

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

**MONTREAL IN WINTER.**—The engraving on our fourth page is taken from a photograph by Alexander Henderson, the landscape photographer of Montreal, and represents an interesting view of the city from the Island park, the frozen river covered with snow over its whole surface forming a level plain which entirely alters its summer aspect and adds a new interest to this front of the city, which in its garb of snow, is hardly to be recognized by our summer visitors.

**CHRISTMAS IN CANADA.**—The next page gives a charming illustration of the pleasures of our winter season. The snowballing, snowshoeing, sleighing, and last but not least the pretty girls, one of whom is pictured in the middle of the page, all combine to make our Canadian winter the admiration of the world and the pride of our own people.

**DECORATING THE CHURCH** will possess a special interest for those of our readers who have before now assisted in a similar work in wreathing garlands of green about the stone pillars, and fastening legends above the arches of their own house of worship.

**THE ADVENT OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE** is suggestive rather of English Christmas tide than of our own. Yet a similar scene will be enacted, though with different surroundings, in many a home in this country as well.

**THE BOYS AND THE GIRLS** have not been forgotten in this number. The former have a page of football sketches, while their fair sisters will know appreciate the pretty pictures of their favorite nursery rhyme, and both alike will enjoy the turning of the tables on the last page, and the fate of the little boy who tackled the turkey.

AN EVENING AT VICTOR HUGO'S.

(From a Correspondent.)

I have been spending the evening at the house of M. Victor Hugo, who appeared in very good health. He was also in a generally expansive mood, and his spirits higher than usual. Between dinner and half-past ten, when all his visitors rose to go away, he scarcely sat down a moment, but kept walking about from one person to another to converse. He had on, for a wonder, evening dress. When ever he talked to the whole company he stood on the hearth rug with his back towards the fire. A circle of disciples stood around. Madame Dorian was the guest of the evening. She is the daughter-in-law of the late M. Dorian, who was the most useful colleague of General Trochu in the siege, and is the wife of M. Menard Dorian, a notable St. Etienne manufacturer and deputy. This lady is a poetess. She has just translated into French verse Swinburne's Ode to Victor Hugo. I have not read her translation, but her brother-poet, M. de Lacerelle, the Deputy of Macon and biographer of Lamartine, assured me that it was admirably done, and that the vibrating ring, the rhythm, the movement, and originality of Swinburne were caught up and rendered by her with apparent ease. Madame Dorian was brought up in England.

I have to thank M. Victor Hugo for a presentation copy of "Torquemada," which contained on the title page a few gracious lines written and signed by him. As he hardly ever puts pen to paper except to work for printers, you may conceive the difficulty there was in finding words adequate to express, without appearing to flatter, my sense of the honor he had done me. The little thanksgiving speech I had to make brought the conversation of him and the surrounding circle to the founder of the Inquisition, and then to his action, through Mary Tudor, on England. The idea had never before occurred to the poet that Torquemada, having been for some time before the birth of Catherine of Aragon the ghostly director of Isabella the Catholic, the English Queen of sanguinary memory was his spiritual granddaughter. The bent his exhortations gave to Isabella's mind did not appear to affect Henry VIII's Queen (or, at least, the Katherine of Shakespeare), but, skipping a generation, came out as a hideous moral deformity in Mary. Victor Hugo said he wanted to serve true indignant religion in his poem on the founder of the Spanish Inquisition. Torquemada was a well-intentioned man, and would have been good and great had he not started from a false principle, and wanted to destroy the absolute and eternal Hell by a relative and a temporary one. He was like those scientists who seek to destroy disease through vaccines which keep them alive in the world. Torquemada dealt by compulsion, and left no room for the conscience to grow and move in. St. Francis of Assisi (in glorifying whom Victor Hugo has forestalled the Pope) overcame evil by good and forced souls by example, charity and persuasion.

I have often noticed the intense pleasure that it gives to Victor Hugo to be told of a good action performed by somebody else. Apropos of St. Francis and his works of charity, one of the poet's guests told him of a movement in the State of New York to send poor city children on visits to farm-houses and country residences in the hot summer weather. The old man's fine sympathies were all awake as he listened. I should not wonder if, in the course of the night, he wrote a poem on the first impressions made by the country on a New York street Arab. He

looked as if turning in his brain something of the kind.

