

OPENINGS IN CANADA.

It used to be the case that a man who went to the United States and went West, was able to get a free grant of a farm of 100 acres, on which he could settle and build a home. These opportunities were perhaps exhausted so far as the United States were concerned, though in the western part of Canada the opening still existed. But what he should like to impress on agricultural labourers in this old country of England was, that it was no great trial of hardship to shift to Australia, New Zealand or Canada, to the other worlds which were open to their occupation, where they could, on easy terms, get land in all sizes to cultivate.

NO GOOD BEING HOME-TIED.

In England they could not be constantly breaking up a farm into small pieces, and then bringing the small pieces together and making a farm of them. The difficulty of joining and separating pieces of land, and the loss of capital involved in the operation, were so considerable that farms in England could not easily be changed in their character. But in the countries to which he was directing their attention there was a great unoccupied world in which they select land of any size, and the freedom of combination and selection met all requirements. He recognised that it was not a pleasant, or an easy task, to talk to the people of this country of leaving their native land. But why was the world so broad? It was made so wide to give men room to wander upon it, and they must not cling too tenaciously to their affection for their old country where they were born and reared. There was no man who turned to Cornwall with greater affection, or more readily recognized and hailed a brother Cornishman wherever he wandered than he did. But they must rise above mere county feeling, and be ready to test their fortunes in other lands, conscious that they were safe wherever they travelled under the sun—(applause).

BRITAIN MUST COME OUT OF THE MUD.

Said Mr. Courtney in conclusion: English farmers and labourers must not allow themselves to stick in the mud and become fossilised, but be living, active, pliable, always ready to accept new chances, new conditions, new fortunes, under new skies and under new suns—(applause).

A Pyrotechnical Battle.

The spectators held their breath and not a murmur was heard from the vast sea of human beings, looking on at the grand spectacular drama being performed before their eyes.

The occasion is the storming of the Ice Palace, which is one of the chief attractions of a Canadian Winter Carnival. Fully ten thousand snow-shoers in picturesque blanket suits, supported by the militia and Indians, the latter decked out in his newest "war-path" toggery, including the all important feathers, advance to the attack. The gallant defenders of the ice palace are evidently expecting the foe and are uneasily turning their search lights in every direction. Meanwhile, by a peculiar system of lights the ice now appears glowing red as if the Castle were all afire, then its cornices and turrets turn a vivid green, quickly changing to all colors of the rainbow. The iridescent effect is dazzling, and the immense crowd is dumb with admiration. But hark, what is that hissing sound? All eyes are turned in the direction from which it comes. A thin vein of fire reaches high into the heavens and breaks into a thousand myriads of brilliant stars. An answering signal shoots into the sky from the ice forts. It is the signal for the attack to begin. Thousands of snow-shoers, Indians and the militia seem to rise from the ground, every one holding a torch, and bear down upon the Castle, pouring in volleys of rockets, colored lights, maroons and red hot shells until the heavens appeared like a canopy of fire. Nor have the defenders in the Castle been less active. They open upon the enemy with a whirlwind of fire, mines of crackers, volleys of canisters, dragon and fly rockets and flights of tourbillons. Ever and anon comes the explosion of mammoth shells. Then there are search light balloons, festooned with signal rockets, containing the diamond chain and even musical rockets. The brilliancy of light and coloring in the volcano of living fire and curtains of golden flame and the magic changes of illumination, are bewildering. The changing appearance of the ice structures, as the variously colored fires are reflected upon or shine through their semi-transparent walls, is perfectly kaleidoscopic. And so the pretty pyrotechnical battle rages for over an hour with varying success. The sky is strewn with gold and silver, emerald and ruby, crimson and blue stars, and the air is heavy with the peculiarly exhilarating fumes of gunpowder and ruddy with the glow of fire. The scene throughout is grand beyond expression. Everything, however, must come to an end. The assailants go over the wall with a rush, and the main fortification falls into the hands of the enemy. Nothing is heard but that sighing murmur of the multitude which testifies to an admiration too deep for loud outbursts of applause.

