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## CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, Sept. 1st, 1877.

#### PARLIAMENTARY COURTESY.

Among the illustrations of the present number will be found a picture representing a scene in that memorable session of the British House of Commons, which is said to have been the longest on record, having lasted twenty-six consecutive hours, and which was marked by the obstruction of a handful of members to the normal course of Parliamentary legislation. Into the political phase of the question to which this case has given rise, it is needless to enter. We prefer to regard it in the light of that code of gentility and mutual forbearance which is laid down as the rule of conduct of all gentlemen who are called upon to meet together to devise laws and regulations for the good of their country. We wish to call attention to the highly creditable manner in which the House extricated itself from a position which, through the exhibition of ill-breeding or the ebullition of bad blood, might have culminated in a national disgrace. All through an afternoon and evening, through the whole of a weary night, and during the dull hours of a forenoon, rendered duller and heavier by sleeplessness, the large majority of the House of Commons was kept at bay by a trio of malcontents. The House was sitting in Committee. Five times was the chair vacated and filled. Members relieved themselves by a few hours' rest in the cloak rooms and ante-chambers, or a turn on that beautiful terrace, from which the thin freshness of the Thames was wafted, to revive them. There was a generous patience on the one side, a good-humored persistency on the other. At times nature would assert herself faintly, and such ardent spirits as that of SIR WILLIAM VERNON HARCOURT, for instance, would rouse itself into remonstrance, but a cooler head would soon calm the excitement by some words of honest commonplace. A harsh word would sometimes fly across the table, but it would be at once caught by a member asking to have it "taken down." Once or twice an unparliamentary expression would escape from a pent-up breast, but the cold, inexorable Chairman was there to insist upon an immediate withdrawal. And in every case, the withdrawal was gracefully made. Notwithstanding the natural wear and tear of so protracted a sitting, the room presented no trace of disorder, beyond a little more than the usual amount of paper littering the floor, and when the dawn streamed in grey streaks through the colored glass, its light fell upon men whose evening apparel was

still unruffled. When, at length, the great session came to an end, all signs of ill-feeling between the combatants had passed away, and business took its usual course.

We contend that this is an example of which any nation might feel proud. Without desiring to be invidious, we can only express our wonder at what would have happened if similar circumstances had presented themselves at Versailles or Washington. Almost the last meeting of the French Assembly was positively disgraceful, and we have had scenes of "filibustering" and obstruction in the House of Representatives, of which the less said the better. Even here in Canada we may well profit by the lesson set us at St. Stephen's. During the last session of our Parliament, we had exhibitions on both sides, which were far from creditable. Ministers especially should give the example of Parliamentary courtesy, as SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE did, in the instance to which we have just referred. If the leaders of the House go astray, we need not expect that the conduct of the members should be above reproach.

#### THE TRUE SITUATION IN FRANCE.

It has occasioned much surprise among the monarchical Conservatives of France, that their course and that of President MACMAHON in the present struggle receive only scant sympathy from persons of conservative tendencies abroad. They attribute this indifference or covered hostility to an ignorance of the true issues at stake. It must be confessed that the real motives of the MacMahonites are not generally as well understood as they might be, owing in a measure to the almost inextricable confusion of parties now struggling for supremacy in France, and, also, because we are naturally led to appreciate that struggle according to the constitutional principles by which we ourselves have always been governed. But if we study the situation in France from an exclusively French point of view, with some knowledge of the construction of French Society, we shall be led to admit that the followers of Marshal MACMAHON can make out a case which justifies them in their own eyes in the campaign which they have undertaken, and which, as a consequence, sets the question of their sincerity and patriotism beyond the range of dispute. They fear—and profess to have reason to fear—that the Republican party, as a body, is hostile on principle to the Church which is that of the almost totality of the nation. They believe that if the Republic is definitively established, all religious and educational institutions will be secularized, that the clergy will be excluded from all participation in public affairs, and that a practical atheism, such as prevails in Germany, will be the result of the policy. They contend fairly enough that no nation, and the French in especial, can live without the curb and guidance of religion; and that if France is to be saved from the horrors of another cataclysm, she must cling with desperate tenacity to the pillars of her old traditions. They affirm that already in the last Assembly the Republican majority showed how far it was disposed to go in the elimination of direct religious influence on political issues, and the complete separation of Church and State. The MacMahonites allow, of course, that the Republicans have been in a strong majority during the past few years, and they are beginning to betray their fears that this majority will be increased rather than diminished at the forthcoming elections. But here, precisely, is one of the points where these Conservative Frenchmen begin to differ in their views from ourselves. They have not that respect for the majority which we have. For them, it is rather an abstraction than a concretion. Trained in the ideas of Divine Right, more or less clearly defined, they make rather light of any factor, even though it be the compact vote of millions, which militates against their preconceived theory of what is just and proper. Hence the very questionable,

not to say illegal and tyrannical, means which they are employing to force the approaching elections in their own favor. Hence the bold return to a personal government which reminds one forcibly of the late Empire. In this respect, no man born and bred under a constitutional government can approve the DE BROGLIE administration. And there is more. We fail to share in this morbid fear of the French Republicans. We do not choose to confound Republicans with Radicals. The former are men deserving of credit for their patriotic endeavors during the past seven years. The latter are utterly detestable. There is no more atrocious being under Heaven than a French Radical. But they are only a handful and do not control the bulk of French democracy. Besides, the constitution is there, framed after several years of patient and patriotic labor by men of all parties. That constitution guarantees the rights of the Church, the liberty of education, the prerogatives of the clergy, and the privileges and duties of the people. That constitution cannot be violated without usurpation, and usurpation would entail revolution. If the Republicans were disposed to tear up a document which they were principally instrumental in framing, they would become the first victims of their treachery and folly, for a revolution would bring a new dynasty and the death of the Republic. While, therefore, we can understand the motives which prompt the followers of MACMAHON to act as they are now doing, we fail to see that they justify the high-handed measures which they are at present employing, and so long as the Republicans make no worse use of their power than they have hitherto done, we think all the true lovers of France will desire that the majority shall continue to rule.

