

OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

(From an Occasional Correspondent.)

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, December 4th, 1871.

The "Tyne Rowing Club," have been holding their Annual Dinner, with great success, and the Regatta to be held next year is talked of with enthusiasm. I send you portraits of the President, Hugh Taylor, Esq., of Chipchase Castle, and the Hon. Secretary, Thomas Allison, Esq. Both gentlemen take great interest in aquatics, and Mr. Taylor, who is a wealthy coal-owner, and an Ex.-M. P., is very liberal. Mr. Allison is quite a young man, and has yet some good work in him.

The excitement consequent on the great boat-race has now subsided, although numbers will ever remember the day. Chambers' crew being the favorite, large sums of money at 7 to 4, were bet on them, and the working classes, in small sums, have lost heavily. A general holiday was held and thousands availed themselves of the privilege to witness the race.

It was an affair that might have been expected to create a great stir in the district, but, singular to say, there was no extraordinary excitement, especially considering the way in which the population of a thoroughly sporting district have turned out for events of much less importance when set for decision on the waters of "coaly Tyne." The sudden, and we still think mysterious death of Renforth, one might suppose, would have given an unusual interest to the race, especially as, one way or other, he was concerned so greatly in the circumstances by which, more or less directly, it was brought about. For some years the Tyne, after having achieved many great successes, was really without anything like a crew up to first-class form, mainly owing to dissensions, which prevented good men being brought together; and though in 1868 the late Robert Chambers took a crew to Paris, and won the first prize for fours there, and subsequently carried everything before him on the various rivers in the country, it was not until the following year and after his death that a four, which fairly earned for itself the title of Champion of England, by winning it in rowing both on Thames and Tyne, was formed on the last-named river. In that year the first of the revived Thames Regattas was held, and Renforth, Winship, Martin, and Taylor showed form which must have enabled them to win had they not, towards the close of a terrific race in their trial heat with a Thomas four stroked by Hammerton, fouled a large when they had just begun to take what appeared a decided lead. The result of that meeting they very properly considered as most unsatisfactory, and afterwards in a couple of home-and-home matches, each for £200 a-side, they defeated with great ease a splendid Thames four, consisting of Kelley, Hammerton, J. H. Sadler, and W. Messenger, and who, previous to the first race at Putney, booked winning a certainty. The second meeting was regarded as little better than a row over for the winners of the first, though as a matter of fact, the South countrymen, with their positions in the boat altered, made a much better fight of it than was expected. Last year, it will be well remembered, Renforth and his crew, constituted as when they rowed the Thames four, triumphantly defeated the St. John's crew on the St. Lawrence, and it seemed that a four had been got together which might defy the world for a long time to come. Matters, however, had not gone very smoothly in the championship when in America, especially as regards Taylor and the stroke oar of the boat, and a split was the consequence, the paired race at the beginning of the present year, in which Renforth and his old opponent, Harry Kelley, beat Taylor and Winship, widening the breach. In response to the invitation of the St. John's men for a second match, Renforth again sought the aid of Kelley, and these two, with Chambers and Percy, and Bright as spare man, entered on that American engagement which was terminated by the death of Renforth, and so unsettled his crew that it seemed hopeless to expect they should hold their own against another English crew stroked by T. Winship, and consisting of him, J. H. Sadler (of Teddington), R. Bagnall, and James Taylor, not to speak of some good American crews, one of whom, the Wards, succeeded in bowling over both the English lots. With the result of this, to Renforth's crew, most unfortunate trip, the supporters of neither four were satisfied, as each was determined to have the relative claims of the crews decided beyond question. Chambers issued a challenge to the world as soon as he landed in England, and Winship and Taylor were as ready to accept as he was to offer it, the consequence being that with a little parleying on either side the articles were drawn up on October 9.

The following is the opinion of the special correspondent of the *Sporting Life* on the champion crew:—"Winship must be accounted one of the very best stroke-oarsmen that ever sat in a boat, and it is but justice to say that Sadler rowed admirably throughout, and furnished another proof of how good a man may become by persevering despite discouragements. Bagnall, the youngest man of the two crews, is considered as the rising champion of Tyneside; and whatever may become of him in the future, his career so far has been very successful. To Taylor's careful management of the steering apparatus the success of his crew is in no slight degree owing; and if, as we are led to believe, the race of Wednesday is to be his last, he will retire after a run of success such as falls to the lot of few oarsmen."

At the desire of the Tyne Rowing Club some mention was made of the Transatlantic crews, and Mr. J. J. Clarke, hon. secretary to the regatta, spoke as follows:—"Some one had mentioned the Transatlantic crews, and he (Mr. Clarke) hoped that means would be taken to invite them to the regatta next year. (Cheers.) He thought such an event would bring credit to the regatta and all connected with it; as the Canadians had invited them to be present at their regattas, it was as little as Englishmen could do to invite them. (Continued cheering.) He hoped that the committee would not rest content with one successful regatta, but continue to improve it until it beat even the Thames National." (Cheers.)

