

MR. BROWNING will soon give us another play upon a Greek subject.

SIR ARTHUR HELPS has a new book on the "History of the Russian Court."

PHILIP VERNON SMITH has just published a work on the "History of English Institutions." It is too short, and he omits several important institutions, at least so says the *Athenaeum*.

A forthcoming volume on the "History of the English Drama," by Prof. A. W. WARD, is announced. This is a subject on which comparatively little has been written, and coming as it does from the pen of so eminent a scholar cannot fail to secure favorable reception.

### Wickets in the West.

*Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit.*

*Time.*—A scorching afternoon in the first week of September, the year of *Grace*, 1873.

*Scene.*—Inside "the Hut," on the Cricket ground; half a dozen men in flannels in the easiest positions, with an equal number of soda-water glasses of "shandy-gaff," a monotonous stillness prevails in this "tobacco-parliament," such as is consequent on a couple of hours' play on a capital crease, the consciousness of having held your wicket fairly for the usual twenty minutes, and a regular *dolce far niente* feeling produced by the fact of its being 90° in the shade.

"Oh, for a little one-story thermometer,

With nothing but zeros all ranged in a row!

Oh, for a big double-barrelled hydrometer,

To measure the moisture that drips from my brow!

Oh, for a soda-fount spouting up hotly

From every hot lamp-post against the blue sky!

Oh, for a proud maiden to look on me coldly,

Freezing my soul with a glance of her eye!

A cab rattles up; enter the Secretary with a telegram: "I say, you fellows, Toronto wants to play us next Friday and Saturday on their own ground." It was too hot to grow enthusiastic, at least outwardly, but half a dozen "all rights" settled it. The Eleven is chosen there and then—business must excuse several of the best men, so substitutes are notified—and the team leaves on Wednesday night. But on that afternoon Toronto wires that a previous engagement prevents them meeting us on the days named; however, after a few *cursey* remarks and a great deal of fresh correspondence by telegraph, the date is finally fixed for Monday and Tuesday following; so Pinkney gets orders to have our traps down in time for Saturday night's Western. The *depot* is crowded, every one wishes us success—*All aboo-ord*—we jump on the platform of the Pullman, exchange cheers frantically, watch the lights lessen in the distance, and then hunt up our sections, secure our pipes, and eleven fellows crowd into a compartment intended to hold half a dozen! Song and story succeed each other, and in this line the younger members rather astonish the veterans; much consumption of "bacsy"—half an hour for supper—then the sensible ones go to perch, but yarns and choruses keep on, and it is at a most heathenish hour before Morpheus claims the Entire eleven for his own. Breakfast and a rain-storm are announced together; the first is soon discussed, but the Union Station is reached and still the latter makes us miserable. No one to welcome us at the station—strange, we thought—but a jolly good wash and a capital dinner at our hotel, made each of us feel all seraphic. The weather continued moist all day, and we killed time by lounging in the easiest chairs we could find, and speculating on the match of the morrow. Most gloriously did old Sol shew up next morning, and in the best possible spirits we donned our flannels and hunted up the Cricket Ground; it was in fine order, the crease might have been improved upon, but the out-field was capital, while the club-house with its dressing-rooms, stands, &c., was just what the M. C. C. should have for themselves. The report of the matches has been duly chronicled in the daily papers; suffice it to say we were out-bowled, out-batted, and out-fielded; and our two days' match ended in an easy victory for Toronto. Nothing daunted we challenged for the return match, which came off on the Tuesday, and again did victory perch on the Toronto willow, at a time too when we had the match in our own hands; but the "glorious uncertainty of the game" shewed itself, and their score gradually overtopped ours, leaving us beaten on each day's play. While at lunch on the se-

