

FACTS FOR THE ELECTORS

Result of five years Grit-Rouge Rule in Canada.

THE STEEL RAIL PURCHASE

No subject has been more discussed since Mr. Mackenzie came to office than his unfortunate purchase of steel rails. A simple record of the facts in this case is all that is necessary to show, first, that the purchase was a most unwise one; next, that it was without the authority of Parliament; and last that it was open to the grave suspicion of having been prompted by a spirit of nepotism.

In the fall of 1874, he advertised for tenders for some rails, and the first suspicious circumstance connected with the matter was the manner in which these advertisements were inserted. It will be admitted that it was a matter of the greatest possible importance that the fullest publicity should be given to any invitation for tenders of this description. The manufacturers of steel rails were in England. Their agents in this country must of necessity communicate with them, and unless, therefore, there was time for that communication, the trade at large must necessarily be put to a very great disadvantage. And yet we find that the advertisement was dated on the 29th of September, that its first appearance was in the *Montreal Herald* of the 2nd of October, and that it asked for tenders delivered in Ottawa on the 8th of October, so that there were only six days during which merchants could arrange to send in their tenders.

Next, as to the contracts. Mr. Mackenzie has claimed that the lowest tender was, in every instance, accepted. The tenders which actually were accepted were as follows:—Guest & Co., \$54; Ebb Vale Company, \$53.53; West Cumberland Company, \$53.53; and Mersey Steel and Iron Company, \$51.26. This last company was represented by Cooper, Fairman & Co., of Montreal, whose names have been unpleasantly associated with this transaction. It will be seen that their tender was 26 cents a ton higher than the highest of the others, and 73 cents a ton higher than the lowest. Each of these tenders was for five thousand tons, excepting that of Cooper, Fairman & Co., which was for from five to ten thousand tons. And yet THE HIGHEST TENDER WAS AWARDED THE CONTRACT FOR TWENTY THOUSAND TONS, while of the others the Ebb Vale Company got only five thousand tons; Guest & Co., ten thousand