Of course Victor Hugo's guest had much to say to him about *Le Roi s'Amuse*. The author seemed to experience unalloyed happiness in looking forward to the jubilee, and in looking back to the tempest of hatred which the drama had evoked fifty years ago. French intellect was then bandaged up in the literary forms and conventions of the 17th and 18th centuries. He had done what he could to unbandage it. The small-minded people, and many of the large-minded too, had come to look upon the bandages as an epidermis. If their skins were going to have been torn off they could not have fought harder than they did against an innovation which meant to assist outward and upward growth. On the 22nd November, 1833, the author of *Le Roi s'Amuse* and the manager of the Français, packed, so far as they were able, the house. This time a single ticket had not been signed by Victor Hugo or any delegate of his. Four boxes were placed at his disposal, but one of them was only taken by Madame Lockroy, who wanted it for some of her own friends. The poet would not accept the roomy one offered him unless on the condition of paying for it himself. There have been hitched in the revival of *Le Roi s'Amuse* which might have seemed had omens to superstitious persons. Georges Hugo had suffered from the wet weather, and been ailing since Sunday. His mother was not, therefore, able to appear at the dinner given in compliment to Madame Dorian, and there was uneasiness felt lest one grandchild only could witness with the illustrious and loveable grandfather the jubilee of *Le Roi s'Amuse*. Another serious contretemps was the illness of M. Monnet-Sully, to whom the part of Francis I. had been entrusted. Of Victor Hugo it may be said he has lived eighty years, but not grown old. The sadness of those who have long survived their generation has not fallen upon him. There is hardly any one now alive who witnessed the theatrical storm which burst in the Français half a century ago. All the actors and actresses who performed in it have, save one, passed away. He is the accomplished Regnier, who has quitted the stage and is now a professor at the Conservatoire.

The Duc de Nemours is old enough to have seen the first representation of *Le Roi s'Amuse*. But Louis Philippe decided that it was better for the Court not to patronize the play from the moment he had received Count d'Argout's verbal report of the full dress rehearsal. Said he to the King, "Barbès and Blanqui will have their Republic before the year is out if this drama succeeds. Not only does the King amuse himself, but he amuses himself immensely and *en cavaille*. The spectacle of such a Monarch on the stage would break down all respect for the Crown." "But I," replied the King, "do not amuse myself at all. I am always at my desk unless when I am badgered by my Ministers. Every one knows that in my whole life I never committed a wild action." "So much the worse, Sir," retorted M. d'Argout. When the Parisians see that M. Hugo's cap does not fit your Majesty they will all accuse you of wanting to stick it on Charles X., who *did* amuse himself when he was young. On the whole, he would be, if so capped, better off than your Majesty. The French have a sneaking kindness for a King who is a *mourais* sujet, but they hate a monarch who they find is perfidious.

OXFORD REVISITED.

It is just eight years ago that the old Provost of Oxid looked upon the University, in which he had lived for the best part of a century, for the last time. All resemblance, except indeed that which is more or less durably embodied in architecture, between the Oxford of his early manhood and of his old age had disappeared, and the interval which has elapsed since then has served to make the transformation complete. Dr. Hawkins has belonged to ancient history any time during the last two or three decades. This is not surprising seeing that he expired on Saturday last at the age of ninety-two: what is surprising is that the chief features in the social life of Oxford, which men who are yet barely middle-aged can recollect in the days of their undergraduate-ship, have disappeared as completely as if they had never been in existence. All that the energy of the builder and the restorer could do to revolutionise the external aspect of things has been done. There are new streets and tramways; Koble College looks severely down upon the Parks, as if resenting the contiguity of a secular Museum; part of the facade of St. John's is new and imposing; all the frontage which Balliol offers to Broad-street is new and ideous. The old schools as intellectual torture-rooms have ceased to exist, and the examiner of the period applies the thumbscrew and boot to the victim in a superb palace nearly opposite Queen's, standing on the site of the old Angel Hotel, made ridiculous indeed without by some mural design caricaturing Dr. Lightfoot of Exeter and others, but glorious within with marble pillars, oak panelling, tapestry from Turkish factories, curtains from Persian looms.

