

Brydges from his engagement with them in order that they might confer upon him the Secretaryship of the Company he had so long and faithfully served. This application was not successful, however, and Mr. Brydges prepared to remove to his newly-chosen field of labour. Before leaving England he received many lasting tokens of friendship; among others, a silver inkstand from the members of the "London and South-Western Literary and Scientific Institution," of which he had been Hon. Secretary and one of the first promoters.

Mr. Brydges arrived in Canada in January, 1853, and took up his residence at Hamilton, the Canadian headquarters of the Great Western Company. He proceeded without delay to organize the working staff of the road, and in this task he proved his intimate knowledge of human nature which must so often have stood him in good stead while regulating the places and promotions of the great armies of employees he has had to command, embracing in their ranks all classes and kinds, from the eminent engineer and skilled mechanic down to the humble stoker or day labourer, and from the ablest and most experienced office man down to the simple copying clerk. We remember many of those who in the early days of the Great Western were appointed by Mr. Brydges to different posts in the service of the Company, and it is matter of surprise that, after a lapse of more than fifteen years, so many of them to-day occupy positions of higher trust and responsibility, either under Mr. Brydges on the Grand Trunk, or in the service of other Railway Companies. To be able to surround himself with able officers is one of the chief elements in the success of a commander; and in this matter Mr. Brydges has certainly given high proof of his ability. The personal attachment to himself of the employees under him has been so often evinced publicly during his Canadian career that in this notice we shall not attempt to enumerate them all: but we may remark that they prove how judiciously and fairly he has acted by those who have been engaged under him.

In January, 1854, a portion of the Great Western line was opened, and within the year the whole line from Suspension Bridge to Windsor. The traffic bade fair to exceed the most sanguine expectations of the early promoters of the enterprise, the dividend on the third year being as high as eight per cent. This sudden prosperity was, perhaps, a misfortune for the Company, for it undoubtedly tempted many of its warm friends to favour the construction of the Southern, or what was formerly known as the "Bertie" line, skirting the Lake Erie Shore almost parallel with the Great Western. Mr. Brydges, on the other hand, while cultivating closer and more extended connections with the American roads East and West, stoutly, and, as it subsequently appeared, successfully, resisted the Southern scheme. The discussion on this question was a long and acrimonious one, arraying in its progress many former friends in personal antagonism; but in the end the Southern scheme totally collapsed, and the animosities it created have doubtless long ago been healed by time. It is worthy of note, however, that some two years ago, a speculative (or speculating) American succeeded in reviving the charter in the Ontario Legislature; and that the final success of the road is only now being utterly destroyed by the construction, by the G. W. R. Co., of what is called the "Air line" or branch from the Great Western Station at Glencoe to the Buffalo and Lake Huron (or G. T.) Station at Canfield. By the partial use of the Great Western and Grand Trunk lines this new road will give the shortest possible route from Detroit to Buffalo, and will therefore be of advantage to both. At least the fact that both companies surrender the use of a part of their track to complete the line proves that the managers are working in accord in the matter. It has to be stated that the Directors in England fully sustained Mr. Brydges in his opposition to the views of his Canadian colleagues in the Directory on the subject of the Southern Railway.

The discussion of this Southern Railway question, upon which the stockholders of the Great Western were so much at variance, led to numerous virulent attacks upon the general management of the line; and the reduction of dividend consequent upon the increase of railway facilities and the depression of trade, gave point to these charges, which in a time of high dividends would have passed without notice. A committee was sent out to Canada to investigate these charges, and their report, though not sustaining to any degree the complaints made, was considered so unfair towards the management of the road that it was rejected by the shareholders, and Mr. Brydges sustained by a large majority. During the discussion of these two questions—the Southern Road and the Great Western Management—his powers as a writer were frequently tested, and the extraordinary tact, ability, and, we may add, plausibility, which he displayed were confessed by all parties. In the "railway literature" of that time, his contributions are pre-eminent for elegance

and force, as well as closeness and clearness of argument.

Mr. Brydges, who had fought the question of management on both sides of the Atlantic, having spent the winter of '60-61 in England, returned to Canada after the discomfiture of his opponents, and the citizens of Hamilton entertained him at a monster banquet at the Crystal Palace in May, 1861. There was an immense gathering, including many prominent men from a distance; it was, in fact, a complete ovation. On that occasion the employees of the railway presented him with a magnificent service of plate, which cost \$3,000 at Tiffany's, New York; and the old employees of the road who had left its service expressed their regard and esteem by presenting him with a splendid gold watch and chain.

