



III.

CANADA THE FREE.



SIR John Thompson has gone to the Old Country, and a lot of vulgar curiosity is being exhibited by the common people to know the why and wherefore of his trip. The "masses" seem to imagine that because they indirectly supply the money for the official outings of Cabinet Ministers, they have a right to pry into the public affairs of which these gentlemen are the custodians. They go so far as to broadly hint—if they do not openly assert—that members of the Government are extravagant, and frequently go abroad for the personal pleasure going abroad affords, merely pretending that they have State business to look after. Such impertinence as this is very deplorable, but it is the natural result of "free institutions," and Cabinet ministers must endure it as part of the penalty which they pay for greatness. We have noticed some ribald allusions of the kind to the Premier's present mission. Some of the papers also have been mean enough to suggest that Sir Charles Tupper is paid to transact Canadian business abroad and might very well be called upon once in a while to save the trouble and expense of these ministerial jaunts, especially as he does not seem to have anything else to do. We call attention to these remarks simply as an illustration of the "liberty of the press" as it exists in Canada. It is a pretty faithful reflex, it will be observed, of the freedom of speech we have just alluded to. That Sir John Thompson has not punished it by suspending the journals which have thus criticised him, is a great tribute to his good nature. In Russia the journalists would have been sent to Siberia.

A FABLE.

ONCE upon a time there was a coal and wood Dealer who was also a Christian. He had a somewhat extensive business and employed a large number of men as shovellers, weighers, carters, etc. As the Fall of the year drew on and trade began to grow brisk, the Dealer gathered all his employes together one day and addressed them saying: "I want to have it clearly understood by every man in my employ that this business is carried on, from top to bottom, in accordance with Christian principles, and these principles as applied to the coal and wood business mean good quality and full measure or weight. Now the first man who has any hand in sending out a short ton of coal or cord of wood from this yard will be discharged forthwith. I have no objection to a little over-measure in the case of poor people, but short measure will not be tolerated." And having thus spoken he dismissed the workmen, every one of whom became a church member before the winter was over.

BY MR. LAURIER.

MID banquets and rallyings, though we may roam,
And score many triumphs there's no place like home.
Though courteous the people and whoesome the fare,
We would rather be home than a-touring out there.
Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
The great West is nice, but there's no place like home!

A MODERN COMEDY.

THE following outline of a comedy is given gratis to any aspirants who wish to become famous as playwrights. They should remember that no dialogue or plot is necessary in a play of this kind. In fact the audiences of to-day feel discouraged when they attend a play that has anything but incident in it. The first act should open thus:

Elderly gentleman enters and sings "Oh, who will hold the dog?" He then sits down, as he supposes, upon a chair, but there is no chair there, and the floor saves him from falling into the cellar. (Uproarious applause.) He throws the chair through the window. Policeman standing outside catches it with his face, (More applause.) The policeman shoots at him and the bullet flattens against his face. (More applause.) This always brings down the house. Here exeunt both and enter lover playing banjo and singing serenade. Then enter goat with chestnut bell tied about its neck. It straightens itself and sends the young man over the footlights. This is so new and novel that it never fails to bring peals of laughter. If a goat cannot be procured a bull dog will do, but a bull dog has been used before. Then let the curtain down with an invisible chorus singing "Baby's with the Angels."

The second act should be varied somewhat. It would be well to introduce somebody stepping upon a tack with his bare feet or getting killed while struggling with a barrel upon the cellar stairway. There are numerous funny situations which may be introduced, such as having a man putting up stove pipes and breaking into profanity. The rest must be left to the reader. If we have given him a pointer which may serve to win him fame, we can die in peace.

LET the Patrons keep a sharp eye on their official editor, Mr. G. Weston Wrigley. He has begun to part his name in the middle as thus. This is an innovation the farmer's party should stamp out at once.



AT THE END OF THE WESTERN CAMPAIGN.