There are a number of new features never before attempted to be tried at the Carnival to be held at Ottawa, from January 21st to 26th which will be an exhibition of pyrotechnics which has never been equalled.

The House of Lords.

(From the "Times" of 1st Nov., 1894.)

In his speech in Edinburgh Lord Salisbury laid much stress on the fact that what the Prime Minister has demanded at Bradford was not a reform of the Upper House, but a revolution in the State. At one time Lord Rosebery himself was, or appeared to be, in favour of the former course instead of the latter. He has now, however, in spite of his theoretical preference for a second Chamber, practically surrendered to those among his followers who are bent upon getting rid of its restraints, and has declared for the abrogation of the "veto" of the House of Lords, which he admits to be equivalent to its absolute nullification as a political force. But Lord Rosebery's secession does not affect the question whether it would not be wise and practicable to introduce certain changes in the constitution of the Upper House which would remove the only substantial objections that can be urged, with any show of reason, against that Branch of the Legislature. There are difficulties in the existing system which are felt by many of the most convinced supporters of the principles of a second Chamber. Those who believe that the House of Lords as at present constituted, has on the whole most admirably performed its functions in the State, and who deny that it has attempted permanently to obstruct the decided wishes of the nation, must desire to remove these difficulties. We cannot pretend, of course, that any change of this character would satisfy Lord Rosebery. What he and his party are aiming at is to establish the complete supremacy of the momentary majority in the House of Commons. Any second Chamber that endeavoured to do its duty as a checking power would be as obnoxious as the present House of Lords. But that is no reason for declining to consider a scheme of reform which would strengthen the Upper House. We infer from Lord Salisbury's language in Edinburgh that he is not opposed in principle to such a measure. "I have heard," he said, "many proposals for change in the constitution of the House of Lords; some of them I sympathise with; some of them are really bad; but they all agree in this, that they would end in making the House of Lords much more strong against the House of Commons than it is now." He pointed out, further on, that the Prime Minister at Bradford "had not touched the question of reform, because a reformed second Chamber would be more hostile to his objects."

The two main points on which reform of the House of Lords appears to be desirable are the exercise of some sort of selection among the hereditary peers, with a limitation of the numbers entitled to sit, and vote, and the extension of the right of the Crown to create life peers. Whether an elective element should be admitted, and if so whether the election should be direct or indirect, are much more disputable questions. The experiment of indirect election has not turned out a great success in some foreign countries, and, though some safe and practicable plan might be devised for giving representation in the Upper House to public bodies, corporate or other, the innovation would be a pregnant one and might open the door to further inroads on the stability which is the special characteristic of our existing second chamber. The House of Lords has the advantage of being rooted in history, like the Monarchy itself, and, like the Monarchy, it has modified its action so that it has never come seriously in contact with the democratic spirit. This natural development of institutions is perfectly consistent with the preservation of that stable character which belongs to the House of Lords alone among the second chambers of Europe. But the popular appreciation of it is clouded by the excessive numbers of the peers who take no active interest in politics, and by the unnecessary limitation of the numbers of eminent men entitled to sit by a title other than hereditary, in the Upper House. In practice the former objection rarely applies, though the possibility of it is always to be reckoned with. In principle the latter limitation has been qualified by the presence of the Bishops and the recent creation of the law-lords. We have only to proceed upon the lines of reform already marked out either by general usage or by legislative enactment. A comparatively small number of peers, mostly those who have held high office in the State, take part habitually in the proceedings of the Upper House. Only on the very rarest occasions is there anything approaching to a full muster of the mem-

