

## WENTWORTH AND PYM.

THE GREAT EARL OF STRAFFORD AND THE GREAT COMMONER.

when he advised the Government if they were going in for a general jubilee of forgiveness to restore the member for Three Rivers (Sir Hector Langevin) to his former glory, paying him the salary he would have been entitled to had he not fallen from grace. Sir Hector was in the House at the time and tried to look unconcerned and deeply interested over an article in an Ottawa newspaper. The various items were adopted, the Opposition insisting on a division in two instances. Altogether the general impression is that the Opposition got the better of the argument on this particular occasion. One of the Opposition overhit the mark nevertheless when he accused the Government of retaining certain clerks in the service fearing they would reveal discreditable deeds of darkness if they were dismissed, and received a telling reprimand from Sir John Thompson, who then and there publicly announced that any servant in the employ of the Government was at liberty to state anything that he knew, and that he would receive the utmost immunity in so doing.

It is said that Sir Hector Langevin is about to appear before the country in the new rôle of defender of the rights of the poor oppressed French Canadians. Mr. McCarthy is loaded up for his assault on special privileges in the North-West, and it is expected will move the second reading of his Bill about the middle of the week. Then, will Sir Hector seize the golden opportunity and appeal, like Sir George Cartier of old, for *nos langage, nos religion et nos lois*. Poor Sir Hector! he is still infatuated with

The triumph and the vanity,  
The rapture of the strife.

As the House was about to go into supply the other day, Mr. Laurier asked Sir John Thompson when the Redistribution Bill was to be brought down. The reply was, that a definite answer could not be given, but that the measure would be presented as soon as possible. This explanation was not satisfactory to the leading Liberals, and drew forth from Mr. Mills a little speech in which he compared the procedure in this Parliament, with the procedure in the Imperial Parliament, much to the discredit of the former. Here five weeks were gone and the House had yet no indication of the provisions of the most important bit of legislation with which it would be called to deal.

It is generally expected that if there is any serious fight at all before the House adjourns, it will take place over the Redistribution Bill. No one with the slightest experience of political warfare expects for a moment that whatever the provisions of the Bill, it will meet with anything but opposition from the Opposition. We will all be satisfied if it is not so obnoxious to them as to lead to the continuation of the session one month beyond the birthday of Her Most Gracious Majesty, which it is hoped her faithful Commons of Canada will celebrate by entering upon a lengthened period of rest and recreation.

Mr. Abbott, in the early days of the session, promised that the Redistribution Bill would be a very simple measure. It may seem simple in the eyes of the Government, but inexplicable to their opponents. There is no accounting for tastes among politicians, and our ears may once more be charmed with the old refrain so dear to the heart of the true Ontario Reformer:—

To tie thy hands behind thy back, Ontario, Ontario,  
They passed the Gerrymander Act, Ontario, Ontario.

There is the smell of scandal in the air, and the end of the session has receded from sight. Mr. Edgar has given notice of motion that he can prove that Sir Adolph Caron, lately Minister of Militia, now Postmaster-General, has been guilty of malfeasance of office. The gravamen is that Sir Adolph appropriated to his own use, and for his personal and political profit, certain sums of money, voted by the Dominion Government, as subsidies for the Quebec and Lake St. John, and the Temiscouata Railways. It is hard to say what the result of all this will be. It may be a scandal or it may be a slander. Sir Adolph treats the matter lightly at present.

There is no particular excitement over the coming revelation, the impression being that it will not amount to much. Sir Adolph is said to be preparing a defence which will be entirely satisfactory to Parliament, or to those members of Parliament who would always wish to see a Minister of the Crown honourably acquitted of the charge of degrading his position.

The Supreme Court gave judgment on Tuesday in the appeal from the inferior court, of William Manly German, who was unseated from the representation of Welland and personally disqualified. The Court dismissed the appeal by a unanimous decision. Mr. German is therefore disqualified from representing any borough in Parliament, or from voting in any election during the space of seven years. The punishment is severe, but if our elections are to be ever conducted honestly, examples for the warning of intending offenders must be made.

