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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS

is that he will procure us ONE additional subscriber. This can be easily done, and it will go far towards increasing the efficiency of the journal. We are doing our best to put forth a paper creditable to the country, and our friends should make it a point to assist us. Remember that the Dominion should support at least one illustrated paper. Remember too that the "News" is the only purely literary paper in the country. We invite our friends to examine carefully the present number of the paper and judge for themselves of our efforts in their behalf.

L'OPINION PUBLIQUE.

Such is the title of an illustrated paper, written in French, and published from the offices of this Company. It is now in the seventh year of its existence and has prospered from the beginning, but since the month of January of this year, special efforts have been made to improve it, both pictorially and editorially, and the result has been of the most satisfactory nature. It is in the hands of two or three of the best known and most graceful writers of the Province of Quebec, who have, besides, the inappreciable advantage of assistance from the first pens in Quebec, Ottawa, Montreal, Three Rivers, and elsewhere. The literary movement among the French Canadians has never been so pronounced as it is at present, and most of us have really no idea of the variety, abundance, and general excellence of French Canadian literature. We feel therefore justified in calling attention to this fact among our English-speaking friends throughout the Dominion. The knowledge of French is almost a social and commercial necessity in Canada, while in the circle of polite education it cannot be omitted. Hence the English-speaking people of Canada, who wish to learn the language, or improve their acquaintance with it, cannot do better than subscribe to this beautiful weekly, which will furnish them with choice reading, written in good French, and edited with a single view to the entertainment of the fireside. The form of the paper is a large quarto, the size of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, containing twelve pages of matter—four devoted to illustrations and eight to letterpress. The price of subscription is only \$3.00 in advance. Colleges, convents, academies, schools, and public institutions are particularly invited to give the paper a trial and they may rely upon being treated with due consideration. For further particulars apply to the office of the Burland-Desbarats Lithographic Company, 5 Bleury Street, Montreal.

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, April 7th, 1877.

CANADIAN COPYRIGHT.

We trust it will not be too late, before the present Parliament closes its sittings, to legislate in some practical fashion for the behoof of Canadian publishers. Indeed time must be made for this vital business, and if the Government are not prepared to move in it, we trust that some private member will have the wisdom and courage to do so.

It has been with general satisfaction that the country viewed the progress of the Canadian book trade during the two years which have just elapsed. Toronto led the van and in its wake came Mon-

treau with a number of works, elegantly printed, well bound, and served to the public at very reasonable prices. On all sides the movement was received as the token of a new era, and there appeared substantial grounds for believing that, at length, we were about to lay the foundation of a national literature. But all at once there came a sudden check, and further developments have led to the conclusion that, unless some remedial legislation is at once introduced, our optimistic hopes will be scattered to the winds, as so often before.

We need not refer to the case of Smiles against Belford, which occupied the attention of the Ontario Court of Chancery, some months ago, because we analysed the case fully at the time and delivered our views upon it. The issue was regarded as so important that Belford Brothers were urged by the whole book trade and by public sentiment generally to carry their case to appeal. They did so and lost again, the judges being unanimous and thus preventing the question from going to the Supreme Court of the Dominion. Unfortunately the judgments have been made so clear that they must have been endorsed by the Supreme Justices.

There is no necessity to go through the technicalities of this controversy. Suffice it to say that the so-called Copyright Act of 1875 is a dead letter, and in view of the late judicial decisions, a bitter satire on those who enacted it. It gives the Canadian publisher no guarantee whatever. It gives him no right, not even a chance to take his share in the business of publication. It places him not only at the discretion of the British author, which is only fair enough, but it leaves him utterly at the mercy of the American publisher of the British work. In other words the British author may refuse a copyright to a Canadian house, but he can give it to an American firm and force Canadians to buy the reprint. The result is that we must go on, as heretofore, getting our literature almost exclusively from the Americans. The effect will also ultimately be to force our publishers to close altogether or have their printing done on the other side of the lines, thus depriving hundreds of Canadian printers, pressmen, electrotypers, engravers and others of their legitimate work. Mr. LOVELL long ago transported much of his plant to Rouse's Point, and the BELFORDS are having their reprints done at Buffalo and Detroit. We repeat that this vital subject calls for the immediate attention of Parliament, and the man or men who will associate their name with a measure of reform in this respect will deserve well of their country.

To guide our legislators in this matter, we may make the following suggestions derived from an authorized source:

I. No copyright to be given to any one unless the book be printed and published in this country.

II. No copyright to be given to any but British subjects.

III. If any English book be not registered by the time it is published in England, then any publisher domiciled in Canada to be at full liberty to publish it, the publishing of it to give him a copyright, excluding all reprints of said book.

IV. The Canadian publisher on publishing any book under clause 3 to deposit with some person, appointed by Government, 10 per cent royalty on the retail price of 1,500 copies (an average edition) and to pay quarterly 10 per cent on all copies sold over and above 1,500 copies.

V. The Government to appoint an officer to inspect all returns of quantities sold.

The reason that English authors do not sell their rights for Canada to Canadian publishers is that New York and Boston publishers stipulate, when they buy advance sheets, that the English author shall not sell to any publisher in Canada, but if we make a law, which will give the English author an excuse for selling to a Canadian house, then the whole matter will be righted.

THE AMERICAN SYSTEM.

