

ESTABLISHED 1866

THE MONETARY TIMES, TRADE REVIEW

And Insurance Chronicle,

With which has been incorporated the INTERCOLONIAL JOURNAL OF COMMERCE, of Montreal (in 1869), the TRADE REVIEW, of the same city (in 1870), and the TORONTO JOURNAL OF COMMERCE.

Issued every Friday morning.

SUBSCRIPTION—POST PAID:

CANADIAN SUBSCRIBERS	-\$2.00 Per Year.
BRITISH " "	10s. 6d. Sterling Per Year.
AMERICAN " "	\$2.00 United States Currency
SINGLE COPIES	10 Cents.

Book and Job Printing a Specialty.

PUBLISHED BY THE

MONETARY TIMES PRINTING COMPANY OF CANADA, Limited.

EDW. TROUT, President.

ALFRED W. LAW, Sec'y-Treas.

Office: 62 Church St., cor. Court

TELEPHONES { BUSINESS AND EDITORIAL OFFICES, 1892
PRINTING DEPARTMENT, 1485

TORONTO, FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 1869.

THE SITUATION.

Among the first acts of the new Government are some which will obviously give rise to political contentions, even though they should not be open to the suspicion of originating in political motives. On the pay list of the Public Works Department Mr. Tarte makes it known that he has found the names of many persons with whose services he has thought it proper to dispense. They were mostly mechanics for whom current work was no longer to be found. They formed part of the extra staff whose services are ordinarily called for when required and dispensed with when their special work is done. On this state of the facts the dismissals would be justifiable and even meritorious. In all this there is nothing unusual, nothing irregular, nothing abnormal. But it is an unseemly thing, if this be the true state of the facts, to describe the present periodical reduction as a cleaning out of the stables. The necessity of dismissing honest mechanics should excite commiseration and it will not excuse execration of the released. It will in the long run be best for the Government that all such changes should be made in a spirit of fairness. It is possible to conceive of political reasons which would justify the dismissal of subordinate civil employees. If they themselves overstepped the limit of their privileges, and instead of simply exercising the franchise, have made themselves offensive partisans, they play a game in which want of success may justify their dismissal. Nevertheless such cases require delicate handling. In our Parliamentary history, a few such cases are found. Forty years ago Mr. James Moir Terris, a revenue officer, was dismissed for interference in elections. One or two similar cases could be found in the half century, but they are so rare that they only mark the stability of the rule of permanence of tenure of the offices of subordinate civil servants. That rule is not, we think, now threatened, and it is certain that any attempt to set it aside would be met by public disfavor.

Certain claims of public contractors which had been referred to the Courts, by the late Government, have been withdrawn by the present head of the Public Works Department. Murray & Cleveland made such claim in respect to work done on the Toronto harbor, and after an Order-in-Council to refer the matter in contention

to an impartial tribunal, the withdrawal took place. The consent of the Minister of Public Works is necessary; and if it has once been given, it may be a question whether a successor has the power to cancel the reference. Against the claim, the chief engineer had reported. Under such circumstances, the Government might, in the first instance, if ever, have refused the reference; but, consent having been once given, can it be withdrawn by the simple fiat of the chief of the Public Works Department? To remove these contentions from the political atmosphere to the atmosphere of the courts is generally and rightly accounted an advantage, whatever may be the merits of this particular case. A Minister needs to be circumspect, indeed, when he takes the ground, in effect, that he is better qualified to decide than the courts. Mr. Tarte was certainly unfortunate when, in another case, he objected to Mr. Walter Shanley as an arbitrator, on the alleged ground that he had been a partner of the claimant. The allegation involved an error of identity, an American of the same name being taken for Mr. Walter Shanley. But in any case, Mr. Walter Shanley is recognized by all who know him as the soul of integrity. No opinion is here ventured on the merits of these cases; whatever they may be, it is seemly that a Minister of the Crown should abstain from making on the hustings, or in the press, accusations against political opponents which he will have the opportunity of making, a few days later, on the floor of Parliament, where they can be best dealt with.

The British Government having refused to join in an enquiry, on the spot, into the health of Canadian cattle, the late Government of Ottawa appointed 180 veterinary surgeons to perform this duty. They date back to June 18th, ten days before the elections. The new Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Fisher, has cancelled them all, though it is said he intends to study the question of inspection to see what can be done. It seems that the date of the appointments which have been annulled suggested something political to the new men. The appointments are said to have been hastily made, and that this army of inspectors, it is alleged, was not furnished with proper instructions. It is unfortunate that so large a number of inspectors were made under circumstances which raised the question or suspicion of political motives. Wholesale appointments which in any way invite wholesale dismissals are not calculated to stem the rising tide, however feeble it may be, which bears on its surface the motto that "to the victors belong the spoils."

During this year, 1896, the question recurs whether Sunday cars are to be authorized to run in Toronto. This year the vote to decide it may be repeated. Something depends upon the season in which the vote is taken; in summer we sigh for the sight of green fields; in winter, when they are buried in snow, they lose their attraction. The advocates of the cars and their opponents, silently recognizing these facts, contend for different seasons in which to take the vote: the former desire to have the vote before the attractions of rural scenery are obscured by the winter; the latter, to wait till the January elections. The question ought to be met fairly, without any attempt to dodge the inevitable reference to the voters, by whom it is to be decided. Among such as do not use the bicycle, the advocates have gained; among such as do use them they have lost. But for the extension of the use of the bicycle, the company might, by this time, count with some confidence on a victory; but the owners of wheels, who hold the deciding vote, will be very likely to seize the opportunity for getting a monopoly of the streets for themselves on Sunday.