The question of amalgamating the Great Western and Grand Trunk Companies next became the topic of discussion. Mr. Brydges, on behalf of the former, and Mr. Watkin for the latter, favoured the project, and the preliminary agreement was approved by the Boards of the two Companies. At this time, '61-62, the press of Canada teemed with angry discussion on railway affairs, and Mr. Brydges came in for his full share of censure as well as praise. For a few months, from the preliminary agreement between the companies until September, 1862, he managed both lines; but the amalgamation having completely fallen through, he resigned the management of the Great Western, and has since continued to hold his present position on the Grand Trunk Railway. It was not long after this, if they had not already commenced, that negotiations took place for the amalgamation of the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway with the G. T. R., an agreement for which was finally completed between the two companies within the next two years; and the sanction of the Canadian Parliament was sought for the arrangement. The bill ran the gauntlet for several sessions, but it finally passed at Ottawa in 1866. The leasing of the Buffalo Suspension Bridge (now being built) by the G. T. R. is another of those bold projects by which Mr. Brydges has shewn his capacity for what may fairly be called Railway Statesmanship, in order to place his company in the front rank among the railway enterprises of the continent. It is gratifying to state that at the last general meeting of the English stockholders in London his policy and his administration were both heartily endorsed.

During the last ten years Mr. Brydges has been the honoured guest at many banquets throughout the country, but our space forbids any detailed allusion to them. He holds the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Grand Trunk Brigade of Volunteers, and is also one of the four Commissioners appointed to superintend the construction of the Intercolonial Railway.

#### CHRISTMAS IN THE FATHERLAND.

Nowhere, perhaps, throughout the world, not even in England—certainly not in Canada—is Christmas more carefully observed than in Germany. Take what part you will of the Fatherland, from Pomerania to Swabia, from Westphalia to Silesia—among the charcoal-burners of the Black Forest, on the vine-covered slopes of the Rhine land, the whole country is given up to joy and thanksgiving, the cares and troubles of business are lost sight of for the time, and nothing is permitted to occur that might mar the gaiety of the festive season. It is not in Germany that when Christmas Day falls upon a Sunday, the next day's holiday is denied to the working people. In some parts, nearly the whole of the month of December is set apart as a holiday, and throughout the whole country both the week before and the week after Christmas Day are given up entirely to the festivities of the season. Everyone that can manage it spends the holidays at home—the student leaves his university, the apprentice his workshop, and in many cases the servants, as many as can be spared, are allowed a few days to spend with their friends.

As to the Christmas festivities as practised in Germany, they are much the same as anywhere else. Our own Christmas customs are mere imitations of the old German Weihnacht rites, many of which have been handed down from time immemorial, and are practised to this day with but little alteration. Like us, the Germans have their Yule log, their tree laden with presents, their Christmas carols; but many of their Christmas customs are entirely unknown to us. We have neither the Yule-clap, the Christkindlein, or Christchild, nor the Three Wise Men of the East; our very Father Christmas, or Santa Claus, is of German origin. In Pomerania this worthy gentleman is known as Knecht Ruprecht; his business is to go round some days before the holidays and note down on a huge slate, which he carries, the conduct of the children for whom he will bring presents on Christmas Eve. Unlike our Father Christmas, however, Knecht Ruprecht is no imaginary personage. The character is assumed for the time by one person deputed for the purpose in each village, who dresses himself, before commencing his rounds, in a huge fur coat, a mask, and a flaxen beard, a wreath of ivy on his head, a green girdle round his waist, and a birch-rod covered with bells in his hand. The children, of course, are not in the secret, and stand in great awe of the good Father, for woe betide those that incur his displeasure—birch-rods and pebbles are all their share of the Christmas presents that Knecht Ruprecht brings. On Christmas Eve he makes up his accounts, and prepares his presents for those of the children who have deserved them, and the following day the distribution takes place. After dusk the children are assembled in a room in which they are kept closely guarded until their impatience reaches its height. The door of the adjoining room opens at a given signal, and the happy children rush in with a cry of joy and surprise at the beautiful

sight which awaits them. In the middle of the room is the Christbaum, lighted up with innumerable wax candles, and covered with presents of every description. At the foot of the tree is the manger with the Holy Child—the Christkindlein—the Virgin and St. Joseph, and the magi kneeling in adoration, while around them stand the oxen, looking on as if in wonder at the strange sight; and far up on the topmost branch of the tree is a golden star, emblematic of the wondrous star that guided the Wise Men from the East to the lowly habitation of Mary and Joseph. Then comes the distribution of the presents, of half of them at least—for the remainder are reserved for another occasion—and the yuleclap, or surprise presents, are brought in one after another, causing much merriment by the strange way in which they are done up. Perhaps a large parcel, after almost infinite unwinding, is found to contain only a walnut, which being opened discovers a ring, or a locket; stockings or balls of wool, after this fashion, often contain watches or knives, and even the humble potato is known to have produced such costly articles as diamond pins and pearl rings. After much fun and frolic the wassail-bowl is brought in, the half-burned tapers on the tree are blown out, to be rekindled on New Year's Day, and the tired and happy youngsters are sent off to bed.