Several attempts have been made to get Sadler, Kelley, and others matched since the great race, but it is now confidently expected no races will take place this winter. Winship's crew intend visiting Canada and the States next year.

R. E.

OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 96.—HON. EDWARD BLAKE, Q. C.

PREMIER OF ONTARIO.

After a brief struggle on the address, in reply to the speech from the Throne, the Government of the Hon. J. S. Macdonald was defeated by a majority of one; but as there were eight constituencies unrepresented the Cabinet did not consider it advisable to then abandon the Ship of State. Another vote, however, left the Ministers in a minority of 17, giving a majority vote of a full house on the Opposition side. After this unmistakable declaration of the sentiment of the Assembly, the Hon. J. S. Macdonald at once tendered his resignation and that of his colleagues. On Wednesday, Dec. 20th, Mr. Blake undertook the formation of a Cabinet, and on the following day completed his arrangements. The customary adjournment of the Legislative Assembly on the occasion of a change in the Cabinet thus happily coincided with the holidays, and legislators had the privilege of flavouring their conversation over the Christmas dinner with speculations concerning the political future predicated on the supposed temper of the country and the chances of the new Cabinet.

That usually exact authority, *Morgan's Parliamentary Companion*, is silent as to the date of Mr. Blake's birth; but we believe he is now only about thirty-eight years of age, though he appears a good deal older. His career, commenced under most favourable auspices, has been an exceedingly fortunate one, as indeed his high talents and evenness of temperament were well calculated to earn for him. He is of gentle and unobtrusive manner; ready in debate; a close but somewhat sophistical reasoner, and a most caustic antagonist in the oratorical tournaments of Parliament. If he shall also prove to be an able statesman we shall have pleasure in congratulating both him and his native Province on the fact. Undoubtedly he is an orator. He has great command of very choice English; his words and his ideas are harmoniously arranged, so that even his opponents listen with pleasure to his speeches, and are only sorry when a hair-splitting quibble, or an occasional ungenerous remark mars the otherwise faultless discourse. He first entered public life at the general election in 1867, the first held under the Confederation Act. He was then returned for West Durham to the House of Commons, and for South Bruce to the Legislative Assembly. No other man of the present generation of politicians has risen so quickly to eminence as a leader; and perhaps very few enjoy so large a share of respect from their opponents. It is but now, however, that the crucial test will be applied to his qualities of statesmanship; if he leads Ontario successfully for the next four years he may fairly hope for something higher in the future.

Mr. Edward Blake is the son of the late Chancellor of Upper Canada, the Hon. W. Hume Blake, a gentleman who took an active part in politics some twenty or twenty-five years ago. On both the paternal and maternal side he is descended from Irish families of high respectability. He was born near Toronto, at the University of which he finished his education, taking the degree of M. A. He was called to the Bar in 1856, and made Q. C. in 1863. He is generally reckoned the best Chancery lawyer in Ontario, and enjoys a very large and lucrative practice.

No. 97.—HON. M. C. CAMERON, Q. C.

The recent change in the Ontario Government has driven from the Treasury benches into the cold shades of Opposition the gentleman whose name is mentioned above. Mr. M. C. Cameron is a man of a peculiar stamp. It is a puzzle how he ever got into political life, and a greater puzzle why he should have so long remained in it. The *profanum vulgus* get no courtesies from him; he makes rather a boast of his contempt of the press. Yet the people have given him their confidence and the press its support under circumstances which precluded the notion in either case of the existence of motives other than those that were strictly honourable. He has a dash of chivalry about him, however, as we well remember its manifestation at Ottawa in 1866 when a member of the fourth estate got into a "difficulty" with a member of the House, and was brought to the bar by the Sergeant-at-arms on the Speaker's order. Mr. Cameron then, with singular eloquence and felicity of argument, made such a defence on behalf of the peccant journalist as no doubt did much to mollify the temper of the House towards him.

Matthew Crooks Cameron was born at Toronto about five-and-forty years ago, his father at that time holding a responsible position in the office of the Canada Company. On the completion of his education at Upper Canada College, he studied law, and was called to the Bar in 1849, gaining the silk gown in 1863. He has held several offices in the literary and commercial associations having their headquarters at Toronto; and as a criminal and *nisi prius* lawyer, holds rank so high that some adjudge him the equal of the Hon. John Hillyard Cameron. His first entry into political life was in 1861, when he successfully contested North Ontario, and in the subsequent sessions which that short-lived Parliament held was rather distinguished as a fire-eating Conservative, having earned the *soubriquet* of "Anglo-Saxon Cameron." He was defeated at the general election in 1863 by the Hon. Mr. Macdougall, then a member of the Sandfield-Macdonald-Dorion