These things are only the outward and visible signs of the far greater metamorphosis which the inner life of the place discloses. Married fellows, and the establishment of a military depot at Cowley, have assimilated the society of Oxford to that of Cheltenham and Southsea. You were to have met the Prefector of Transcendental Ethics at the hospitable board of your

friend; but he was unfortunately already engaged to dine at the military mess. The Senior Proctor is also prevented from being one of the company, as he has promised to superintend the production of some new theatricals at the house of a sprightly spinster on Headington-hill. When you drove up to the departure platform at Paddington, you observed a number of gentlemen, of familiar face and figure, who you imagined must be *en route* to some country-house in one of the home counties. Not a bit of it. The members of Parliament, undersecretaries of State, able editors, and *littérateurs* who composed the group, were all bound to Oxford, where the Saturday to Monday visit is as much an institution as at Brighton itself. Some were going to stay with one of the permanent officials of State who still keeps on his rooms at All Souls, others were the guests of the Christian Socrates at Balliol, and the rest were similarly billeted in different quarters. As you observe all these things, and listen to the talk on every side, you gradually realise the fact that Oxford has become a mere suburb of London. Pall Mall and the High-street, St. James, and St. Aldate's, the Athenæum Club and half a dozen colleges appear to have become fused into one curious social amalgam. The venerable professor who sits next to you surprises you by casually mentioning that he was dining in Mayfair last night, and that he went to the Lyceum afterwards. He would, he adds, hope to see something of you to-morrow; but it is, he regrets, impossible, as he has an appointment in the City, which involves his leaving Oxford at nine—at eleven o'clock. Your *vis-à-vis* at dinner is a thick-set gentleman, with a bushy beard, and an appearance generally suggestive of a prosperous land surveyor. His talk is of the price of wheat, and of the projected improvements at Hyde Park Corner. You presently discover that he has devoted his lifetime to deciphering inscriptions, and that he is the only man in Europe who can claim a comprehensive acquaintance with the literature of the ancient Pelasgi.

Not less novel and startling are the points of view taken by those about you, and the media through which they are disposed to look at life. The whole standard of ideals and ambitions has changed. Here is an eminent scholar and reverend divine, who you might imagine would recognise his legitimate goal in a bishopric. It turns out that he takes comparatively slight interest in academic affairs; his favourite study is municipal administration, and his secret ambition is believed to be to become a member of the Local Government Board, or possibly mayor. At the present moment he is wholly occupied with the question of sewage; and in a few minutes he will excuse himself for prematurely quitting the company on the plea that he has an appointment with half a dozen Common Councilmen of distinction. The atmosphere is so thoroughly modern, so conspicuously non-academic, that you almost hesitate to broach a subject which can, in the slightest degree, savour of "shop." But old associations come back to you with some force, and you venture a few observations upon the question of Greek and Latin scholarship. The youthful *savant* beside you condescends to take a languid interest in the matter. He is engaged in a correspondence with the learned Vossius at Leipsic upon what he shrewdly suspects is a fragment of Plato, exactly two lines and a half in length, and he visited last summer the more learned Bossius at Berlin, for the purpose of discussing a newlight which he thought was thrown by a discovery in Gaelic syntax upon the Greek genitive, or of testing the affinity which he is convinced exists between the dialect of the tribe on the Upper Congo and the depraved Doric of a mythic community in Southern Greece. This is not probably quite what you meant by scholarship, and you modestly inquire whether composition in the Latin and Hellenic languages is still cultivated at Oxford. Your interlocutor smiles contemptuously. He thought you were quite above that sort of thing. A mere trick of school-boy neatness, he assures you, and nothing more. He was talking, he explains, of real scholarship—of scholarship as approached from the scientific point of view. It is an epithet of evil omen, and you may as well change the conversation at once to such topics as zinc wire and liquid manure.

TRICKS OF PICTURE DEALERS.

"Many pictures have been made to acquire the appearance of age, even to a complete deception; and I remember at the commencement of my collecting, having purchased some. They were offered at a price which induced me to buy; and as the very canvas on which they were lined, to prevent their falling into decay, appeared old, whatever uncertainty I might have been in as to their originality, I had none as to their antiquity. I sent for a picture dealer, who made use of spirits of wine; and in a moment that which he worked upon was totally ruined, which made the cleaner say those pictures had been in the Westminster oven. He then informed me that there was in Westminster a manufactory, where several persons were employed making copies, which, after being soiled with dust and varnish, were thrown into an oven built on purpose, and moderately warmed; when, in the course of an hour or two, they became cracked, and acquired the appearance of age, and a certain *stoidity* the pictures I had bought did not possess, which made me conclude that they had not been baked long enough. I will venture to as-

sert, many of our superficial connoisseurs have been caught as I have been with this snare, and have preferred to the best modern productions those of the Westminster oven."