T. C. L. K.

A DEVICE to prevent engineers from passing curves and other difficult points at too great speed has been invented by a French engineer. It consists of a tuning fork provided with a point which inscribes a curve on the smoked surface of a cylinder revolved by a suitable mechanism. The instrument is fixed at any desired part of the line, and as the train passes the mechanism is set in motion, the wheels of the engine stopping the revolution of the device as they leave the curve. The speed of the train can readily be determined by counting the vibrations of the fork, as shown on the cylinder.

NOTE.—In the first half of the 17th century lived two men of gentle birth and great ability, but representatives of very opposite principles—John Pym, the great philosophic orator and statesman; and Sir Thomas Wentworth, subsequently the able and powerful Earl of Strafford. These two, in the ever-memorable Parliament of 1628,\* had stood shoulder to shoulder, the champions of government by law in opposition to the despotic acts of the Ministry of Charles; but Wentworth—by constitutional tendency and training always at heart, I think, an aristocrat and courtier—having been won over to the King's side by promises of royal favour, and being about to be created Baron and Viscount (I here quote Welwood), "sent to Pym to meet him alone at Greenwich, where he began in a set speech to sound him about the dangers they were like to run by the course they were in, and what advantages they might have if they would entertain the offers to be made them from the Court. Pym, understanding his drift, stopped him short with this expression: 'you need not use all this art to tell me that you have a mind to leave us; but remember what I tell you, you are going to be undone; and remember, also, that, though you leave us now, I will never leave you while your head is upon your shoulders.'" Such is the origin of the scene below:—

*Wentworth (alone).* On the first rung of high ambition's ladder I've set my foot, at length, with solid tread,  
And now, my soul, mount high and ever higher,  
Till thou hast gained the summit of thy wish.  
How bounds my heart to play the game of life.  
Coke, Phillips, Eliot, you I leave to prose  
With country knights and esquires, whilst I climb  
The starry pinnacle of glorious power.  
Sir John, thou art unhorsed: go on and spin  
With welcome, hence, thine everlasting yarns,  
For soon thy shire shall see thee wholly worsted.  
From Pym I shrink most: weighty, subtle, cool,  
Clear, bold, ambitious, active, eloquent,  
He seemed to trust and treat me as a friend:  
But more than him the interview I dread.  
If it were over I should breathe the freer,  
What! should I win him! Who is proof against  
The syren eloquence of godlike power,  
Which weaves its thousand threads around the soul,  
And in the web of passions nets the will.  
It were a good first step in policy  
To make a subtle enemy a friend.

*Wentworth.* I sent for you, as an old friend, to talk,  
Secluded here, without reserve, of things  
Of deepest moment to the general weal.  
Whatever others think, we know we play  
A dangerous game. To me—and I have mused  
Long on this subject with deep, anxious thought—  
Is seems against vast odds. Had we not, then,  
Better, ere fortune with strong obvious tide,  
Bounds swift to whelm us, seek to shun the fate  
Which else awaits the madly obstinate.

*Pym.* But have we not for liberty of late  
Won against power a noble victory? +

*Wentworth.* As 'gainst the vault of darkness some poor lamp  
Flashes an instant its expiring flame,  
And then goes out in universal night;  
Such is our victory—a hand-breadth cloud  
Against the blazing body of the sun.  
We hold the shadow, words: the power is his.  
First to dissolve, then wreak his fury on  
The disobedient! Who will stand between  
Us and his vengeance? Scattered, powerless,  
Fall we an easy prey.

*Pym.* The law is plain:

"Twill vindicate our rights."

*Wentworth.* We live beneath  
A rule prerogative in which hook law  
Yields to *lex loquens*. What! should he resolve  
Without a Parliament to rule the realm.

*Pym.* Wentworth, he cannot. Hold we not the purse,  
That mighty curb against the neck of will  
To bend it to our purpose?

*Wentworth.* Think you, then,  
No means could be devised to fill that purse,  
Should the right men, clear-headed and fierce-willed,  
Look round for the appliances by which  
To work their ends. Wealth is the child of power,  
If off its parent. Is necessity—

The safety of the State—no plea to urge  
For strong high-handed measures, when the soul,  
Rigid with will, sees through ambition's lens  
The means at hand to grasp the tempting prize?  
Hath royalty no dignities, nor place,  
Nor courtly blandishments to win men by?  
Are we not strong but by the royal breath,  
Which, if withdrawn, dissolved, we drop forthwith  
Into the nothinghood from which we sprang.  
In this low life, where, thousand-fold disguised  
Or frankly selfish, all their own ends seek,  
Can we afford for doubtful good, of more  
Than doubtful issue, to adventure all,  
Vain, thankless martyrs of a worthless world?  
Men must be ruled. What matter how, if well:  
Nor could I lend myself to any scheme  
That had not for its end the general weal.

