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MORALITY IN POLITICS.

In these days nearly every full-grown man has a vote. As to his disposition of it much seems to depend upon circumstances in no way related to the interests of the Country (speaking in a large sense) but altogether to the claims of his party. We are, of course, dealing now with the average elector. It is essential that the Party Leader should have what is called a POLICY, which may be defined to be a series of phrases which the average elector may repeat to his neighbours as the embodiment of political wisdom. Otherwise, the opposition elector would be able to tax him with ignorance or worse. (We all know what political amenities are like!) However, the battle is fought and to his grief or joy, SIR JOHN MACDONALD or MR. MOWAT, as the case may be, is returned to power. Thereupon, according to the particular stripe or hue or complexion he has adopted or inherited or contracted, the worthy elector is satisfied that the country is saved or that it is going to the dogs.

The act of voting constitutes the highest practical manifestation of the interest which a citizen takes in his country. Self-government theoretically presupposes that the affairs of the country are conducted according to the cumulative desires of the people as expressed at the polls.

If the bulk of the electors are ignorant and selfish (but selfishness, after all, is only a form of ignorance) the affairs of the country are likely to be conducted badly. When we find so sacred a trust as that of a representative of the people confided to such men as MR. RYKERT OF LINCOLN, a condition of things surely exists which forces those of us who profess to instruct as well as interest the people to raise our voices in warning. There are doubtless many men in the community who are conscious of the degrading influences which enter so largely into our public life. It is a common topic among what are called the better classes. But these people singularly resemble ARTEMUS WARD when he expressed himself as being perfectly resigned to the enlistment of his wife's relations in the army. They are satisfied with that sort of self-sacrifice which confines itself to talking morally instead of acting morally.

In the last Ottawa election the number of abstentions in the wealthier wards of the city was most remarkable. In that election the issue was quite clear. The Roman Catholic Church had tampered with the use of the Bible in the schools, had been encouraging, as useful to her purposes, the growth of Separate Schools and the introduction of French text-books; had obtained grants of public money in aid of her convents and other institutions, and had established a very direct connection with the Local Government. The school laws had been so framed that it was difficult for the

Roman Catholic citizen to send his children to the Public Schools, nor could he do so without attracting the attention of his Priests and, more than probably, drawing upon himself the anger of his less enlightened co-religionists. All these facts, we repeat, were perfectly well understood. They were understood, at any rate, by every Roman Catholic in Lower-town, for they voted *en masse* for MR. BRONSON, ARCHBISHOP O'LEARY's nominee. Moreover, it is beyond a doubt that the same vote which had elected MR. MACKINTOSH, the Conservative candidate in the contest one month earlier, had now shifted round to the Liberal quarter. The Equal Rights party in both elections fought stoutly for principle. We cannot deny that the Roman Catholics did so too. But in what terms can we characterize the conduct of those men who held aloof from voting? The very important principles at stake were as nothing to these persons. There was no material interest at stake; therefore they looked coldly on. Such men are Protestants just as they are Englishmen or Scotchmen or Irishmen or Canadians. They are, in fact—nothing!

It is the barest political commonplace to state that our political system in Canada is altogether subject to an unwritten but perfectly well understood compact between the two great political parties on the one hand and the Church of Rome on the other. Under this arrangement the Liberals (so-called) are allowed to hold the Provincial Governments and the Conservatives (so-called) the Dominion. This arrangement is the more convenient in that it effectually stifles all opposition. The Conservatives in the Provinces have been afraid to resist the encroachments of the Romish Church for fear of injuring SIR JOHN MACDONALD, and the Opposition in the House of Commons has renounced its liberalism for a similar reason. MR. MOWAT would suffer.

Surely it is time for some one to protest, whether in doing so he may be called a fanatic, a peace-disturber or what not! Common sense demands that in a country such as Canada, with races and creeds innumerable, the State shall regard the citizens simply as citizens and not as members of a privileged class or creed. Into the perilous matter of Education the State has been forced, it having been generally admitted that the existence of a grossly ignorant class is a danger to the State. But, beyond the inculcation of the "four r's" the State has, we contend, no right to go. If there *has* to be moral teaching, the Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's Prayer, as not being subjects of creed conflict, should suffice. The State has certainly no right to endow, under any form whatever, any church. The citizens do not pay taxes as subscribers to creeds. They do that sort of thing in other ways quite sufficiently. Nor could any equitable apportionment of public money be made to any one church. There is a general agreement upon these points amongst most thinking men. Unhappily the average voter does not think.

RECIPROCITY.

The New York Tribune, which represents the extreme and dominant section of the Republican Party, in the hope of diverting public attention from the McKinley Bill, the Force Bill, and the pension scandal, against each of which re-actions are already setting in, has been endeavoring to prove that Canada is a dangerous neighbour to the United States.

It complains that Canadian railways have facilities of which the Inter-State law has deprived their own roads; forgetting that the Canadian railways are subject to the operation of that law as regards their traffic within the United States.

