

PUNCH IN CANADA'S ADDRESS

TO THE ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF HALTON.

GENTLEMEN,—

Having been waited upon by a deputation of my own thoughts, urging me to advise you on the course I think it right you should pursue as to the forthcoming election for your county, I proceed to do so. You may ask what business I have with you or your election? I reply that it is my pleasure to soothe any momentary irritation of my hump by rubbing it against whichever of my neighbour's posts happens to be the nearest. You have two posts at this moment set up in your county, and I feel an itching to rub against them.

You have before you Mr. Wetenhall's address of sixty lines of the usual electioneering twaddle of the Ins. You have also eighty lines of the usual electioneering bunkum of the Outs; and remember, in talk, the Outs always have the best of it.

You are dissatisfied with the administration. Heaven knows it is bad enough: but under the present colonial system, no administration can conduct the business of the country to the satisfaction of the people. You cry out for retrenchment in the public expenditure. Where will you begin? With the Governor General? Under the present system that cannot be done. All great reforms must spring from the people. To carry them requires a pressure from without, and you have no lever to work with—no organization—no leaders. A puerile cry for retrenchment is got up without, as it appears to me, any one knowing where it is to begin, or where it is to stop, or how it is to be effected. Your cry is that of a child who whimpers for something nice: its mammy brings it jam, and it then discovers it wanted barley sugar.

What is wanted, it is difficult to say; but I will tell you what is not wanted. A governor general at £7000 sterling a year is not wanted! An executive council of eleven members, at enormous salaries, is not wanted! especially when more than one half of that council is composed of lawyers. What does a fourth-rate French pettifogging attorney like Chabot, ignorant almost of the language in which the correspondence of his department is carried on, know about the public works? What do maggoty-brained advocates, replete with the jargon of the courts and crammed with precedents and technicalities, know of commercial or political economy? And yet it is to these men, and such as these, you have entrusted the government of this province; and you cry aloud for retrenchment, law-reform, and good government!

Well, you have found them out, and you have it in your power to turn them out. Yes, men of Halton, on your votes depends the existence of the present administration. Return Caleb Hopkins, and the present firm is dissolved, and the business of the country will in all probability be conducted by Henry Sherwood and company. Will that suit you? No! Then take my advice, and

VOTE FOR WETENHALL!

You want no new men at the head of affairs until you have resolved what the new men shall do, and more especially who the new men shall be. Do not be afraid that the present holders of office can continue such, excepting by sufferance. The pear is ripe, but it is not worth the plucking; it is diseased; let it hang till it rots, and it will drop itself.

Besides, what with annexationists and anti-annexationists, ministerial-reformers and "clear-grit"-reformers, elective-institutions-British-leaguers and non-elective-institutions-British-leaguers, war-of-races-men and no-war-of-races-men, federal-unionists and colonial representationists, old Tories and young radicals, and heaven knows how many other parties or sections of parties, Canada politically is but a large pool of turbid and foul water. It must be filtered. But there is no filter constructed that would do the work. No sponge manufactured sufficiently large to absorb the dirt. The people must construct the filter, and the sponge must grow. Then and not till then will it be necessary for them to hire men to superintend the action of the machine. Therefore I say, once more,

VOTE FOR WETENHALL!!

Again, how is Caleb Hopkins on annexation? On the vital question of the hour Caleb is silent. Is he silent from forgetfulness? Then is he not a fit man to represent even a pigstie. Is he silent from design? Does he think, by shirking the question, to entrap annexation votes? Then is he a low-intriguing-dishonest politician, of the stamp of those traders on the public purse who argue that the end justifies the means, and who to gain a vote would, like Peter, deny their master.

My dear electors of the county of Halton, make Caleb speak out on annexation; do this, even though you make Wetenhall the ball to knock down the ten-pins now set up in the cabinet of Canada. Do not shirk the question. Make it a test at every polling place. Let Halton speak out on one side or the other; for no lasting prosperity can exist in Canada until that question is disposed of.

Once more, for the reasons before stated, advising you to

VOTE FOR WETENHALL!!

I remain,

My dear electors,

Your obedient servant,

PUNCH IN CANADA.

PUNCH ON THE MILITIA.

It has been said that military ardor was a harder thing to cure than the measles, and like the measles was catching. But this is a poetical idea, and in this "pork and flour" age, poetry is not "the cheese." Love of country has also been considered by philosophers as a feeling ennobling to the human mind.—No quotation has been more used up than the lines—

"Lives there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said,
This is my own, my native land?"

At the period when Scott asked "Where this man lived?" Mr. Echo, who is hired to dwell in caves and church-towers, and under rocks, and in divers places, for the purpose of replying to questions in the Hibernian style, by asking others, instantly shouted, where? It is also said that the high-minded little Echoes who dwell in the innermost recesses of every good man's heart, clapped their tiny hands in an enthusiastic manner, and shouted the same syllable. But in Canada "*nous avons change tout cela.*" In this wooden country various inspired volunteers, jealous of the red-coats and gold lace of the regulars, obtained commissions in the militia. They fancied that they had souls above buttons, live souls actuated by generous sentiments, and not petrifications, which they could at pleasure confine in the sordid prisons of their breeches pockets; but souls that would never shrink in defence of the Queen they swore to defend, and the country they promised to serve. But bless me, they suddenly discover that the red-coats they so much longed for, are but the liveries of slaves: that the gold lace they worshipped is but tinsel after all: that as for souls they are in the predicament of Master Stephen, and have none "worth speaking of;" that oaths of allegiance are but old gloves to be put on and off at leisure, or like Indian-rubber bands made to stretch; and as for love of country, it is a feeling which has no existence save in the hearts of heroes and statesmen, and is totally unworthy of holding a place in the minds of enlightened cobblers, tinkers, and tailors. On making this discovery they, like a goose who has in her own idea done something wonderful and lain an egg, with loud "quacks" proclaim it to the world. The red-coats, once the objects of their fond affections, are stripped from their backs; the gold-stripe they idolized is torn from their trousers; no longer can they display their manly forms (if manly forms can exist without manly feelings) decked in the glorious panoply of war, to the admiring eyes of grandmothers, aunts, sisters, and maid-servants; they are dismissed, ignominiously dismissed from a service they disgraced, they would disgrace any service where fidelity was an essential; and they turn round and bully, and bluster, and whine, and look big, like an overgrown boy at school who, feeling the smart of the birch, holds in his breath, buttons up his unmentionables, and then retires to the lowest form and blubbers; they are looking big now, but they will blubber presently. When they do they shall be forgiven.