

his views and of the Opposition. While making a very earnest, pointed, and somewhat violent speech on this subject, Mr. Bell, the Conservative leader, in the name of his party accepted the issue, and expressed his willingness to make this question the chief one of the coming campaign. So that after all the battle will resolve itself into a purely party contest. The Conservatives will struggle to uphold the union, and try to show wherein it has benefited Nova Scotia and other sea-bordering Provinces; while the Liberals are attempting to prove that this arrangement has done a great deal more harm than good, and that it has already existed entirely too long.

Regarding the probable decision of the electors on this matter it is rather difficult to make predictions. There are many elements in the contest whose value cannot be estimated, and some of them, which now seem of slight moment, may become sufficiently important to control the result; and a lucky hit of written or spoken eloquence might set rolling one of those waves of popular enthusiasm, which are liable to rise in any great political struggle and sweep away all opposing forces, although it may be utterly without any logical consideration.

The reasons for desiring a return to direct relations with the Imperial Government advanced by the Nova Scotia Liberals are, mostly, already familiar to many of your readers. They declare, in the first place, that Confederation ought never to have been established. There was no occasion for it. Things were well enough under the old régime, and have been growing worse and worse ever since it was superseded by a scheme which they characterize as all promise and no pay. Consequently, permanent prosperity cannot be expected until we get rid of it. Secondly, the Upper Canadians and the Maritime people are naturally foreigners. From geographical as well as many other considerations they can never be anything else. They assert that politically, commercially, and socially, they have nothing in common with the St. Lawrence country, and a proper national amalgamation is impossible. Hence in all relations with the Upper Provinces they must labour under great disadvantages; and if they must remain a dependency of any Power, Mother England would suit them much the best. The third objection affirms that whatever business is transacted with Canada always proves terribly one-sided, being to the Nova Scotians nearly all give and hardly any take. The Dominion will not or cannot effect Reciprocity with the United States; and so they are forced to receive goods from dealers in Montreal and other Canadian cities. But, as the compliment is not returned by any extensive purchase of their productions, imports greatly exceed exports, and whatever they can make from their four chief industries—fishing, mining, lumbering, and farming—each year goes to the merchants and manufacturers of Quebec and Ontario, with whom they are compelled to deal, because laws made at Ottawa prevent them from trading where they want to. It is also claimed that New England is the natural business ally of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and that with proper commercial facilities traffic between these regions could be conducted upon a mutually beneficial basis. These and many other similar arguments will be advanced to show that the quicker the tie now binding us to the Dominion is broken the better it will be for all parties.

How the Opposition is to sustain their side of the discussion, and strive to show that the young giant of the North is growing up rapidly and as well proportioned as could be expected, has not yet been made public, and very likely they hardly know themselves. The challenge of Mr. Fielding was issued with such reckless brilliancy that the Conservative gentlemen were somewhat disconcerted, and hardly recovered their presence of mind before the House adjourned. The speeches in opposition to this measure by Mr. Bell and his followers made scarcely any attempt at argument, and consisted almost wholly of personal attacks upon the Premier and his Administration. But when these lawyers, doctors, etc., get over their surprise, and settle down to the solid work of the campaign, they will doubtless bring forth arguments weighty enough and sufficiently striking to fairly meet those presented by the Repealers.

Considering the great variety of interests involved in connection with the chief question, this summer in Nova Scotia is sure to see a vast amount of political ink-warfare; and Acadia's resplendent hills and valleys will echo and re-echo with the thunderous eloquence of battling statesmen.

ADDISON F. BROWNE.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS and Lievenne, a French actress, were both summoned as witnesses in a trial which took place at Rouen. Alexandre Dumas, when called upon to give his name and condition, replied in a pompous voice, "Alexandre Dumas and I should call myself *homme de lettres* if I were not in the country of Corneille." On the same question being put to Lievenne, she said, "I am Lievenne, and I should call myself maid if I were not in the town where they burnt them."

FROM BATTLEFORD TO MOOSEJAW.

