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IGNORANT OR DISHONEST

Col. Prior may well say to the wise-aces and Smart Ales of the Times: "Ye are the people, and wisdom will die with you." They have for the last two weeks been carping and quibbling about the constitutionality of Mr. Prior's appointment to a seat in the Cabinet, when East of the Rocky Mountains the appointment has been accepted as a matter of course.

THE WISEACRES.

If Col. Prior's appointment is unconstitutional, as our local Solons of the Grit party declare, would not some Liberal legal light in the East or some zealous Grit journalist have raised his voice against it and like that very high authority on constitutional law, Senator McInnes, prove to a demonstration that such an appointment is constitutionally impossible.

The entire foundation for this comedy of errors, as any intelligent man perceives, arises from the old mistake of confounding two things which are altogether separate and distinct. Col. Prior is a Cabinet Minister. Col. Prior is Controller of Inland Revenue. Either proposition taken alone is perfectly true but by confounding the two you draw a conclusion warranted by neither.

Privy Councillor. One of our contemporaries quotes Clarke Wallace, late Controller of Customs, as acknowledging that he was not in the Cabinet. Therefore fallaciously argues the journal, Col. Prior who holds an office similar to that held by Mr. Wallace is not a member of the Cabinet.

He must be a shallow-pated man indeed who does not fail immediately to perceive the illogical nature of this argument. Col. Prior does not simply step into a position identical in almost every respect with that lately occupied by Clarke Wallace. He is something that Clarke Wallace never was and never was offered to be: that is a member of the Privy Council of Canada, and he is such member of the Privy Council not by virtue of being Controller of Inland Revenue, but by being distinctly chosen and appointed a Privy Councillor by His Excellency the Governor-General.

In Mr. Prior's case he will have besides a seat in the House of Commons an official position, that of Controller of Inland Revenue. But he holds his position as a member of the Cabinet independently of and distinctly from his office of Controller, and would hold it even if he were not Controller at all. Hence it will be seen how vastly higher and different is the position of Col. Prior in the councils of the country from that held by Clarke Wallace.

A BUGABOO.

It is argued by the Grit canvassers that if Manitoba is required to carry out her agreement with the denominational minority of that province the inhabitants of British Columbia will one of these days be coerced into establishing separate schools. This is done to scare Conservatives into voting for the Grit candidate. There is neither sense nor reason in the threat—"our turn will come next."

That act has not been altered in any respect since British Columbia joined the Confederation. Consequently Section 93 of the British North America Act applies to this Province—in fact part of its Constitution. Subsection (3) of that act reads as follows: "When in any Province a system of separate or dissentient schools exists by law at the Union or is thereafter established by the Legislature of the Province an appeal shall lie to the Governor-General-in-Council from any act or decision of the Provincial authority affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education."

We trust that the above provision of the Constitution of the Province will be studied very carefully by our readers. If they do so the bugaboo raised by the Opposition canvassers will not scare them in the very least. The intelligent reader will see that neither of the conditions which give the minority the right to appeal to the Governor-General-in-Council exists in this Province. It is well known that separate or dissentient schools were not established in this Province previous to Union, and every one also knows that no such system has been established in the Province since the Union.

Government. One is if separate schools existed at confederation. This condition does not exist, and therefore British Columbians need not trouble their heads about it. The other is where separate schools have been established since the union. There are no separate schools established by law in the Province, and consequently until the people of their own free will set up such schools British Columbia's turn cannot possibly come.

The Constitution of Manitoba is in this respect different from ours. Its bargain is different, and in the matter of education more restrictive than that of British Columbia. Subsection 2 of Section 22, of the Manitoba Act, the Constitution of Manitoba, corresponds with Subsection 3 of Section 93, of the British North America Act, the only statute which affects British Columbia on the subject. To make the difference as plain as possible we shall print both subsections in parallel columns:

Manitoba Act, sub-section 2 of section 22. An appeal shall lie to the Governor-General-in-Council from any act or decision of the Legislature of the Province, or of any Provincial authority affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education.

