

discussed by our reading people in the end, although sometimes not at so early a period of their history as would be altogether the most advantageous. Discussion will come in its due course, and then many points most important in their bearing upon the welfare of the nation in the vast future that lies before it, and upon the popularity of governments of the hour, where popularity means—as under British institutions it always does mean now—continued official existence for the party in power,—many such points, we say, will have to be taken up with that coolness of spirit which distinguishes the more respectable and more truly influential of our public journals.

There might in some minds exist apprehensions, from the large powers technically accorded to the Governor-in-Council in relation to our great Trans-continental Line, that all the essential conditions of some new bargain might be settled over the heads of the people and their elected and responsible Parliament at Ottawa. If any one likes to believe that, let him do so. The conviction of the writer is that no hasty and ill-considered arrangements could be concluded in a matter which will rank in importance with the greatest constitutional questions and changes, and that legislative confirmation of all preliminary steps will undoubtedly be demanded by the constituencies.

If, indeed, there were any likelihood of our getting our Canadian yeomanry, of which we have hitherto been so proud, converted into an order of tenants-at-will, it would become the part of every true citizen to resist the danger and to hinder the innovation. Arrangements may reasonably be expected to be arrived at by which the risks to the trading and the travelling communities which would attend an absolute monopoly of the vast through traffic will be reduced to a minimum. We still continue to trust that what Matthew Arnold says of Great Britain will remain equally true of Canada:—"Here no one dreams of removing a single constitutional control, of abolishing a single safeguard for securing a correspondence between the acts of the government and the will of the nation."

Civis Canadensis.

INVITATIONS.

Among the many troubles which beset a lady who entertains at all largely in London, by no means the least are caused by the extreme want of thought and consideration of her friends, who appear to think themselves entitled to ask for invitations for their own friends, and to be aggrieved and affronted if they are not immediately accorded. Those who offend most in this direction are either ladies from the country, with not the remotest comprehension of the difficulties and exigencies of a London lady's visiting list, or else those who, never entertaining themselves, have but a small acquaintance, and never trouble themselves to think whether their friends may not be very differently situated. To those who go out much and who entertain largely, it is almost impossible to curtail an acquaintance; it grows as imperceptibly, but quite as rapidly, as a snowball. Unfortunately, rooms do not increase in size, and a hostess who cannot afford to give several balls or parties is perforce reduced either to leave out some of her friends, or to crowd her rooms till there is no pleasure for anyone, when she is inconsistently abused on all sides for being "so dreadfully good-natured." People who do not themselves entertain are apt to be very much offended, and to say very bitter things, if a friend omits to invite them. It never seems to strike them that the simple principle of honesty obliges her to ask first those who have asked her, and that, unless she is willing to reduce her rooms to the condition of the Black Hole of Calcutta, she is perforce precluded from inviting the whole of her visiting list. Some indeed are so utterly unreasonable as to expect, that, if a lady gives two balls for the express purpose of dividing her friends, she should ask them to both, though there would in that case be really no object in her giving two. Others, again, are affronted at being asked to the second instead of the first, and talk as if it were an intentional slight, instead of being pleased to be asked at all. The want of room has of late caused it to be usual to ask only one daughter, though there may be two out; and this is another thing which those ladies who neither entertain nor go out much resent exceedingly. But it is a matter of simple necessity if a lady is to ask all, or even any large proportion, of her friends, and should be cheerfully accepted as such. If then a hostess has such difficulty in asking her own friends, whom she is naturally anxious to invite, it is obvious that she must look on those who write and ask for invitations for their own friends as guilty of a decided impertinence. For a few days before her ball, when she has more on her hands than she can at all conveniently manage, it is most annoying to be inundated with notes: "Dear Mrs. Grey, my cousin and her two girls are in London for a short time, and the girls are so anxious to go to your charming dance on Wednesday. It will be so kind if you will send them an invitation." Or "Mrs. Brown is so very anxious to make your acquaintance. She is afraid you may have forgotten her, though she says she met you in a country house three years ago." Or "Might I bring the two Miss Greens? They would enjoy it so much, and have so little dancing." If the hostess is wise, she will at once firmly decline to accede to these entreaties, and will prefer keeping all possible space for her own friends, instead of crowding her rooms with the friends of others, who, if they are anxious for their amusement, should entertain themselves. But saying