*Pym.* Wentworth, what means all this? Oh, how unlike  
Your former self; you, who were wont to stand  
A pillar 'gainst the subtlety and shock  
Of every foe of liberty, resolved,  
By word and work, to leave no gap of doubt,  
Through which the craft of tyranny might leap  
To riot in the garden of our rights.  
Where is that courage now, those throbbing hopes,  
That flush of victory, when broad and deep  
We laid those strong foundations, and drew round  
Our freedom and our sons' a wall of law.  
Then be not downcast—who dare think it worse—  
It is not Wentworth-like: some sudden chill  
Hath struck upon your spirits. For at times  
A feeling of misanthropy will creep  
Into the bosoms of the best, as crawls  
Into an infant's cot a slimy snake.  
Yet is there fearful peril, when assailed  
By the great Tempter's cunning in these moods.  
But should the worst befall us which you dread,  
Is it not better in a noble cause  
To suffer, fighting bravely to the last,  
Than basely yield our own and others' rights  
For bare immunity; or worse, to ride

\* In this great parliament sat, for the first time, Oliver Cromwell, notable then, as always afterwards, and the great Sir Edward Coke, Coke upon Littleton, and John Hampden, of ship-money fame; and Edward Hyde, the historian, afterwards Earl of Clarendon and a king's father-in-law; and Attorney-General Noye, "a tough man," says Carlyle, "as of the toughness of leather"; and there was Selden, the student of history and the antiquarian; and Glanville, learned in constitutional law; and Sir Benjamin Rudyard, the pacificator; and there was the stern and fiery Eliot, and Mason with his remorseless logic, and Phillips, and Seymour, and Hackwell, and Littleton, and Cresswell, and Rich, and Rouse, and Martin and Digges, who, with Pym and Wentworth, fought inch by inch the great battle of the Petition of Right.

+ After many a hard fought fight on the part of the Commons, and some not very kindly-attempted subterfuges and evasions on the part of His Majesty, the great "Petition of Right" had just become the law of the land.

Upon the shoulders of their wrongs to power?  
But, shaking off this nightmare of the brain,  
Oh, ask your manhood, if we were not born  
To something different far! "Life is not meat,"  
"We live not by bread only." Self alone  
Is not our goal. Oh, Wentworth, Wentworth, think,  
Is there no godlike principle in man  
Trampling all calculation in the mire?  
No thought that rays its radiance on the brow,  
As sunset burns its signet on the west?  
No mighty lever that can lift the soul  
Above the littleness of interest?  
The fresh, heroic impulse of the heart  
That spurs to action when the generous blood  
With genial, noble sympathy is warm  
Weighs not with nice-adjusted balances  
The pros and cons of cold utility.  
The soul bounds like an arrow to its end  
Direct and quick, urged by its sympathies,  
Nor deigns to listen to those maxims nice  
Which prudence needs to warm her into virtue.  
Should goodness stand unhonoured till 'tis seen,  
By the cold process of the intellect,  
If she augment the sum of happiness;  
But long since hath the heart forestalled its end,  
And, loving goodness for herself alone,  
Hath crowned her queen of beauty in the world:

(Here a slight curl shows itself on Wentworth's lip)

And poor as such philosophy may seem,  
It is the truest—in the end the best.  
What we demand is government by law,  
To us and our posterity secured,  
Not the caprice of any mood or man.  
But to speak freely, Wentworth, nor to put  
The worst face on your words, they seem to point  
To something which to me yields little joy.

*Wentworth.* In an old friend I let it pass; but, Pym,  
Leaving romance to sentimental girls  
And spouting schoolboys, we should talk like men—  
Men, whom the ruffling of the real world  
Hath hardened into manhood, as the oak  
Is rocked by winter into rugged strength.  
Let us, then, with the ruthless common sense  
Of men whose young Utopias have been spoiled  
By rude collision with the facts of life,  
Consider on how thin a crust we stand,  
(Through which, at any moment, we may drop)  
And the materials we have got to work with.

