

The Victorian Era Ball.



WHEN Her Excellency the Countess of Aberdeen invited the women of the University of Toronto to take part in her fancy-dress ball which was to represent various phases of the progress made in the Victorian Era, they felt that a great honour had been done them, and that every possible effort should be made to comply with Her Excellency's request. It was indeed a memorable occasion, and the scene was well nigh indescribable; but it is perhaps possible to give a general idea of how the transformation of that great, bare building, the Armouries, into a pretty hall, filled with brightly and beautifully dressed people, was effected.

The building was divided into two parts of almost equal size, one the supper-room, the other the ball-room,—both of them walled in with white bunting. The posts supporting the bunting were decorated in pink and green, and from one to the other were hung rows of evergreen, while incandescent lights with globes of ground glass, peeping from the green, shed a soft light over all. At the north side opposite the entrance, was the dais erected for the vice-regal party. At the back of this was scenery representing the balcony of a palace, through which throngs of people, entering and leaving the dais, passed during the evening. On the dais were the chairs of their Excellencies, covered with a canopy, while at the top, in front, the screen between the three arches was decorated with evergreens and red electric lights, forming in the middle a crown with the letters V.R.I. above it, on one side the date 1837, on the other 1897. The groups of three arches in the middle of the other sides of the room were decorated in a similar manner with evergreens, and had respectively the words *Canada*, *India* and *Africa*, written upon them,—Canada occupying the side opposite the dais. All round the dancing floor were rows of steps, covered with green linen, sloping backwards towards the top, where a gallery encircled the hall. These were only the most prominent of the decorations; but every detail was so perfectly arranged that the whole appearance of the ball-room presented a scene not easily forgotten.

When the University sets entered the room, nearly all who were to dance in the fancy dances were already seated. The seats on each