Government. The following year, however, when the Coalition was formed between the Hon. George Brown and the Conservatives, and when Mr. Macdougall had to come to his constituents for re-election, Mr. Cameron showed his defiance of party allegiances by opposing the new Minister, and this time (1864) he was successful. He sat out the balance of that Parliament (the last of the Old Province of Canada) following an entirely independent course. In 1867 he was again defeated in the same constituency, but returned to the Local House for Toronto East, which he still represents. On the formation of the Ontario Cabinet in 1867 by the Hon. J. S. Macdonald Mr. Cameron became Provincial Secretary, which office he held up to a few months ago when he exchanged with Mr. Richards for that of the Crown Lands. Of course he went out of office last week with his colleagues, and we shall be much surprised if the new Government do not find him one of the most trenchant critics in the opposition. Though far from sturdy of frame his voice has a clear ringing sound, and few can beat him at sarcasm of the most incisive kind.

SCENES IN MANITOBA.

We give in the present issue three sketches of scenes in Manitoba. One shews the residence of Governor Archibald, which is dignified with the name of Silver Heights. It is pleasantly situated on the north bank of the river Assiniboine, about four miles from the Town of Winnipeg. It is said to be the best finished dwelling house in the Province of Manitoba.

The other two views relate to military movements, one of them shewing the arrival of the troops at Fort Garry at the time of their crossing the Assiniboine; the other the departure of a detachment of No. 2 Company to garrison Fort Pembina. Of the first we are informed that the Manitoba Expedition reached Fort Garry about 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the 18th November. The troops were in good health and spirits with the exception of two or three who were suffering from the effects of severe chills. Those who had been through the former expedition say that the labour was less severe on this one, but the hardships much greater on account of the weather.

Our Fort Garry correspondent sends us the following concerning the march out towards Pembina:

"About 8:30 a.m. on the 24th November, a bright clear morning that made the snow-covered plains almost too dazzling for the gaze of human eyes, and sent the breath from the nostrils of men and horses in silvery frozen spray towards the ground, whitening with a premature weariness the moustache of many a young soldier, a train of sleighs and armed men wound its serpentine way across the Assiniboine and took the road for Pembina. It was a detachment formed from No. 2 Company of the Provisional Battalion of Riflemen stationed at Fort Garry, formerly known as the Quebec Service Company, and comprising some of the hardest cases and stoutest hearts of the Quebec Battalion.

"This detachment is destined to garrison Pembina Fort during the winter months, and has before it a cold and arduous march of over three score miles."

CHICAGO IN 1830.

Among the wonders of Western progress Chicago stands pre-eminent. Within living memory its site was a swampy desolate waste. Forty years ago it contained but a few insignificant houses, as exhibited in our illustration. Some six or seven years later (in 1837) the population was ascertained to be about four thousand. In 1850 it had swelled to thirty thousand, and at the present day, but for the terrible ravages of the great fire, it would undoubtedly have reached about two hundred and fifty thousand. No other city in the world, either in ancient or modern times, ever made such rapid progress; and, happily, few cities have undergone such a terrible affliction as that of the great Chicago fire, which has been illustrated and described in previous numbers. The recuperative energy of the people is immense, and we soon expect to see Chicago resume its former status of Queen City of the West. What a contrast it furnished before the fire to its condition forty years ago!

A MAN THAT ÆSOP SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.—One day the village grocer nailed up a salt cod on one of the shutters of his shop, and underneath he wrote in chalk, "codfish for sale cheap for cash here." Presently, in came an acquaintance and said, "what do you have 'here' on that sign about codfish for? You don't sell codfish or any other goods in any other place but here. Any fool would know where you sold them without that word."

"That's so," said the grocer, "boy, wipe out the word 'here' from the codfish sign." The boy obeyed, and the next day another critic appeared. Said he, "For Cash! who ever knew you to trust for any goods? Why do you say that you sell all your goods for cash?" "You are right," said the grocer; "boy, wipe out the words 'for cash' from the codfish sign." This was done, and shortly after a third critic came to the shop, objecting to the word "cheap." "Who ever knew you to undersell other dealers?" said he, "you don't sell any cheaper than they. Your price is just the same as theirs, and more if you can get it. Cheap! cheap! what do you have that word for?" "Well, it is not of much use," said the grocer; "boy, wipe out the word 'cheap' from the codfish sign." Again the boy did as his master bade, and the same day critic number four found fault with the phrase "for sale." Said he, "For Sale! no one ever knew you to give away codfish. Of course, you keep them for sale; there is no occasion for telling people what everybody knows." "There is something in that," said the grocer, "boy, wipe out 'for sale' from the codfish sign." This left the salt fish and the single word "codfish" beneath. It was but a few minutes after that a customer who came in to buy some goods, remarked to the grocer, "What a funny sign you've got out here; what darned fool wouldn't know that a codfish was nailed on your shutter?" "So they would," was the reply; "boy, wipe out the word 'codfish' from that sign." The boy obeyed, and the fish remained with no inscription.