Face the thing squarely. Really who cares  
For you or me, save as we serve his ends.  
Each to himself the centre of the world  
Upon his neighbour's shoulders strives to climb  
To reach the golden apple of desire.  
Is it for these that you and I should work  
Uphill, in vain, along the rugged paths,  
Without the sunshine of reward to cheer,  
To be forsaken by the heartless throng,  
Who shift, each for himself, when comes the pinch,  
And leave us gaping with bewilderment  
At what, if wise, we should have known at first.

It is to save you from the sure regrets  
Of such a course, that now I plead with you.  
We were not made for such a fate as this,  
To be the hodmen of the vulgar herd,  
But to consort with peers and serve a king.  
Then, let us follow where our natures lead,  
And, whilst not wronging any, serve ourselves;  
For interest is the polestar of the world.  
And why should we not recognize the law,  
'Gainst which 'twere vain to struggle? He who's wise  
Masters the laws of being and conforms  
His conduct to their teaching. Is not this  
The dictate of a sound philosophy?

Oh, let us row, as we have ever done,  
In the same boat, nor always 'gainst the tides.

*Pym.* Oh, Wentworth, Wentworth, do you leave us thus?

And hath the Syren with seductive voice  
Immeshed you in her toils? Oh, frail; oh false!  
Is it for this that by the midnight lamp  
I toiled with wearied brain—that I might see  
The friend familiar of my manhood false,  
False, false to God and Liberty and me!  
And the reward of friendship seek'st thou, too,  
To undermine my virtue—to corrupt  
My heart by fixing my sole gaze on self,  
With *saure qui peut*, it is a thankless world.  
How change our reasons as our interests change.  
But, oh, remember, Wentworth, that the heart  
Hath its own system of philosophy.  
Serve we for pay alone? Is interest  
The only lever that can lift the soul?  
Is there no echo in the heart to truth?  
No indignation beautiful as night?  
No self-forgetting impulse? No sweet tears  
For innocence oppressed? No poetry  
Of rich and holy feeling? No deep sense,  
Or joyous love, of right? Is selfishness  
The only spring of action? Do no streams  
From the deep fountain of humanity  
Flow to enrich and beautify the world?  
Above the weeds of self-love flowers there not  
A higher, purer, first philosophy,  
Which spurs your calculations, and asserts  
The nobler birth and destiny of man?

(He here pauses a minute, then adds)

But did it need such peroration long  
To let us know that you abandon us?  
Yet hear one word prophetic ere we part:  
You may leave us, but we will not leave you,  
So long as on its fleshly pedestal  
Sits that proud head. Wentworth, no more. Adieu.

(Pym passes out quickly. The door closes after him. Suddenly pausing, with head bent low, he thus soliloquizes)

*Pym.* Man is a kind of moral centaur—part,  
God, and part, Devil. In his lowest thoughts,  
Motives and feelings he comes near the fiend:  
But rouse his highest nature, and, a god,  
He battles 'gainst a universe of wrong.  
But, even here, weakness and strength we find  
So intimately blended, that the clay  
Of some poor motive mingles with the gold  
And renders an alloy the purest life.  
So oft fierce passion melts, like wax, the will,  
If the temptation's suffered to unfold  
Its blandishments to sense. 'Tis to enwrap  
An unctuous pine-ridge in a robe of flame  
And bid it not to burn. Who would escape  
Must parley not, nor pause to contemplate,  
Nor look behind him, like Lot's wife, but flee  
Till he hath reached the purer moral heights.  
Wentworth, such are we. What are you? what, I  
On the broad battlefield of life henceforth  
We meet to measure strength in mortal strife,  
But with what issue curtailed night wraps up  
In the dumb future! Whence the difference  
Which parts our paths, like two divergent streams?  
Is nature like in both, but circumstance,  
That cunning painter of camelion life,  
The limner to whose colouring we owe  
The lights and shadows of our characters?  
Or is it nature, and the use we make  
Of that we are and that which passes through