cond day, a telegram was handed our captain, and he read out a challenge from the Colborne C. C. We had made up a party to "do the Falls," but our cricket proclivities triumphed over our desire to see Niagara—we had been there before—and so the night-watchman called us in time for the early train, and a few hours' riding saw us deposited at Grafton Station. The cricketers there met us at the cars, drove us and our traps up to the ground, gave us lunch, waxed us nicely in one inning, dined us at the hotel afterwards, and to wind up with, saw us to the station in time to catch the evening Express and sent the Eleven off, each and every member being ready to solemnly declare that at Colborne was to be found the best cricket, the prettiest ground, and the jolliest fellows that had been met on this trip. Perhaps it was the decided contrast to the way we had been treated in Toronto; there, no one met us at the station, took us to the ground even, or even said "good-bye" before we left, while we were asked to lunch, and asked to pay for it too—as for a dinner—well, we dined at our own table at the "Rossin." Cricket is supposed to be essentially the game to bring men into more intimate and friendly relations; we became so very intimate that we question if one member of our team remembers the names of half their Eleven. We grant that possibly—and we have their word for it—the Toronto Cricket Club could not afford to lunch eleven men who had travelled nearly 700 miles to meet them; but certainly for their cavalier treatment, their actual want of common courtesy, we fail to make for them even a shadow of an excuse. We must apologize for this digression, but in the mental notes of this trip, our reception by the Toronto C. C. has ever been unpleasantly prominent.

We said our Eleven left Colborne true, but only half of them returned home—some going to visit friends farther West, while we were forcibly detained and carried off by two fellow-colleagues, Medicals, who had played on the Colborne team, and in fact, won the match for their side. Our Railway ticket was only good for a week, but that was a mere bagatelle, so we borrowed for an Ulster coat, climbed into the trap, and composed ourselves for a 30 mile drive. As a supplement to such steady cricket, we now finding ourselves in jolly Country Quarters, devoted ourselves equally hard to boating, fishing, driving, &c., and dress clothes being hunted up, we went in mildly for "the light fantastic,"—but our time was soon up. College opens in a day or two, and so our *an revoirs* are said, and we soon found ourselves in Colborne, caught the night Mail and got back home in time for a late lunch the next day. On our appearance up at the Cricket ground the same afternoon, we had to stand no end of chaff; but as Ottawa had been easily beaten a few days before, the sarcastic remarks on our success up West, were not quite so pitiless as those which I had been showered on the fellows who came straight home. Our whole trip was a success, and looking back now, we can even forgive the Toronto Club their sins of omission and commission, although they seemed to forget the old saw, *Victoria concordia crescit*. Such foreign matches as these help wonderfully to foster the cricket spirit among us—and our only drawback in Montreal is the distance which has to be travelled before we can meet any other club worthy of our steel.

We have taken the title of our sketch this month from Mr. R. A. Fitzgerald's brilliant little book, descriptive of the visit of a team of the Gentlemen Players of England to this country in 1872. In it he tells us how "The Twelve" visited Canada and the United States, playing a series of matches, and that, added to the natural excitement of the game, was a keen enjoyment of the whole trip. Each place and each inning is described, and from these observations we learn how to place our cricketing qualifications. The Canadian batting was weak, the fielding anything but first-rate, while the bowling proved to be better than had been anticipated. We also read about their hearty appreciation of the invariable kindness with which they were treated, and how the prospect of seeing Niagara Falls was one of the charms of the expedition, and it is also hoped that their visit would improve and give an impetus to Canadian cricket. On this very subject we have had several letters from Mr. Fitzgerald, and had great pleasure in assuring him how thoroughly it had stirred up our Colleges and Public Schools, and that the chick of the bat is heard far more often than ever before; and, to still further encourage and promote the love of this essentially English game, we have a paper from him "to put fairly the claims of cricket before the young athletes of your University; as no cricketer, I am sure, will deny me the merit of trying my best to advance the true interests of his favorite game;" and in our next, we will have much pleasure in publishing in full our article from the secretary of the Marylebone Cricket Club.

R.