It further alleges that the Canadians have violated the spirit and intention of the Treaty of Washington inasmuch as that they have provided

for a rebate of tolls in the case of vessels going through to Montreal; again forgetting that the Treaty of Washington has never been fairly fulfilled by themselves, because Canadian vessels are practically prohibited from using the Erie and Champlain canals.

It further complains that American fishermen are forbidden to land their catch at Canadian ports and tranship in bond; once more forgetting that it was the Americans themselves who abrogated the Fishery clauses of the Washington Treaty, well knowing the consequences which would follow.

It further complains of seal poaching on the part of Canadians in the Behring Sea; wilfully disregarding the fact that the seal poachers are, in nearly every case, Americans who have hoisted the Union Jack to escape the absurd navigation laws of their own country.

It is a pity that responsible journals in the United States do not try to get at the truth and endeavour to promote friendship rather than estrangement between nations so much akin in every way as we are.

We are quite ready to admit the McKinley Bill was not specially directed against Canada, and we are glad to find that that fact is pretty well understood by our people. Every nation having commercial dealings with the United States will be more or less injuriously affected by that measure. It seems, absurd, on the face of things, that the United States should prevent its merchants from trading with other countries, especially when we consider how very well able to protect themselves these same merchants are! But, unfortunately, the Government is in the hands of "ringsters" and "combinists" and there is more than an impression that many members of both chambers are holding immense stocks of the articles shut out "waiting a rise." We suffer from a modified form of the same evils in Canada and can sympathise with the people of the United States. Nevertheless, the McKinley Bill will shut us out from the United States market, and it behoves us to enlarge our other channels of trade and seek for new ones. A considerable trade could, we think, be arranged with the West Indies, and we are glad to see that our Government is doing what it can in this direction. There is no reason, now that our shipping facilities are growing on the Pacific coast, that we should not strike out for a share of the Pacific trade. We have made a fair beginning with China and Japan, and if our merchants will practice the elementary wisdom of finding out what their customers want (e.g. as to weight and colour, in cottons) and meet barbaric prejudices in a business-like spirit we shall some day have a big trade with them. The Japanese, we may remind our readers, have largely adopted the European style of dress, but, if the pictorial representations of them are in any way correct, are not yet critical as to "fit." Our ready-made clothing merchants have their opportunity, if they will only take it. A whole nation is seeking to be clothed in "our fashionable and durable Five Dollar suit." What a chance for the enterprising drummer!

EDITORIAL NOTES.

A Maritime Province newspaper suggests that whereas the abrogation of the old Reciprocity Treaty led to the Confederation of the Dominion, so the present harsh restrictions upon our commerce imposed by the McKinley Bill may lead to a larger Federation—Imperial Federation. Unlikelier things have happened.

It is the duty of every Englishman living in the United States to do what in him lies to convert the Republic from its attitude of hostility to the rest of the English-speaking world. No man could embrace a nobler mission and its accomplishment would secure the peace of the world and advancement of civilization.

Most contradictory reports continue to come respecting the result of the harvest in the North-West. The west-

ern papers, however, agree in declaring the harvest exceptionally good. The Winnipeg Free Press estimates that twelve million bushels of wheat will be free for export. If this be true the Canadian Pacific Railway will have enough to do for several months.

The proceedings of the Methodist Conference have been marked by dignity and wisdom. The appointment of a committee to watch legislation is highly opportune. When one recalls the many instances in which legislation has been tampered with, in the most underhand ways, in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, notably in connection with the North-West Territories Act—the wonder is that Protestants have not been earlier alive to the necessity for close watchfulness of the proceedings of the politicians. But, "better late than never."

The difficulties attending the government of Ireland will be seriously increased by the failure of the potato in the west. The Government proposes to build three lines of light railway and to undertake other public works in the west of Ireland with a view to providing employment and alleviating distress.

The great trouble with Ireland is that all economic laws are set at defiance while at the same time the Irish people are never allowed to learn the lessons which stern adversity can alone impart. The *foinest pianthry* will continue to grow the uncertain tuber so long as weak minded persons, improperly termed "humanitarians," appear disposed to implement any failure of the crop by liberal contributions.

A farmer's life is a fight with nature. To some extent he can harness and control the forces which would otherwise destroy him. But in the main, he has to depend very much upon the law of chances. The climate of Ireland is moist and mild. Hay is generally a good crop if enough sun can be got to cure it and get it in. Stock of all kinds do well, for no such drawbacks as want of water or scarcity of pasture are known.

Rents are, on the whole, very reasonable, and the tenure more secure than in any other civilized country. The prices obtainable for dairy products and cattle allow an ample margin of profit.

