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MONTREAL, SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1874.

THAT LAND SWAP.

The Tanneries Land Swap sensation appears to be gradually dying a natural death. After having been the one topic of conversation and of newspaper discussion it has fulfilled its time as a nine days' wonder, and seems to have been pretty well dropped on all sides. The cause of the sudden demise of so fruitful a subject may in all probability be found in the fact that the verdict with regard to the transaction was all but unanimous. Conservatives and Liberals, Blues and Rouges united in denouncing it as an infamous affair, and in demanding an immediate investigation. Thus there being but one opinion about the matter, it lost its piquancy, and as a natural consequence fell flat. Party papers are not, in this country, given to discussing a subject out of which there is no fighting to be had.

We have hitherto contented ourselves with briefly alluding to the transaction between the Minister of Public Works and Mr. Middlemiss, and to the extraordinary unanimity of opinion it has elicited. We have done so simply for the reason that we are inclined to believe that the matter has been too hastily taken up to allow of its being fairly and impartially discussed. We do not wish to be understood as constituting ourselves the champion of the Quebec Ministry. Nothing can be farther from our intention. Any reader of these columns will confess that when we felt that blame was due to the Quebec Ministry we have not spared it. On the contrary, we have been accused of prejudice against them. But in this matter we cannot hide from ourselves the fact that the Government of this Province has been, if not harshly, at least hastily dealt with. This, however, can occasion no surprise. Apart from the mere feeling against Conservative Governments caused by the Pacific Railway Scandal *exposé*, there exists among the people at large a feeling of uncertainty, due to the same cause, which leads them to decline to put their trust in any Government whatsoever. In half a dozen words, public confidence in public men is shaken. The country has been so miserably deceived by those in whom they have long trustfully confided, that it will take some time, some years of good honest government, before confidence is restored. As things now stand the country is in a chronic state of panic. One rumour of political malfeasance, once fairly started, is caught up, spread here and there, *crecens eundo*, until it assumes such preposterous and unnatural proportions that it blinds even those who are most interested in seeing clearly. This, we believe, has been the case with what is now known as the Tanneries "Land Swap." We are fully aware that we stand alone, or almost so, in this opinion; but nevertheless we do not hesitate for one moment in expressing our conviction that when the matter has been thoroughly sifted it will be found that it amounts, in the popular phrase, to much cry and little wool. We do not say that the Government will come out scatheless from the ordeal. Far from it. But this we do believe, that the charges of corruption and speculation which are now brought against it by friend and foe alike, will be found, upon investigation, to be groundless. Wilful mismanagement we believe there has been none; and we only wish, for the sake of the country, that we could say as much of ignorance and incapability on the part of the rulers of the Province.

Efforts have been made to lay the onus of the unfortunate land transaction upon the Hon. Mr. Archaibeault. It has even been stated that the Minister of Public Works has pocketed a handsome sum as the proceeds thereof. It is difficult to conceive upon what evidence this statement is based. The notarial act of transfer is open to

inspection, and there it will be found that the transfer was made, not to the Hon. Mr. Archaibeault in person and by name, but to Her Majesty the Queen, through the honourable the Minister of Public Works and his successors. This certainly does not look like speculation. Mr. Archaibeault's political record is not as fair a one as one would like to see, but it is plain that in this case if he erred it was on the side of gross negligence, and not of greed. And in his negligence his colleagues must be co-partners.

The cry on all sides now is, let the Ministry resign. By all means. But let us have the investigation first. Let us know the exact position in which they stand. Are they to resign as dishonest men, or merely as incapable men. If the former, the shame is great, and will do incalculable, irreparable, injury to the party they lead. If the latter, they are but as other men are. We have a whole Cabinet-full of incapable curiosities at Ottawa, with the exception of Mr. Mackenzie and one or two others.

It would seem, however, that a final decision has been reached. If our information is correct, the Quebec Ministry intend consulting their supporters with a view to ascertaining how far the latter are willing to grant them a Parliamentary investigation. Should they succeed in obtaining this, they will convene the Legislature at as early a date as possible, and make the investigation the first business of the session. But on the other hand, should their friends advise them to yield to the strong current of public expression, should they decline to grant them the support necessary to carry the investigation, the Ministry will at once send in the seals of office, and we may expect to hear of a new Administration under the leadership of one of the prominent members of the Upper House.

Next to George Brown. Mr. F. W. Glen, of Oshawa, is about the best abused man in the country. He has mortally offended some of the Conservative papers in Ontario by the fact of his opinion and the accident of his birth. Mr. Glen is in favour of Reciprocity, and was born south of line forty-five. We have nothing to do with Mr. Glen's opinion, which is open to discussion by every journal in the country. Doubtless he is able to defend it to his own satisfaction. But we sincerely condole with Mr. Glen on his misfortune in having first seen the light in the benighted Republic to the south of us. Of course it is not his fault, and this being the case, we trust his opponents will not be too hard upon him. He has done his best to rectify an error in which he had no hand by settling in Canada, furnishing employment to a few score of hands, and paying his mite of dues into the treasury of the country. There are some few other Americans in the Dominion in much the same position as Mr. Glen. We would advise them to withdraw from the country, employ their energy and capital elsewhere, and—see the howl that will be raised. It is amazing what lively satisfaction the use of the harmless epithet "Yankee" seems to afford the Canadian journalist who attacks a citizen of the "Great Republic."