Our illustration gives a scene of Christmas home life in a German family—a scene of happiness and contentment such as, alas, was repeated in but few families in the Fatherland last year. The merry, careless student, who blows the smoke in many circling ringlets into the air, has exchanged his gay university cap and sash for the spiked helmet and leathern belt, has laid aside his pipe to take up the needle-gun, and is now far away on the fertile plains of France, spending his Christmas before the walls of Paris. And in the home-circle what a change has taken place! the children's laughter is hushed, the mother's smile has given way to tears, anxiety has taken the place of the peace and goodwill proper to Christmas-tide. And this is the picture that many, many German families offer this Christmas-tide. From the highest to the lowest in the land, in many a home-circle, there is whispered fear, gnawing anxiety for the "our Fritz" who has gone to risk his life at the call of the Fatherland.

#### BURNING OF CLEMENTS' SASH FACTORY, TORONTO.

On the evening of Saturday, the 17th ult., a fire was discovered, about twenty minutes past seven, under the staircase of Clements' Sash Factory, Front street, Toronto. Mr. McGraw, of the Queen's Hotel, with a few other gentlemen, speedily extinguished it. The origin of the fire, at that particular spot, confirmed Mr. Clements and others in the conviction that the fire was the work of an incendiary, and a strict search was accordingly made, but no further signs of fire were found. However, at eleven o'clock the bells again rang the alarm, the factory being once more discovered to be on fire, and this time seriously. Before the water could be brought into play, the whole building was in one mass of flames, which spread rapidly owing to the combustible nature of its contents. It became necessary to send for the third engine, and soon three strong jets were being poured upon the burning mass. Almost from the outset all hopes of saving the factory were abandoned, and Mr. Clements directed the firemen to devote their energies to prevent the fire from taking hold of Messrs. Jacques & Hay's establishment, which adjoins Mr. Clements' property. Fortunately their efforts were successful, and a still more serious catastrophe was averted. Shortly after the fire broke out in the factory, a convincing proof of the disaster being the work of an incendiary was afforded by the discovery that the stable, which is situated some distance from the factory, was on fire inside. This incipient conflagration was soon extinguished before it had attained any headway; had this not been done, nothing could have saved the immense stock of lumber with which the structure was surrounded. About half-past eleven the roof of the factory fell in with a tremendous crash, and the scene at that time was a grand one, the interior of the building resembling one vast furnace; the floors were consumed very shortly after, and the heavy joists falling at intervals sent into the air myriads of sparks, which, being carried off by the brisk wind, caused great apprehension for the safety of the surrounding buildings. By midnight nothing remained but the mere shell of the building, with its burning contents in one flaming heap in the basement story. At one time fears that the boiler would burst were entertained, but fortunately one of the pipes breaking allowed any steam generated from the water remaining in it after the day's work to escape. An inspection of the place revealed a melancholy scene of desolation, the building being completely gutted, and the valuable machinery bent and twisted into all kinds of shapes. Some idea of the intense heat to which it was subjected may be formed when we state that a portion of the ironwork round the boiler was completely melted. Of all the valuable contents of the factory, and the completed work in it, not a particle remained, and a quantity of valuable lumber in the yard contiguous was completely destroyed, as was also a planing machine which was outside the building. Mr. Clements calculates his loss on stock and machinery at \$8,000, none of which amount is covered by insurance. That the fire was the work of incendiaries appears beyond a doubt, as but a few moments before Mrs. Clements discovered the flames, she distinctly heard the footsteps of two persons leaving the place, but thought nothing of it until alarmed by the unusual light in the yard. The fire broke out the second time inside the building, and, as it seemed, in several places at once; by the time the engines arrived, and they were promptly on the spot, the whole of the interior of the factory was in a blaze. Mr. Clements has offered a reward of \$200 for such information as will lead to the apprehension of the perpetrator of the act.

#### EXTENDING THE FORTIFICATIONS OF LYONS.

After the fall of Strasburg in September the investing army was divided into two portions, one of which was detailed to besiege the remaining fortresses on the eastern frontier, Schelestadt, Colmar, New Brisach, and Belfort, while the second, under Von Werder, pushed forward into the department of the Jura, for the purpose of attacking the army of the East under Garibaldi, and opening the road to Lyons. The fall of Schelestadt and New Brisach, following so quickly the surrender of Strasburg, created the wildest excitement in the south of France. The most exaggerated rumours were circulated among the terror-stricken inhabitants, who commenced to move from the open country into the fortified towns, where every preparation was being made to offer a stubborn resistance to the invading host. Lyons was the