If the hundreds of thousands of pounds which have been poured into Ireland from America, had been employed in releasing the small farmer from the exactions of the *gombeen* man (who is a greater curse to Ireland than the worst landlord ever was) and in aiding the west coast fishermen in the way of new seines and fishing boats; rather than in the support of a lot of low blackguards in Parliament, whose sole aim is to keep alive sores which have been festering for generations. Ireland to-day would be peaceful and prosperous and the investment had proved a safe and profitable one.

The question of delegating to the President of the United States the power of making Reciprocity Treaties with other nations on the American continent is exciting much controversy on the other side. The New York Nation calls attention to a decision rendered by the New York Court of Appeals in 1853, which bears upon the point. The court held that the Legislature had no such power of delegation, and further in illustration of its position, said: "Let us suppose that the Act of 1849 had directed the Attorney-General, or the Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church, or the Common Council of the city of New York to certify, on the next general election day, whether in his or their opinion that Act ought to become a law; and had further provided that 'the Act should or should not take effect, according to such certificate: it cannot be pretended that the statute could have become operative upon the making of the certificate in its favour.' 'The Constitution does not authorize the power of legislation to be so delegated.'"

This decision was based upon common law, which is operative in all English-speaking self-governing countries. And yet it was pretended by SIR JOHN THOMPSON that the Legislature of Quebec had the power to delegate to the Pope the right of deciding whether an act of a British Legislature "should or should not take effect." The average elector may be disposed to let the Jesuits Act "slide" but there are those in this country who will not cease their agitation until the principles that were overthrown by that Act

have been re-asserted and reincorporated in our Constitution even though it should take a revolution to effect this result.

If a citizen is at all in doubt as to whether he is properly qualified to fill his part, as a voter, in the government of his country, he may easily test the matter by asking himself point-blank: "Would I vote for my political opponents if they were to suggest certain reforms which would undoubtedly benefit the country?" Would MR. CHARLTON, for instance, vote for MR. MEREDITH, who had adopted the platform which the former professed?

That was the rock upon which the Equal Rights people split. A great many men had sufficient love of country, and, for that matter, natural intelligence, to see that, in principle, Equal Rights must be an admirable thing. But, although SIR JOHN MACDONALD, on the one hand, and MR. MOWAT, on the other, had been pursuing a policy exactly opposed to equal rights, when it came to a question of voting, men shrank from practically applying the principle which they had embraced to hurt their political friends.

This was remarkably the case with MR. CHARLTON, M.P. His friend MR. MOWAT had withdrawn *Marmion* from the curriculum, at the demand of the Roman Catholic church. *Marmion*, it appears, contained an incident which reflected faithfully, but, therefore, the more injuriously, upon some of the methods of that church. *Marmion* was consequently withdrawn from the Public Schools, notwithstanding that Roman Catholics are not supposed to attend those schools and, wherever it is possible for the priest to prevent it, do not attend them.

The same thing occurred with reference to the Bible. That sacred book—the sanction of Christianity—was withdrawn from the Public schools of a Christian and largely Protestant country because the Roman Catholic church so willed. Will any one pretend that the Bible was not withdrawn from the Public Schools, or, what is quite as bad tampered with, at the demand of the Romish Church? It cannot be denied, even by MR. CHARLTON. And this being the case, we may well ask—why should the State come to the aid of the Separate Schools, when those for whom the Separate Schools are maintained do not content themselves with a privilege not conceded to any other sect, but insist upon interfering with the schools maintained by the State for the rest of the community? The Romish Church should consent to a general system of public schools or she should confine herself to her own separate schools. She will find that she will not be allowed to meddle much longer, with both.

SIR JOHN MACDONALD has been equally guilty, in his sphere, as MR. MOWAT. The Jesuits Estates Bill should have been annulled and no amount of legal sophistries will obscure the facts. A man dies leaving no legal heirs. A long time after another man assumes the name of the deceased and claims his property. What title has he? None. The Jesuits attempted an impudent piece of blackmail and the State ignobly yielded. SIR JOHN MACDONALD is as much responsible as MEREDITH for that disgraceful piece of legislation, for without the assent of the former it could not have become operative.

But Equal Righters of Conservative proclivities will forget all about the Jesuits Estates Bill, just as Equal Righters of Mr. Charlton's stripe, forgot all about Mr. Mowat's concessions on the 5th of June last. Citizens are led to believe first in a creed and next in a party; seldom, as far as we can perceive, to consider the ethics underlying the creed or the principles which have been trodden under in the scramble for office.

It is truly a grand thing that our forefathers were Englishmen! But it is a yet grander thing that *we ourselves* are Englishmen. A man who is content to strut through the world with his chest expanded and his head in air: all because his forefathers were men of noble character—but who is not able or not willing to emulate, and if possible, excel his ancestors in public and private virtue—ought properly to be a Hottentot—not an Englishman. *Viv ea nostra voce.*

It was the constant exercise of perfect independence of mind for generations which produced the English character. That sort of thing is very different from arrogance or disdain towards others. We have heard Englishmen