We are not in the habit of looking for grapes from thorns, figs from thistles, or disinterestedness and generosity from members of municipal bodies. And by closely following this rule of life we have succeeded, like the man who is called blessed because he expects nothing, in not being disappointed. But there is such a thing as reckoning without one's host. The Mayor of Kingston has grievously disappointed us. He has proved recreant to all the traditions of his position, and has doubtless thereby incurred the dire anger of all the fat feeders and dead-beats of the city. It seems that it has hitherto been the custom in Kingston for the mayor to give an excursion to the members of the City Council and other friends. From this custom Dr. Sullivan, the present Mayor, has made a new departure. Instead of the excursion, with its usual concomitants, he has given \$400 dollars to the principal charitable institutions of the city. The longer one lives the more one discovers that good can come out of Nazareth.

At the recent meeting in South Elgin Mr. Rykert deprecated the too prevalent custom of reflecting in public and in the public prints on the private character of a political opponent. He said that "he despised the man who, falling in argument, has to fall back on personal abuse." It would be a great satisfaction if Mr. Rykert could instil a little of his loudly professed contempt for political muck-scrapers into some of the organs of his party. The advantage to be gained would be a double one. In the first place Mr. Rykert would gratify his own personal taste; and in the second he would confer a benefit upon a large portion of the community by abolishing the cause for half the libel suits that arise, and thereby keeping money that might be better invested out of the lawyers' pockets.

A story has been circulated by some of the daily papers to the effect that the utmost dissatisfaction exists among the men of the mounted police expeditionary force, owing to the manner in which they are treated, and that matters have gone so far that sixty five of their number have deserted and succeeded in getting across the lines. We have every reason to believe that the story is nothing but a hoax. We are in regular communication with our special artist accompanying the expedition, and have received advices from him up to the 12th ult., but not one word has he said relative to any desertion from the forces. On the contrary, he states that all is going as well as could be expected. Until the rumour has received further confirmation it should be taken *cum grano*.

Mr. Roebuck has come out on the Public Worship Regulation Bill. He expresses his deep grief at the strife now raging in the Church. He can hardly fancy that the two Archbishops and the present and past Lord Chancellors have formed a plan for pulling down the Church. So far as he can see, the only object of the Public Worship Regulation Bill is to put a stop to the silly and dangerous doings of men who are carried away by fanatical notions as to the importance of dress, posture, and genuflections—men whose great purpose seems to be to make figures of themselves to be stared at by young girls and silly women. Mr. Roebuck adds that he will aid in the endeavour to suppress extremes in ritual.

At last, as we expected, the Beecher Tilton nastiness has got into book form. One would have thought that the lengthy and not always over-delicate accounts of the scandal which have appeared in the daily prints would have satisfied the depraved tastes of all but the most crapulously prurient minded. But it seems not. There is evidently a demand for the work, or it would never have been published. Who can the buyers be—and to what station of life do they belong? It might have been supposed that the sooner the scandal was dead, buried, and forgotten, the better. And now they are going to erect a monument to its memory. We hope the next generation will be edified.

That pious old fraud, William, German Emperor by the Grace of God and the Will of Prince Bismarck, has been at his old tricks again. Congratulating his well-beloved cousin and ally, the Emperor of Austria, on a recent occasion, he said, "I hope for the renewal of our old companionship in arms to secure peace for many years, which is equally desired on all sides." This is coming Pecksniff a little too strong. We know by this time what this companionship in arms to secure peace means, and unless the Austrians are more unsophisticated than they get credit for, they have not forgotten the kind of peace that followed Sadowa.

A contemporary points out a queer incongruity that exists in the relations as to legal matters between New Brunswick and Ontario. It appears that the former Province excludes Ontario barristers, and the latter returns the compliment by refusing to permit Maritime lawyers to practice in her courts. In some respects the provinces are as disunited as before the Confederation. For example, judgment obtained against an insurance company in a New Brunswick court would not be recognized in Ontario, even though that province might be the head quarters of the company. This inconvenience should be remedied as speedily as possible.

It appears from a summary of the expense of Congress that each member of that body is credited with eighty-four pounds of toilet soap during each session. And yet their hands are not clean. Now let us have the soap statistics from the late—and present—House of Commons, the Ontario Legislature, and last, but very far from least, the Quebec Legislature. Some genius might start a very interesting theory for calculating the amount of corruption existing in a given Legislature in inverse ratio to the amount of soap used by its members.

The Catholics of Europe are bent on making a determined stand against the attacks of their opponents. The Hungarian and Ultramontane papers of Austria propose that a Congress should be held at Pesth or Pressburg in September, in order to assist in the formation of an international Papal party in Europe, in accordance with suggestions made at Geneva last year, and at the Catholic meeting in London.

There seems to be a hitch, or a good many hitches, in the arrangements for the Philadelphia Centennial. Our neighbours should get their new Minister from Vienna to give them a lift. Baron Schwarz-Senborn was one of the managers of the World's Fair of 1873, and contributed not a little to its success.