteristic dances, of various epochs in Canadian history, dating from the discovery of Canada by the Norsemen, about the year 1,000. The ladies and gentlemen who took part in these dances represented various personages prominent in the history of Canada, and it must be said that, judging by the costumes displayed, there was much careful deliberation upon the choice and portrayal of the characters. Never was the study of Canadian history so ardently pursued in our Capital City. School Histories were at a discount, tossed contemptuously aside, while fair ladies poured over pages of Parkman with sighs and exclamations as the mysteries and intricacies of Canadian history were revealed. Never shall it again be said, in Ottawa at least, that Canada has no history. In the library of Parliament for three or four weeks before the Ball, the great volumes of illustrations of the costumes of various periods, were left lying upon the tables so that they might be consulted without the delay of taking them down from their places. Ladies, and gentlemen too, studied them with a semi-comical semi-tragic air of anxiety. The ordinary words of salutation were dropped and if you wended your way towards the library of Parliament you

would probably be met by a friend or acquaintance armed with a long lead pencil, and carrying a scrap of white paper. Nor would you be allowed to pass the threatening pencil until you had answered, or expressed your ignorance, as to the date of a certain event.

There have been balls and balls. A gorgeous Fancy ball was given at Government house some years ago by a former governor; but this one is unique in its historical significance and moreover its presiding spirit was Her Excellency the Countess of Aberdeen. "the most charming hostess in Canada."

Their Excellencies spared neither trouble nor expense in connection with the arrangements for the ball which was held in the Senate Chamber, the chairs being removed for the occasion, and the walls of the Chamber suitably decorated with flags and emblems significant of the character of the Ball. The Governor General and the Countess of Aberdeen occupied the throne upon the dais at the end of the Chamber. The Vice Regal Court consisted of Their Excellencies the Governor General and the Countess of Aberdeen, the Cabinet Ministers and their wives and the different Military Aides de Camp while Mrs. Lewis, wife of Bishop Lewis, Madame Albani and Mrs. Potter Palmer were present as guests at Government house.

The costumes of the ladies of the Vice Regal Court were superb. The Cabinet ministers were in full regalia and Sir Mackenzie Bowell was especially resplendent in his new Windsor uniform.

The first dance on the programme was that of the Vikings by the Government House party. It was certainly the most striking feature of the evening. The dresses were all of woollen material closely adhering to the fashion of the time. A better idea of the styles of the different costumes is given by the illustrations accompanying this article than could be given in words. It was a vigorous somewhat boisterous dance in which all took part with the jolly romping spirit typical of those primitive