"No" is never pleasant, and many ladies, though greatly vexed and annoyed, are weak enough to say "Yes," and are then sure to be told, possibly by the very people they have obliged, that it is a pity they were so good-natured and crowded their rooms so terribly. The only time when it is permissible to ask for an invitation is in the case of lady who is going to give a ball, and wishes to know another who is about to do the same. Then a mutual acquaintance may write: "Dear Mrs. Gray,—Lady Jones would be very glad to make your acquaintance. She is going to give a dance on the 16th, and would be happy to send you a card if you would like it." Mrs. Gray may either accept the introduction, or, if she does not care to do so, she may regret that her acquaintance is already so very large that she really cannot increase it. Married couples without daughters should never expect their acquaintances to invite them to balls, though one or two very intimate friends may do so. Of course, there are sets where married women are invited in preference to, and sometimes to the absolute exclusion of, girls; but the general run of balls are given for the pleasure and advantage of girls, and reasonable young married women should be aware that there is not space for both, and not resent not being invited. If a hostess can contrive to do so, it is always well to give a reception either before or after a ball, so as to include those whom she has been compelled to omit from it. But if it is an act of inconsiderate impertinence for friends to write and importune a hostess for invitations for her ball, it is a great deal worse to presume to take any one to it without an invitation, and this, from many complaints which have reached us, seems to be not uncommon. Nothing can well be more unpardonable than for a lady to take two daughters when one only is asked, or to say, when she makes her appearance, "My niece was dining with us, and I thought you would not mind my bringing her." Of course the hostess *does* mind very much indeed; if she was to have an extra young lady, she would have liked to do a kindness to one of her own friends; but civility prevents her saying so, and she can only smile and bow while thinking how extremely ill-bred her acquaintance is. It is universally understood in society (of course, in all these remarks we are speaking only of London, where space is of infinite importance) that when the card for a ball bears the name of the father, mother, and daughter, only the father *or* mother, never both, is expected,—excepting, of course, at a State ball, or some great ceremony. Now that only one daughter is generally asked, the mother frequently goes to one ball with one daughter, and the father to a different one with another; in such a case it is usually the youngest daughter who accompanies her mother. There is not any objection to friends asking for invitations to balls for young men, as a much larger number of them is required than of young ladies. A good many of those asked have other engagements, and do not come; some do not choose to dance; others dance but seldom. It is therefore considered requisite to ask at least three times as many dancing men as young ladies. Thus, if a hostess is able to ask 120 girls, who, of course, will not all come, she would ask from 350 to 400 dancing men. If a lady is not very well established in the ball-giving world, she would hardly have a sufficient number of gentlemen on her list, and she therefore asks her friends for assistance. They send her lists of names, and she selects such as she prefers and sends them to the gentlemen, with the compliments of the lady from whose list she has taken the name. It is very bad taste to send an invitation to a stranger without thus mentioning to whom he is indebted for it. Gentlemen being requisite, it is therefore no indiscretion for acquaintances to ask for invitations for dancing men; but they should never be offended if the hostess says that her numbers are quite full, and she really can ask no more. They should ask in good time.—*Queen.*

THINGS IN GENERAL.

A TALL ICEBERG.

Among the almost countless and colossal icebergs recently reported by incoming steamers that encountered by the *City of London* on the 16th ultimo, "about one thousand five hundred feet long and three hundred feet high," commands special note. Its altitude above the sea is greater than that of any berg we have seen reported in the North Atlantic during the phenomenal ice drift of the last four months, with the single exception of one met also by the *City of London* early in May. The latter, however, was only seven hundred feet long, or half the length of that seen on the 16th ultimo. As the specific gravity of ice is so much less than that of Atlantic seawater it is ascertained that the portion of a berg under water is over eight times as great as that exposed to the air. This proportion is based on the supposition that the iceberg is symmetrical, but in any case we may assume that about seven-eighths is submerged, and probably this particular berg could not have floated in water under two thousand five hundred feet, or four hundred fathoms in depth. The Gulf Stream off the Newfoundland Banks where this tall iceberg was observed is too superficial to float it, the warm current not being more than one hundred fathoms deep, so that about three-quarters of its submerged volume is under the impact of the flow of glacial water from the polar basin moving under and in a direction contrary to that of the Gulf Stream. Thus propelled by an invisible submarine force the berg in question had ploughed its southerly way