

The storm in Great Britain is said to have been moving at a high velocity when it struck things in a heap and tore around among the wreck. It is credited with a speed of a hundred miles an hour. This was what our American cousins would call a pretty 'slick' performance; for the pace of European storms strike an average of only 17 miles an hour. Those of the United States hold the world's championship with an average of 28 miles. Much better running is, however, frequently made, for, like Mr. Dooley's Admiral Dewey, a wind-storm can take things easy and be calm 'when they're anything to be calm about.' But it can also 'light out' like a grizzly of the Rockies when it is 'so disposed.' In 1872, for instance, a hurricane—or whatever else you prefer to call it—tore along at the rate of 78 miles an hour from Texas to Maine. Nine years previously (according to Mulhall) another rushing wind-storm swept over Liverpool at a pressure which indicated 90 miles an hour. And there are records of intermittent gusts in Great Britain which, for a brief space, did a sprint of two miles in a single minute. The tropics lay claim to typhoons and cyclones that career over the surface of sea and land at even greater speed than this.

An Old Superstition

A curious story of the recent storm is told by a Dublin solicitor. 'He lives,' says the 'Freeman,' 'in No. 13 in a well-known street, and has for neighbors right and left, a couple of friends who "wouldn't live in a house numbered 13 for any money." On Friday morning the solicitor, who had slept right through the cyclone, went across the street to see what damage had been done to his house. He was seen crossing back again with a smile on his face. There was not the slightest trace of damage on No. 13; while No. 12 and No. 14 were in a state of utter wreck.'

The superstition of lucky and unlucky numbers is as old as it is silly. Most of those popular fancies about good and evil luck are the tattered rags of paganism which ill-instructed persons bear about them still. They come down from pre-Christian days, and Latin and Greek literature is studded with them. It is a far cry back to Pythagoras. But, in his 'Pentad,' he lays stress upon the virtues of numbers one, three, and five, and the evils that are supposed to lurk in two, 'the symbol of diversity.' Long ages afterwards, Shakespeare echoed the sentiment, when, in his 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' he made fat old Falstaff say: 'There is divinity in odd numbers, whether in nativity, chance, or death.' Christianity waged a war that still continues against those pagan fancies, and has enormously lessened the detestable influence which they once exercised upon the human mind. Samuel Butler rallied the Puritans of his day upon their simple faith in lucky numbers and in the horse-shoe as a charm against witches, and poked gentle fun at them with an alleged ancient instance—

'Augustus, having b' oversight
Put on his left shoe 'fore his right,
Had like to have been slain that day
By soldiers mutiny'ng for pay'

Lecky has remarked in one of his works that periods of decay of religious faith are commonly marked by a high degree of credulity and superstition. And, as a matter of fact, one of the curious features of this age of sneering scepticism is the boundless credulity with which men who have 'emancipated' themselves from the restraints of Christianity, cling to a faith in lucky and unlucky numbers and circumstances, and to other superstitions that have no connection with religion. Zola was probably about the most thorough-going and swinish-minded of the 'emancipated' neo-pagans of our time. A few years ago he took the public into his confidence with regard to a swarm of superstitious practices to which he was enslaved. His superstitious fear of number seven was, for instance, an overmastering dread. No matter how urgent or important an undertaking might be, he would not begin it on the seventh day of any month. And this was the man who spent a great part of his life in railing at the 'superstition' of people who believed in personal responsibility to a great Creator, in moral homes, and in clean, Christian lives!

A practical protest against a popular and widely-prevalent 'unlucky number' superstition is the periodical clerical meeting that is held in Paris under the title of 'the thirteen dinner.' It is the quiet and frugal reunion

of a society of a baker's dozen of Catholic ecclesiastics who selected this mode of combating the prevalent idea as to the fatal ill-luck that is supposed to dog the footsteps of some one of any group of thirteen persons who sit down together to table.

SKETCHES OF TRAVEL

VII.—CANADA'S GREAT TRANSCONTINENTAL.

By the Editor.

Two Canadians—one returning from Australia, the other from Honolulu—stood beside me on the Moana's upper deck as we rounded the Alley-Sloper nose of the bulbous promontory at the further end of which Vancouver stands. As the city came suddenly into view, one exclaimed: 'There she is, the Melbourne of the North!' The other replied: 'The Glasgow of the West!—I reckon that's about her name.' This latter I found to be a sort of descriptive local pet-name bestowed on Vancouver by people who are firm believers in the destiny which is to raise their city into a foremost emporium of the commerce of the north-western world. Another and less familiar designation was applied to Vancouver by Douglas Gladen:—'The Constantinople of the West.' These titles give diverse expression to the three features of Vancouver that appeal with greatest force to the stranger within its gates. Its rapid rise recalls the swift growth of the great Australian city that stands on Port Phillip Bay. Its position, its present commercial importance, and its roseate prospects justify the comparison with 'Glaigie.' Constantinople is a gem of picturesque effect when seen from the surrounding hills or from the further shore. But for the scenic grandeur of its setting Vancouver is, perhaps, not surpassed by any city in the world. It does not present the parti-colored and picturesque tatterdom that in Stamboul is reminiscent of the glowing East; but its sidewalks and stores and factories and sawmills and homes are alive with the dapper Jap and the stolid-faced Chinaman, who lend to its broad and open streets an air that is redolent of the distant Orient.

Vancouver is a city of yesterday. Seven and twenty years ago its site was a dense primeval forest where the panther had his lair and the wild deer and bear their abode. It owes its existence and prosperity to the

Canadian-Pacific Railway.

The history of that remarkable corporation is, in effect, the history of the development of all North-western and Western Canada from the shores of Lake Superior to the waters of the broad Pacific. In 1611 the great Jesuit missionaries, Fathers Raymbault and Jogues, were preaching the faith to a great assemblage of Indians on the neck of land between Huron and Superior, where Sault Ste Marie now stands. Father Raymbault was moving west across the rolling wilderness, anxious to fulfil the hope he had long entertained of crossing the unknown and undiscovered mountain-region beyond, and finding his way to China. He desired to join his confreres who had raised a flourishing Christian church in the Flowery Land, where a few years later—in the reign of the enlightened Sun-Chee, the first of the Tartar dynasty—Father Verhiest held an important astronomical appointment, and Father Schaal's talent for administration was so highly appreciated that he was made Chief Minister of State and actual ruler of the Chinese Empire. Father Raymbault was the first white man who projected a journey to the Pacific across the wilds of Canada. But he never realised his dream, and his bones lie in an unknown grave in Sault Ste Marie. The first white man who made that perilous journey was

A Scottish Fur-trader.

He was a true and dashing representative of those adventurous French and French-Canadian gentilshommes and peasant coureurs des bois of the old regime who were lured by the fascinations of the fur-trade far into the forest-fastnesses of the west and north, and who were, with the missionary priests, the first explorers of those unknown regions. They

'Blazed new ways for worlds to come
And mourned not, but bravely dumb,
So died, full trusting God and time.'

Like them, the Scottish fur-trader 'blazed' a track for the future pioneer. He tortured a route for himself through the Rocky mountains, got afloat in his canoe on the dangerous, swiftly-rushing, and boulder-strewn