bers entitled to sit and vote. The method of representative selection has been admitted, with certain variations of forms, in the case of the Scotch and Irish peers. We do not pretend of course to advocate any cut-and-dried scheme, and we are aware that any practical proposals would have to be worked out by statement of responsibility and experience. There are some suggestions, however, that may be offered. If the method of selection were extended to the entire body of the peerage and regulated by the proportional vote, a picked body of about 200—say, one-third of the whole, reckoning the Scotch and Irish peers with those of the United Kingdom—would probably include every person of real weight and distinction now entitled to sit, and every one who exercises the right habitually. It would exclude by an automatic process the idlers, and the disreputable, of whom there must be a few in any hereditary body, and who are by no means unknown in elected assemblies. To these chosen representatives of the hereditary nobility the addition of a considerable number of life peers—some, perhaps, to be chosen without restriction by the Crown, that is, by the ministry of the day, and some to be selected according to the precedent of the Bishops and the law-lords, from certain specified categories—would contribute an element which, though not absent in the present House of Lords, is not present in adequate force. Intelligence and cultivation, as well as property and political experience, have their proper place in a second Chamber.

As for the political results of such a change, we believe, with Lord Salisbury, that the position of the House of Lords in the State would be strengthened, not weakened. Nor would the effect be materially altered by the introduction of an elective element, on the assumption, of course, that it would not depend on the direct appeal to a democratic electorate. Any second Chamber, as Lord Salisbury argued in his Edinburgh speech, must, unless it is a mere shadow of the first Chamber, represent those influences and tendencies which modern Radicalism has alarmed and repelled. When Mr. Gladstone appealed to the "masses" against the "classes" he made a mischievous and unpatriotic use of a social fact which is manifest and inevitable, and which is one of the reasons why second Chambers are necessary. The House of Lords is not more hostile to separatism and collectivism than any other body of educated and well-to-do men in the country. But though the introduction of the elective element into the House of Lords would not, under rational conditions, bring the majority in the House of Commons an inch nearer the "harmony" they seek for—which means their own supremacy—it would undoubtedly open both in respect of its principles and of its limitations, a much wider field of discussion than either of the other changes to which we have referred. As Sir Henry Maine has pointed out, the doctrine of *vox populi vox dei*, which is at the root of the claims of the democracy, cannot be extended to two branches of the same Legislature chosen in different ways. "What is expected," he says, from a well constituted second Chamber is not a rival infallibility but an additional security." A House of Lords including the most capable and experienced men among the peers, chosen among themselves by proportional election, and reinforced by a body of life peers representing the intellectual interests and the solid acquisitions which too often find no favour with popular constituencies, would furnish the desired security. "The security of concurrence after full examination of the measure concurred in," even more unquestionably than the existing second Chamber. We have repeatedly drawn attention to the importance of taking up this question of the strengthening of the Upper House by measures consistent with its constitutional basis and existing functions. It is to be regretted that nothing was done while the Unionist party were in power to carry into effect some such reforms as we have indicated, with due precautions and under the guidance of statesmen thoroughly acquainted with the working of the present system. We must remember at the same time, that, as Lord Salisbury has pointed out, no reforms that would preserve the independence and strengthen the authority of the second Chamber would satisfy the destructive demands of those whose mouthpiece the Prime Minister has become.

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The pastime of skating may be classed under two heads: Ordinary and Fancy. In Canada it is a difficult matter to find a person who has not at some time during his life taken part in this exhilarating exercise, but the number of those who have become expert enough to be classed as fancy skaters is very small. Some men and even women have, through persistent effort and practice, rendered themselves so proficient as to enable them to cut figures on the ice, which to novices seem well nigh impossible. A great deal, however, depends on the grace accompanying ever movement. The difficulty attending a successful performance of such feats on skates, as the figure eight on one foot forward, and on one foot backward, curved angles, cross-cuts or anvils, the figure three, sketches of birds, fancy designs, words, etc., can readily be understood. Mr. Herbert S. Evans, of Boston, carried off the championship of Canada last year at the Fancy Skating Tournament held in Quebec during the Carnival.

At the Ottawa Carnival to be held the week commencing January 21st a Fancy Skating Championship competition will take place.

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