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The Farmer's Advocate

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Politics.

INDEPENDENT, CONSERVATIVE OR REFORM

As the great tug of war approaches, the two great contending parties are strengthening themselves for the field of action, and the arts, devices and projects become more visible to all. In fact, the preparations have been going forward ever since the last election. The main struggle is—Who shall have the rule; and who can make the most money.

No one, at all acquainted with the expenditures and acts of the present Ministry, can justify every thing that has been done—or has not been done—by them. It is not the duty of this journal to extol the good acts done by them, nor condemn all the bad ones, nor excuse their omissions. You no doubt take some paper or other, and that must be a political one, because there is no other non-political farmers' paper published but this. Therefore, we do not pretend to keep you posted in politics; but whatever political paper you take, if you take one, will not give you an unbiased account of the transactions of either party. The paper is for *one* party, and all you see in it will be to favor the party to which it belongs, although it may occasionally give you a little light on the other side of the question. Therefore, you being guided to a "correct" view of affairs in Canada by reading only one paper, is an impossibility. Your mind must be, as a matter of course, worked and biased by the food it receives.

Our sphere has been not to say one word in favor of one or other of the contending parties. You must be the judges, if you consider that the party in power have acted any worse than the party desiring power. If better men are to be found, compare them in every light before deciding. We have previously recommended farmers to vote for agriculturists—not mere pretenders, whose main desire is to obtain some fat berth, but men who really depend on agriculture as their mainstay.

Just question each candidate who offers himself for your support: does he take or

read any of the Canadian agricultural papers. If he does not, you need not expect he cares as much for the agricultural interest of the country as he does about securing some lucrative advantage from some other source. Do not be content with a reply from any one that the political papers give accounts of agriculture. Some of them do; but the writing and agricultural teachings contained in them are often intended to serve the party to whom they may belong.

If they take only American agricultural papers, ask them if they are desirous of annexation; or whether they should not support our own productions, and enable our Canadian publications to be made better.

We received long since, a letter from one of our most thoughtful English readers, in which he informed us that no paper existed in England, nor could exist, without being supported by one or the other of the political parties. That information much astonished us, but the veracity of it appeared too truthful.

When last in Toronto, to attend the meeting of the Board of Agriculture, which took place at the same time as the opening of Parliament, and was postponed for that occasion, we accordingly went to see the opening ceremonies. While in that city, we conversed with several of the members of the Conservative party, who strongly condemned us for writing articles that were not quite subservient to them; and members of the Opposition objected to some articles written that were not in accordance with their views; and your humble servant found that agricultural prosperity was not the main object sought for by either party, as neither of them could condemn us of being allied to the other. This anomalous position has at times forced upon us the question whether we should run as we are—non-political—or whether we ought to take our stand upon one or other of the platforms of politics, and whether by doing so we might be of more advantage to the country, by widening our sphere of usefulness, and by combating more successfully what may appear to us as wrong in the management of our public affairs. Should we adopt such a course, we will not part with or

filing aside our independence, but would continue to criticize as freely as ever what might appear to us as error on the part of those on whose side we may rank; and also would at the same time give credit to those opposed to us for any good that they might do. Our desire would be to promote good, economical and equal measures to all, and not act as clogs to government, but endeavor to give what help we could for the furtherance of all measures calculated to benefit the varied interests of the Dominion. Now as it is but of very little consequence to us as farmers which party gets in power as long as we continue to send office-seekers, and, having only a very few real agriculturists there, it would be no great difficulty to attach ourselves with either party, and still advocate sending more farmers to the Houses of Parliament, for it is by sending more of them that will cause the agricultural interests to be better protected.

We wish to be guided by our subscribers in this matter, by asking their opinion. This may appear rather novel to some, and as if there was a want of decision in our mind upon which side to rank ourselves, and what influence we may have.—But when it is considered that in any difference that exists between the two grand divisions of party politics throughout the Dominion there is not any principle of magnitude involved, except, so far as we are able to see, a constant desire on the part of each to have the control of the public purse, and to exert the influence which being in power confers; and that, we regret to say, not so much for the country's weal as for—in many cases, at least—the advancement of their own interests. Such appears to us to be the ruling spirit existing in both parties, and what we need most is, men of principle, and full of integrity, who shall devote their energies and their time to the country's good, and for the advancement of all that will be of advantage to the farmers without infringing on other interests. But who will act justly and fairly on all the varied interest of the country which may demand their consideration?

We hope that every one of you who write to us during the present month will put either of the following three words at

the top or bottom of your letters, to be our guide as to our future course:—

INDEPENDENT, CONSERVATIVE OR REFORM
And put either the letters I, C or R opposite to every name sent in on a club list. We feel we shall be acting justly to be guided by our supporters. Those who have sent in their subscriptions might also add their note.

Agricultural Elections.

This month is the time legally appointed for the election of office-holders for the townships, counties and of the Dominion, for 1871. At these elections, it is the duty and the interest of every farmer to attend. If you have holding office in your neighborhood the most suitable person you can find, by all means attend the meeting, and prevent a less efficient person being elected in his place. But if you are not satisfied with the present management, by all means attend the annual meeting, make known your complaints, and request improvement. If you are thwarted at first, do not be discouraged; if your suggestions are right, some will lend you an ear, and will induce others to fall in with your way of thinking; and, by perseverance, you will eventually succeed in carrying your plans. The labor you may bestow in making any improvement in your agricultural affairs will not be thrown away if you persistently persevere. It may take you ten years to cause an improvement to be made, and even you may never accomplish all you desire. But try, try, try again; use every legitimate means and plans you can devise. The worst thing that you may have to combat against is party politics. If you happen to live in a section where the majority of the people are fossil Tories or rabid Reformers, do all in your power to check political feelings from entering into or having anything to do with the election. This will require much determined effort, and, perhaps, self-denial; but it is for your good to have your business conducted simply, and solely for the advancement of your own interests, and the less other matters have to do with it, the better. One important thing that should be borne in mind by every one of you who wish agriculture to be placed on a proper