The reader can easily see from this that British Columbia's agreement is very different, indeed, with regard to legislation in the matter of denominational schools from that of the Province of Manitoba.

PANIC IN A THEATRE.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 28.—Twenty-one persons were killed and twice as many more injured last night during a panic at the old Front street theatre in this city. Most of the victims are of Polish nationality. The theatre was filled from pit to dome. The ticket office receipts show that over 2,000 tickets had been sold, when at 8 o'clock the sale of seats was stopped because no more were left; but it is supposed that 3,000 people were within when the curtain went up. Ten minutes after, one of the attendants went up to the stage to light the gas, which appeared to have been extinguished. As he turned the cock and applied the match the light flared up and it was seen there was no tip to the burner. As the glare from the gas showed against the fall, some one in the gallery shouted "fire!" In an instant there was a mad scramble for the door, in which the whole audience took part.

THE YACHT RACE.

NEW YORK, Dec. 28.—The investigation committee of the New York club adjourned shortly before 6 o'clock to meet again at 10 a.m. on Monday. None of them would speak with reference to what had occurred at the meeting to-day, and all attempts to ascertain the possible or probable outcome of the session were ready with the answer: "I can't say; I don't know." One thing is certain, however, that one of the Defender's crew was called before the commission. All the other witnesses were to be on hand on Monday. The last man to leave the club-house was O. Oliver Iselin. Hailing a cab he jumped inside. The cab was immediately surrounded by the news gatherers; Mr. Iselin, however, would give no word of information.

The special committee had to consider the charges preferred by Lord Dunraven that the Defender did not sail against the Valkyrie in her mesasure water line. Lord Dunraven was on the stand and his friend Arthur Glennie was also subjected to a few questions by Lawyer Choate. Lord Dunraven and his friend Arthur Glennie sailed this afternoon on board the Valkyrie, and the evidence was given at the pier accompanied by Mr. H. Maitland Kersey, and immediately went to the upper deck of the steamship. In answer to several questions put, his lordship said, "I really don't wish to talk." Mr. Glennie was a little more communicative. When asked the reason of Dunraven's sudden departure, he said, "It's a very sad ending." Mr. Glennie did not feel inclined to qualify nor define this statement when urged to do so; he said there were only two men left behind to look after the interests of Lord Dunraven, named Lawyer Askwith and Secretary Hamilton. The reporter asked Mr. Glennie if all the evidence in this case was as far as Lord Dunraven went had been submitted. In reply he said: "You can't expect Lord Dunraven to speak before the committee when he is on the ocean. As to my testimony, well, I will be on the ocean too."

JAPANESE PARLIAMENT.

YOKOHAMA, Dec. 28.—The Japanese parliament opened to-day with the genuine, honest home cure by which I was permanently restored to health and vigor, after years of suffering from nervous debility. I was robbed and swindled by the quacks until I nearly lost faith in mankind, but thank heaven, I am now well, vigorous and strong, and wish to make this certain means of cure known to all sufferers. I have nothing to sell, and want no money, but being a firm believer in the universal brotherhood of man, I am desirous of helping the unfortunate to regain their health and happiness. Perfect secrecy assured. Address with stamp:—Mr. Edward Lambert, P.O. Box 55, Jarvis, Ont.

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OUR OTTAWA SPECIAL.

Possibility That the Shortis Death Sentence May Be Carried Out.

The Governor-General's New Year's Day Arrangements—A New Rule Adopted.

Canadian Martial Spirit—Numerous Applicants for Special Military Training.

(From Our Own Correspondent)

OTTAWA, Dec. 28.—The cabinet was in session to-day when the Shortis case again came under consideration. It was practically decided the other day that the death sentence should be commuted, but a hitch occurred afterwards and it is just possible the sentence may be carried out.

