

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

There are rumours of difficulties being placed in the way of General Garfield to prevent his taking up his residence at the Presidential mansion. It appears that General Hancock had a plurality of votes amongst the people, but as this does not affect the question as to the Presidency, it goes for nothing. The mode of election is but imperfectly understood, and the following notes are apropos:—

"No one except a natural born citizen, is eligible for the office of President of the United States; nor any one who has not attained the age of thirty-five years, and resided fourteen years within the United States. A person, having these qualifications, is selected as a candidate at a representative caucus of his friends and it depends upon the votes of the various States which of the candidates shall be president. The States vote as follows: They appoint, in whatever way their legislature may direct, a number of presidential electors equal to the number of representatives and senators, to which the State may be entitled in Congress. The representation of the State in Congress depends upon its population and two senators are added. Thus New York State has 33 members in the House of Representatives and two senators; Indiana, being less in population has only 15 representatives and the two senators. Thus, then, New York is entitled to 35 presidential electors and Indiana to 17. The usual way of selecting there is, that the party men of each town or district send representatives to a district convention, each party having a separate convention. The district conventions of both sides send delegates to separate State gatherings. The Republican State gathering then selects their men it wishes to form the State electoral college, and the Democrats, Green-backers or any other party select their men. These chosen ones are put up for popular election in all the States on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, and the state electoral colleges are thus formed. The Electoral Colleges then meet in the various States on the first Wednesday in December to record their vote and send the result to the President of the Senate at Washington. The State votes solid for either one party or the other—that is, that if the Republican party obtain a majority of one in the State, the Electoral College is Republican, and the whole State vote goes for that party, or *vice versa*. As the results from the various States are known just after the election in November, it is understood who is to be the next President long before the Electoral Colleges meet in the various States."

The Democrats continue to feel very sore over their failure in 1876 to secure the Presidency for their party, and now, through some error in their New York electoral management, they are again defeated, and it would seem that they are now prepared to go to any extremes in order to secure the Chief Magistracy. There is very great danger that they will yet cause serious trouble, and it is a great pity that they cannot become reconciled to their defeat and allow the affairs of the nation to be administered in a peaceful manner. All this doubt and squabbling must damage commercial interests, and the rise in stocks and other securities consequent upon the presumed election of General Garfield must or ought to have made it patent to every Democrat that the world at large have every confidence in the Republican party and in their financial policy. To some the only blemish upon their platform is their adherence to a protective policy, but this is much less to be combatted or opposed than a financial policy tending towards depreciation of the currency, or perhaps entire repudiation.

SHOP GIRLS.

In several journals both in England and the United States have appeared articles advocating the placing of chairs or stools for the use of shop girls, who in many cases, if not in all, are obliged to remain on their feet from morn till night. This over-work cannot fail to be productive of bad results as regards the health of the girls and any efforts made to ameliorate their condition ought to be warmly seconded by every philanthropic person. The question evidently has not been sufficiently agitated in our good city of Montreal, for, if such had been the case, we would have seen some resultant effects; on the contrary, things appear to remain *in statu quo*. That this should be the case is deplorable and we would draw the attention of the public to this important subject. Without being extreme in our views we hold that this inattention or want of interest on the part of employers is cruelty—the effects, however, being extended over a comparatively long period of time are not apparent to a superficial observer. Every one will admit that some steps ought to be taken in the matter, and it has been stated that the evil is in some cases aggravated by the dilatoriness of ladies in making their purchases. A little forethought on their part would be proper and they should not visit stores unless with a definite purpose. The only means of relief the poor shop girl obtains is that at long intervals, she is enabled to lean against the shelves at her back and get relief—but this is a poor apology for a stool.