CHRISTMAS BREVITIES.

**GIFT** books, Christmas cards, &c., in endless variety at W. J. Clarke's, Beaver Hall Square.

**EVERYTHING** novel and desirable in gifts books, Christmas cards, &c., for the season at Drysdale & Co's. Their address is 232 St. James street, and 1423 St. Catherine street.

**FROM** an experience of many years in our city there are few in the fur trade who has a more extensive reputation for first-class goods than A. Brahadi, 249 Notre Dame street.

**THERE** are few places where such inducements are offered in quality and sterling solid value as at W. S. Walker's, 321 Notre Dame street. The assortment of watches, chains, jewellery, etc., is large, and prices very reasonable.

**AT** the "Sign of the Admiral," Notre Dame street, Hearn & Harrison are offering this season many novelties in optical goods, opera glasses, &c.

**MANY** of our citizens have availed themselves of the invitation extended to the public to visit Scott's Art Rooms, 363 Notre Dame street, and inspect the pictures and engravings on view.

**THE** windows of R. W. Cowan & Co., corner Notre Dame and St. Peter streets, present quite an attraction to numerous passers-by, from the elegant display of ladies', gentlemen's and children's fur goods of all descriptions.

FOOT NOTES.

"Mrs. Brown" is dead. That was not her name, but the character associated with the works of Arthur Sketchley. Even this was not the correct name of the author, who was not "Mrs. Brown" nor "Arthur Sketchley," but George Rose. Mr. Rose was formerly a clergyman of the Church of England, but he became a Roman Catholic, and the inventor of the now proverbial "Mrs. Brown." Of late the illustrious lady's utterances have become somewhat monotonous; but at first she was intensely enjoyable, and her curious utterances have long been pleasantly familiar to lovers of domestic humour. Mr. Rose made the mistake of overdoing the character he had created, as many other authors have done before him, and so somewhat detracted from the credit he had undoubtedly deserved as the creator of a distinct school of literature—as distinct as that of Mark Twain, though of a different character.

**A MAN** may be as cool as an icicle under extraordinary circumstances of danger or excitement; he may preserve an even mind when a ghost comes into his room at midnight; he may assume command and act nobly and well when the ship is sinking; but let that man, let any man, upset his inkstand, and he springs to his feet, makes a desperate grasp for the inkstand and knocks it half-way across the table, claws after his papers and sweeps through the sable puddle to save them, tears his white silk handkerchief from his pocket and mops up the ink with it, and after he has smeared the table, his hands, and his lavender trousers with ink, as far as it could be made to go, discovers that early in the engagement he knocked the inkstand clear off the table, and it has been draining its life-ink away all that time in the centre of the only light figure in the pattern of the carpet. Then he wonders why a man always makes a fool of himself when he upsets a bottle of ink. He doesn't know why. Nobody knows why. But every time it is so. If you don't believe it, try it.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

**THE** Boers have captured the Kaffir Chief Mampoor.

**LORD** DERBY has accepted the post of Secretary of State for India.

**A NUMBER** of failures in the tinplate trade are reported in England.

**THE** *Pall Mall Gazette* says rumours of Ministerial changes are premature.

**THE** Sultan of Turkey has had an armoured bullet-proof carriage built for him.

**THE** Bishop of Winchester has declined the Archbishopric of Canterbury, on account of his age.

**THE** Austro-German alliance, which expires in October, 1884, the *Cologne Gazette* says will be renewed.

**LORD** DERBY rejects the idea of an Egyptian protectorate, though admitting that English influence must preponderate in Egypt.

**AT** Connaught assizes on Tuesday, Judge Lawson sentenced an Arran Island farmer to penal servitude for life for grievously wounding a bailiff.

**MR.** CHAMBERLAIN has resigned from the Reform Club, on account of his brother having been blackballed on applying for admission to the Club.

**AN** anti-Terrorist Association has been formed in St. Petersburg to oppose the Nihilists, with branches in England, France, Germany, Switzerland and Turkey.