THE welcome and long-looked-for orders for "A" Battery, Field Force, to move south, and join the General's (Sir Fred. Middleton's) flying column, having reached us, we "pulled out" from Fort Otter, Battleford, at three p.m., on the 8th of March, 1886. Owing to the time of year and the uncertainty of the weather, every precaution had to be taken to guard against both storms and sunshine; for too much of the latter would very soon clear the trail of all the snow, and render the roads knee-deep in mud, owing to the peculiar nature of the soil.

Reports having reached me, from the mail-carrier and others, that long stretches of the trail were completely bare of snow, and the road in the vicinity of Battleford being very heavy, on account of the quantity of snow on the trail, I was obliged to supply myself with both sleighs and waggons. All the large double waggons had to be taken to pieces and carried on the sleighs for the first part of the journey. I had calculated to do the march in ten days, a distance of 190 miles, as laid down on the map, but of 210, as estimated by the freighters of the road. The "outfit" (a term used by the people of the country to signify anything, from a "jumper" with an Indian pony to a column of any size) consisted of five officers, eighty-three non-commissioned officers and men, one Gatling gun with ammunition, eighteen battery horses, one hundred rounds of Snider ammunition per man, and 33,797 pounds of stores and baggage, forty sleighs, waggons, and carts, thirty-two horses, thirty Indian ponies (with twenty-one spare) and three yokes of oxen. What a cavalcade to march on to the Garrison Common of Toronto, or the "Champ de Mars" in Montreal! As may be imagined, a column composed of such heterogeneous material required a good deal of looking after.

Our first day we did only ten miles, as on some parts of the trail the snow was very deep, and there is always more or less difficulty in starting an outfit of this kind. We reached the place called the "Sixty-mile Bush," at midday on the eleventh. This bush is generally used by freighters and teamsters as winter-quarters for their stock, as the Indian ponies and cattle scrape the snow away with their fore-feet to get at the grass below, and thereby get meat and drink at the same time; the only water, by the way, that they get during the whole winter. I was in hopes that I should have found water at this bush, but the small creek was frozen solid to the bottom. My horses had now been for forty hours without anything to moisten their throats, beyond the snow that was mixed with their oats. I tried the plan of melting snow, but the wind which always blows on the prairie, so permeated the snow with smoke from the fire, that, when it had melted to water, the horses would only drink it in very small quantities, and I don't blame them, for even good ration tea and coffee did not destroy the disagreeable flavour of the smoky water. As we drew near the "Sixty-mile Bush," the snow had perceptibly disappeared, and when we got to the bush itself the trail was quite bare. I sent an officer on a few miles ahead, to see what state the trail was in; he returned, and reported that there was no snow to be seen, so I gave orders to change the loads from the sleighs to waggons that I had previously sent out to this point. In the middle of this operation, a heavy snowstorm came on, with a bitter cold wind, and we had to leave off work and get into our tents. I have, many times in my life, been in more comfortable situations! To sit in a cold and cheerless tent, and by the light of a "penny dip," eat, or try to eat, frozen "bully beef," and hard tack, and wash the sumptuous repast down with smoky tea, with the thermometer somewhere below zero, is not what it is cracked up to be! Everything that *could* freeze *did* freeze, and I could not help contrasting my present experience with that of a twelvemonth previous, when I was "leaving the niggers behind" on the Bayuda Desert, with the temperature somewhere in the hundreds in the shade.

The difficulties of the march were considerably enhanced by the fact that after leaving the "Sixty-mile Bush" there was not a stick of wood to be had till we struck the South Branch of the Saskatchewan River, a distance of some 110 miles; so we had to carry sufficient wood from the bush to do the cooking. Of course it was out of the question to carry enough to melt snow for the horses, as every available inch of room was taken up with stores and ammunition. The first day's march after leaving the bush was very fair wheeling, as the snowstorm of the previous night did not last long; but when we got into the "Bear" and "Bad" Hills, the trail became very heavy. The road winds in and out and around these hills, and, in some of the coulées that we had to pass through, the snow had drifted so deep in places that the horses almost completely disappeared, and the waggons and carts had to be man-handled through. This was very trying and fatiguing work for the men, and made a big hole in a day's march. It was in places like these that the little Indian ponies,