Many shop girls, who are not ill in the literal sense of the word, are able to work, but the day's work is gone through despondently and with a "disproportionate sense of effort;" they do not know what is the matter with them, yet they continue to feel ill and dejected—this is the result of over-work. This lowered vitality, should any attack of sickness come, tends to put the patient more in danger, and sickness will come unless some change is made in time. Add to this another cause of sickness, namely, the want of nourishing food, which results from the pittance given by employers, and we have a sad state of affairs. There would seem to be no escape for the poor girl except through the philanthropy of others and this has been attempted with success

at a place called Sunninghill near London, England. It was founded by the late Sir Frederick Grey and is called a Home of Rest and has within a year received forty-five girls. This Home accommodates at one time eight girls, and the rooms are pleasantly furnished: pictures hang on the walls and books and magazines strew the table. "In the garden, tired girls resting among the flowers beds, under the shadow of the trees, form pathetic pictures that might tempt an artist to paint. It is half sad, half amusing, to hear those girls prattle of the delight of those lazy, happy days, when in many cases they have for the first time been introduced to rural sights and sounds. One girl has spent the larger part of her young life polishing coffin handles, without any break of brighter associations until she came to Sunninghill; another had turned a mangle as long as she could remember, without a holiday."

The above shows that in London, they have got even further than the providing of stools; they take an interest in their health sufficient to provide a Home where they may recuperate. In New York the late A. T. Steward left money to be devoted to building a Women's Hotel wherein the shop girls could be independent and self-supporting; through some cause or other, we know not what, it has not succeeded as well as might have been expected. We have heard that the rates were excessive and that some very stringent rules were enforced, so stringent as to become humiliating. That this should be allowed to be even a partial failure is greatly to be deplored, and it is to be hoped that measures will be taken to improve it.

Some idea of the importance of shop girls, apart from benevolent considerations, may be gained when the fact is known that nearly one-eighth of the commercial population of the city of Boston consists or is composed of shop girls. If more attention were paid by employers to the health of their employées, and a kindly interest shown in their welfare, the results both physically and pecuniarily would be very beneficent and gratifying.

Sappho.

FREE TRADE AND THE FARMERS.

All over England the supply of farms now greatly exceeds the demand for them. Various causes have contributed to produce this result. In the first place, the run of bad harvests has severely tried all tenants who have not been abundantly supplied with capital upon which they could fall back. The value of those meteorological forecasts which we daily publish is indisputable; but Mr. Scott does not undertake to prophesy the yield of next year's harvest. On this matter many people are satisfied with a sort of rough and ready form of the doctrine of chances. Nor do they fail to be misled by the besetting fallacy with which that doctrine is connected. It is no doubt true that the chances are heavily against the occurrence of five bad harvests in succession. But it does not follow that, as many people rather assume than deliberately infer, after five bad harvests the sixth is likely to be good. On that point no conclusion can be drawn whatever. A small farmer when he takes a bit of land probably reckons on being able to tide over one or two bad seasons. But five or six throw him on his beam ends. All his plans are spoiled by the failure of the condition on which they depended, and he throws up his farm in disgust, thanking his stars that he is not a leaseholder. The present state of agricultural affairs has pressed with special severity on tenant-farmers on a small scale. A peasant proprietor would get in his corn with his own hands, assisted by his family. The large farmers put on an extra supply of labour, and took full advantage of the golden days of August. The great object of the unfortunate class who are just struggling for a bare livelihood was to spend as little as possible. All through the precious days of sunshine they leisurely reaped and slowly carried, till the rain came and found a good deal of corn still out, and soaked it through, and even penetrated many stacks which were neither thatched nor covered with a tarpaulin. So ears sprouted and lost their goodness, and thus the harvest became worse than ever. This, however, is not the whole of the present crisis. It is not only the small farms that are vacant. Mere combination will not extricate the landlords from their disagreeable situation. Many large farms are lying idle, and though this is probably but a temporary phase, it is sufficiently serious in itself and its consequences. For part of their embarrassment the landlords have themselves to thank. They have persisted in putting their game before their tenants, till at last the tenants have been forced to consider whether they should sacrifice themselves to the game and the landlord. The pheasant vice of excessive preservation has become an instrument to scourge the preservers. To this practical evil the Ground Game Act has applied an appropriate, if not an adequate, remedy. The axe has not, perhaps, been laid to the root of the tree, but the tenants have in some measure been enabled to protect themselves, and the landlords have to some extent been rescued from the consequences of their own imprudence. But the Act must have time to work. In England it will not be long in operating, for English tenancies are as a rule tenancies from year to year. Independently of legislative interference, the landlords have been taught a lesson on the subject of game. When several candidates competed for every vacant farm, the interests of the farmer were naturally postponed to the sacred pheasant and the venerated hare. But times have changed. The tenants have, for the time at any rate, got the upper hand, and landowners will think a good many times