

MONTREAL GOSSIP.

"Jannock to the back-bone," was a Lancashire man's comment on our new Governor-General last week, after hearing his lordship's sincere and sensible speech, and gladdening his eyes with the sight of the most popular of all the Stanleys.

Like most natives of his country, His Excellency dislikes a fuss, and his first official visit to the commercial metropolis of Canada passed off very quietly. Our French fellow citizens are delighted at his perfect mastery of their language, our old English residents are delighted at his truly English appearance, and we are all delighted at the apparent genuineness of the man. It is a foregone conclusion that at the next vice regal ball in Montreal we shall not be invited to take champagne and given Sohmer.

The Kermesse is a thing of the past. Last Wednesday night the fair and fatigued ambulancières, after ten days of most energetic work,

"Folded their tents like the Arabs,
And silently stole away."

Or rather, the tents were folded for them the next morning, and Place d'Armes is now in its normal condition. The bazaar was really very pretty, and profitable, too, the proceeds being over twelve thousand dollars. The scene on the last evening was most animated, the strains of the band being hushed to admit of the sale by auction of the odds and ends remaining on the tables. The auctioneer, a prominent society man, was quite witty, and managed his amateur sale capitally. He had some difficulty in disposing of a quantity of cosmetics, pearl powder and such like, which, to the credit, be it said, of our fair townspeople, remained unsold. What a motley crowd any public entertainment in Montreal is sure to bring together! At the Kermesse, the different elements composing the population of our city were most noticeable. In one corner might be seen a reverend Abbé, in clerical hat and soutane, talking earnestly with the lady president of a table; in another, a Scotch railway magnate of princely wealth and Presbyterian tenets was making lavish purchases; groups of pretty girls, whose bright eyes, glowing complexions, and graceful figures proclaimed them *belles Canadiennes*, even before they opened their pretty mouths to chatter French, were powerful rivals to the more stately and serious, though equally charming damsels who were such efficient saleswomen at the English, Irish, Scottish and American tables. The lady president of the French table, a most energetic worker in the cause of charity, was a Jewess; in another part of the tent, a distinguished Catholic authoress and a fair cousin of the late Lord Palmerston worked in concert.

The Irish table, possibly to shew how Irish manufactures have been discouraged of late, turned into a Japanese stall, and, profiting by the existence of our well-furnished Japanese shops, became a very artistically arranged Japanese stall indeed, and a very popular one as well. The kitchen department was a most important one, where gas stoves blazed, cooks toiled, corks popped, and everybody, in Yankee parlance, "flew around," except one old woman who, in the thickest of the fray, sat with her feet on a chair before her, calmly peeling potatoes into a tin pan. There she sat for over a week, happy because irresponsible—except for the potatoes. The kitchen was a dreadful place for seizures. No box or hamper destined for any stall whatever that found its way into that tent was ever seen again. Many were the complaints, but restitution was, naturally, impossible. At the Grand Café sat a negress who had been hired to wash cups and glasses, with the distinct understanding that she was to wear a red turban, and so make a picturesque addition to the *personnel* of the table. Once established, she refused flatly to be crowned with a bandana, and after several days of utter idleness was, very properly, dismissed. Why is it that people say, "worked like a nigger"? Surely the negro who works hard has yet to be born!

During the fearful thunderstorm which threatened the Kermesse with ruin, one young lady, who is as sprightly in fact as she is fragile in appearance, calmly walked up to terrified beings, who had preferred to face the dangers of the Kermesse rather than the dangers of the elements, and in unflinching accents asked them to "take a throw on a sewing machine," upon which the lightning at the moment was playing brightly. A young scion of French nobility caused some amusement by

becoming the winner of a gorgeous doll, with a Saratoga full of equally gorgeous garments, which he carried about, proudly displaying them to his lady friends.

Apropos of the various elements of Montreal society, one of the most refined looking men at the Kermesse was a young Iroquois law student, a former pupil of St. Mary's College, who is noted no less for his gentleman-like instincts than for his polished manners. It would certainly surprise the ghost of Jacques Cartier, if by any chance he or it hovered round the Kermesse, in anxiety respecting the future well-being of a section of his Canadians, were he to behold a descendant of the fierce Iroquois with a rose in his button hole, fanning a pretty girl while she ate her strawberry-ice, and whispering "sweet nothings" into her ear in equally faultless English and French. Whether or not reckless generosity be a trait in the Indian character, this son of the Grand Chief of Caughnawaga was lavish in his purchases, and seldom refused the oft-repeated invitation to "take a throw."

You have doubtless heard of the unfortunate damper thrown over the *Kermesse* by the difference of opinion respecting the word *non-sectarian*, held by His Grace the Archbishop of Montreal and His Honour Mr. Justice Church. The latter gentleman in his opening address spoke with approval of the Notre Dame Hospital, as being modelled on the Montreal General Hospital, and in the true sense of the word, a non-sectarian institution. His Grace Archbishop Fabre, however, protested against the assertion through his Chancellor the Abbé Emard, and stated most emphatically that the Notre Dame Hospital was *de facto* under religious control. *Inde iras*—and a sigh of regret arose at the dire prospect of the split which it was feared would take place in the camp. Happily however, nothing of the kind occurred. Our age is indeed a wonderful one, made up of a series of contradictions and endowed with that liberal spirit which succeeds in harmonizing the most conflicting opinions. Hence all parties concerned continued satisfied and smiling, and the *Star* came to the conclusion that the Montreal General Hospital is a non-sectarian institution under Protestant control, and Notre Dame Hospital a non-sectarian institution under Catholic control. Which is all very well at present, but there are those who, Cassandra like, prophesy that the day may come when "Jew, Turk and Atheist," exercising their privilege of purchasing a governorship of Notre Dame Hospital, may constitute a majority, and cause the institution to resemble still more closely that one upon which it is modelled—the Montreal General Hospital.

In the meantime *Vive la Kermesse* and all honour to the charitable ladies of the different denominations who so indefatigably worked in the cause of charity.

The "improvements" are still being carried on with unabated vigour in our streets, with this variety, that Mr. St. George has his asphaltting corps at work, and if you escape destruction from a falling Methodist on St. James' Street, you are liable to tumble into a cauldron of boiling pitch on St. Catharine Street. Much of the building and dismantling is caused by last year's fires. It is to be hoped that there will be a lull in the daily blazes for a while—seeing that they have materially injured the credit of the city abroad.

Experts sent here recently from the States have reported the fire department to be in so wretched a condition, that the companies have sent up their rates—not twenty per cent., as the *Star* had it, but thirty-five per cent. as I have learned from private information. And those firms who hitherto have placed their insurance under the protection of the American Eagle will be glad humbly to return to the ægis of the British Lion.

OLD MORTALITY.

Curran was engaged in a legal argument. Behind him stood his colleague, a gentleman whose person was remarkably tall and slender, and who had originally intended to take orders. The judge observed that the case under discussion involved a question of ecclesiastical law. "Then," said Curran, "I can refer your lordship to a high authority behind me, who was once intended for the church, though, in my opinion, he was fitter for the steeple."