The Governor-General holds his reception on New Year's day in the senate chamber. The annual drawing-room will take place on Saturday, January 11. His Excellency and the Countess are adopting a new rule, and application must be made in the case of the presentation of debutantes.

MONTREAL CENTRE ELECTION.

MONTREAL, Dec. 28.—At yesterday's polling McShane's vote totalled 3,295, while Sir William Hingston received 3,059. It is generally considered here that the result of the election is not significant of any real issue or change in public opinion. The fight was chiefly a personal one.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

BERLIN, Dec. 28.—German feeling on the Venezuelan difficulty seems to be veering round, although the government yet studiously refrains from an expression of opinion. From an official of the foreign office, however, it has been learned that several cautious diplomatic attempts have been made by Great Britain during the past week to get Germany to join in a movement looking to a combined European diplomatic action opposed to the Monroe doctrine. These efforts have thus far met with non-committal answers, and unless things assume a much more serious aspect Germany will keep officially aloof from the whole question.

ARSON AT CHARLOTTE.

ROCHESTER, N.Y., Dec. 28.—Father John Fitzgerald, accused of complicity in the Charlotte arson cases, was arrested yesterday afternoon on complaint of his bondsmen, who feared that he might try to abscond. He made no resistance. He said that Norah Cronin, whom he assaulted last night at the Central station while she was accompanying her convicted brother to Auburn, was dragged by the sheriff to make her implicate Fitzgerald says his arrest is an outrage. Attorney Vanvoorst has told District Attorney Forsythe that he will appeal the Cronin case.

One Honest Man.

DEAR EDITOR.—Please inform your readers, that if written to confidentially I will mail in a sealed letter, particulars of a genuine, honest home cure by which I was permanently restored to health and vigor, after years of suffering from nervous debility. I was robbed and swindled by the quacks until I nearly lost faith in mankind, but thank heaven, I am now well, vigorous and strong, and wish to make this certain means of cure known to all sufferers. I have nothing to sell, and want no money, but being a firm believer in the universal brotherhood of man, I am desirous of helping the unfortunate to regain their health and happiness. Perfect secrecy assured. Address with stamp:—Mr. Edward Lambert, P.O. Box 55, Jarvis, Ont.

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NEWS OF THE DOMINION.

(Special to the Colonist.) MONTREAL, Dec. 28.—Sir Charles Tupper, high commissioner for Canada in London, is the guest of Sir Donald Smith. He is very sanguine that the fast Atlantic service will be a success. HAMILTON, Dec. 28.—Balliffs have seized the Hamilton Radial Railway Co.'s office furniture for unpaid rent and wages claims. QUEBEC, Dec. 28.—Capt. Frank Penne of the 90th battalion, has been appointed chief of police. MONTREAL, Dec. 28.—The C.P.R. net profits for November were \$1,000,066, an increase of \$192,408 over the same month last year. For the eleven months of 1895, ending November 30, the net profits were \$8,606,486, an increase of \$771,619 over the same period last year. The gymnastic exhibition at the Y. M.C.A. last evening secured another success, the performance throughout being good and heartily enjoyed by the audience.

CAPTURE OF ZEITOUN.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Dec. 28.—It is officially announced that the most obstinate fighting preceded the capture of Zeitoun by the Turks. Semi-official advices from Zeitoun say the Armenians lost 2,500 killed during the engagements, and 250 Turks were killed. A narrow pass between the hills leading out of Zeitoun is said to be crowded with Armenians, men, women and children, and it is feared they will be massacred. It appears the Turkish troops only bombarded the barracks at the place these buildings were occupied by Armenians. An explosion of shells set fire to the barracks, and obliged the combatants to seek refuge in flight. Zeitoun is said to contain many thousands of Armenians, who are at the mercy of the troops. The ambassadors of Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy and Austria have sent their dragomans to the palace to make a representation with a view to preventing the Armenians being massacred.