#### THE PROPER TREATMENT OF THE CLASSICS.

By a singular coincidence, professors and men of learning in England, France, the United States and elsewhere, are at present devoting their attention to the old vexed question of classical education. They all profess their entire dissatisfaction with the methods of instruction which are in vogue. And well may they do so. The years devoted to Greek and Latin in our academies and colleges are so much time lost, because these languages are never really learned. To know a language, it may not be absolutely necessary to speak and write it, but one should be able at least to read and translate it *ad aperitiam libri*. Yet this, by common confession, is not obtained from the vast majority of graduates in England and America. It were a false pride to disguise the truth in the matter. It is admitted to be a fact, and the fact is one which must attract the notice of those who desire to promote the cause of a higher education. The more impetuous reformers insist, as a remedy, that the classics should be shelved altogether, as impossible of attainment. The wiser counsel is that the classics are quite attainable, provided the proper methods of instruction are employed. What this method is, in all its parts, it is beyond the limits of a newspaper article to explain, but it is founded on the correct principle that the classics should be taught as living languages, and not as dead. The very enunciation of the principle is refreshing, opening new views at once. As a matter of fact, the Greek is not a dead tongue, being spoken to-day in Athens, with differences that are really less than those which separate our English from the English of CHAUCER, or the present French from the French of RABELAIS. The writer happened, for the first time the other day, on some modern Greek verse and prose, which, to his surprise, from his knowledge of ancient Greek, he read currently, stopping only at a few changes in articles and pronouns, that he mastered after a moment's reflection. The well-known Professor BLACKIE offers himself as a practical man to prove publicly before any assembly of scholars at Oxford and Cambridge, that Greek can be taught as a liv-

ing, and not as a dead language, without the slightest prejudice to that minute accuracy and refined classical tone of which English Hellenism has always been found to make her boast. Mr. GRANT DUFF, M.P., in the August number of the *Fortnightly Review*, takes similar grounds. It is safe to say that the Greek language thus studied can be learned more readily and thoroughly than German.

What is true of the language of DEMOSTHENES is equally so of the language of TULLY. Latin is by no means a dead language. It is written and spoken in all the ecclesiastical circles of Europe. In the university towns of Germany it is a common channel of communication. In Poland and Hungary it is spoken by the middle classes. By means of it a traveller can "get along" very nicely among the learned of Italy, Spain and France. The old tongue still survives in its Italian descendant. This is so true that any one who understands Latin has no difficulty with either Italian or its sister language Spanish. French, the third offshoot from the Latin, has departed further from the original. The Latin spoken now-a-days in Europe is not precisely that which was spoken at the Tusculan villa, or around the marble tables of MECENAS, but it is thoroughly serviceable, and has this advantage that the one who so speaks it is simply able to read at his ease the whole of Roman literature. And that is precisely what we call knowing a language.

We make no doubt that this theory of the treatment of the classic languages will commend itself to instructors everywhere, and that before many years have elapsed we shall have a revival in this branch of learning which shall keep pace with the revival in the metaphysical and natural sciences. We cannot do without the literatures of Greece and Rome. If they were allowed to perish, solid education would be a void. As, therefore, it is imperative that they should be preserved, it is time to cast off the *impedimenta* of the old pedagogues, and address ourselves to a rational method of making Greek and Latin as familiar and as easy of acquisition as French or German.

With the intent of depreciating the poor Turks, writers are going out of their way to show that the principal officers of the Ottoman forces are foreigners. But accurate information disproves all these stories. The new Commander-in-Chief, MEHEMET ALI, is indeed a Frenchman by origin, and a German by birth, but he is a thorough Mohammedan in training, education, instinct and religion. His real name is JULES DETROIT. His father was a French bandmaster who went to Germany, where the boy was born, but whence he deserted to Constantinople as a sailor when quite a child. The Turkish navy is not commanded by an Englishman. The correspondent of the London *Daily News* has taken special pains to state that HOBART PASHA has been kept constantly at Constantinople. Of late he has been entrusted with the command of a squadron in the Black Sea, but he is not the supreme officer of the fleet. The Turkish cavalry is not commanded by an Englishman. BAKER PASHA has simply been commissioned to organize and command the mounted militia in European Turkey. It is a wonder that MOKHTAR PASHA has not been claimed by a foreign nationality. SULEIMAN PASHA is said to be a Frenchman, but he has nothing Gallic about him except the purity of his Parisian accent. As to OSMAN PASHA we cannot prevail upon ourselves to disturb the curiously persistent rumor that the hero of Plevna is no other than BAZAINE in disguise.

There is much confusion in the American papers with regard to the use of the words "Communism" and "Communist." It is a mistake to trace the levelling tendencies of the railway and colliery strikers in the United States to the wild men who made such havoc in Paris seven years ago. The latter were not socialists at all. Their