The strain brought upon the American system of government by the late Presidential contest, and the unsatisfactory result of the ultimate choice in so far as a definite settlement on constitutional grounds was arrived at, has again led thinking men to give their views on the relative merits of the American and British schemes of rule. English writers, GOLDWIN SMITH among the rest, have studied the question with much elaboration, but we are better pleased to analyze the ideas of an American, inasmuch as he would be supposed to know the intricate working of his country's system better than any foreigner could possibly do. We find such a man in Rev. V. R. BENSON, and a short paper which he has lately contributed on the subject we judge to be deserving of profound attention.

The writer begins at once by assuming that the British system is superior to the American. That is his thesis. He holds that the British superiority grows out of the very simple truth that all agents who are momentarily responsible to their principals are faithful to their trust. The American inferiority, on the other hand, springs from the fact that officeholders, being everywhere elected for fixed terms, are responsible to nobody for anything; and, hence, are relatively faithless and incompetent. Again, the American written Constitution is a cast iron cauldron, within which the waters of political agitation may boil till they explode; but their explosion works no progress. The English unwritten Constitution is a complex but flexible engine, the various parts of which are the inventions of various minds, each adding something to the smoothness or power with which the engine pursues its way. The English system is correctly stated to be grounded upon three great principles: a permanent executive, a responsible Ministry, and representative Parliament to vote the supplies. From these three principles flow three corollaries, and it is upon these that a comparison with American practice is instituted.

First, the Sovereign always selects his advisers from the party in majority in the House of Commons, whereas the President, as precisely in the case of Mr. HAYES, may select his cabinet from the minority in Congress.

Secondly, when the Sovereign dissolves Parliament, it is because his advisers and the majority of the House of Commons do not agree, and the sense of the country is wanted to see who shall be supported; whereas the President cannot dissolve Congress, which is elected for a fixed term, and he must go on whether he and his administration are endorsed by the country or not.

Thirdly, the two parties in the House of Commons would oppose each other on the well understood terms that the opposition, if successful in overthrowing the party in power, would be obliged to take the reins of administration and run the government on their theory. "It is wonderful what a moderating influence it exerts over all critics if their criticism is listened to only on condition that they, if called upon, will attempt the task of doing better work than that which they criticize." There is nothing of this kind in the United States, where the two parties fight against each other, on personal, not on national grounds.

Fourthly, no elections being necessary, as a rule, under this system, except when some important question is before the national legislature, on which parties make a new division, it would follow that, as a rule, the people would only be called on to vote when there was some measure of policy to vote for or against. The issue would be single, comprehensible, and honest. No one would have any interest in concealing it. This would make political discussion on the stump direct, candid, and manly. It is far simpler than the American issue, which is always in one form.

Fifthly, under this system political parties would divide into progressive and

conservative—one favoring action, the other opposing action, on the always well-defined question: What is now next to be done? This is philosophical and tends toward progress, as compared with the American perpetual deadlock between two political mobs, whose platform always agree, in substance, and who are divided only by their prejudices and their antecedents.

THE PRESS OF THE DOMINION.

* The following from a well known and authorized pen, in a late number of the Montreal Gazette, deserves a place for publication and preservation in the News:

If we cannot give any account of the first introduction of the printing press into the colonies which now form the Dominion of Canada, we can tell something about the history of our newspaper press. It is recorded that Isaac Cury established a printing office in Halifax in the year 1756, but whether he set up the first printing press in the Dominion we cannot say. It was customary in early colonial days for new laws to be published by being read at parade after notice had been given to the population by beat of drum. This custom was continued in some parts of the Maritime Provinces even after the conquest. It might be inferred from this that there were no means of printing, as, if there were, the Government of the day would hardly have resorted to so imperfect a method of imparting information. On the other hand, it seems improbable that, during the long period of French rule in Canada, no one should have had enterprise enough to start a printing press, even on a small scale. Certainly, very soon after the conquest, not only a printing press, but a newspaper was established in the ancient capital. The Quebec Gazette was founded in the year 1764 and was destined to survive by some years its hundredth birthday. In 1769 Halifax followed the good example set by Quebec, an enterprising gentleman of that city having founded the Nova Scotia Chronicle and Weekly Gazette, which, however, proved to be more short-lived than its elder sister. The first New Brunswick paper, the Royal Gazette and New Brunswick Advertiser, made its appearance in 1785. In 1799 the Niagara Constitution was invented, to be followed in 1802 by the York Gazette. For many years a keen rivalry existed between these two little towns—each of which claimed to be the arbiter of public opinion in the new province. Newfoundland had its first journalistic birth, the St. John's Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser, in 1807. Manitoba had its Nor'Wester as early as 1859. Of the beginnings of newspaper enterprise in the other provinces we have no statistics at hand. From those which we have given it will be seen that, before the present century was very old, the leading provinces of the Dominion, as well as Newfoundland, were fairly represented by the press in proportion to their respective populations. In the Province of Quebec, Montreal, as well as the Capital, soon after the Conquest, had its newspaper. THE GAZETTE which is now in its hundredth year, was only fourteen years later than its namesake, now deceased, in coming into the world. The circumstances of its foundation are peculiar, and as they may not be known to many of our readers, we will recount them. In 1778 a deputation, consisting of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Carroll, of Carrollton, and some others of the revolutionary leaders, came to Montreal with the object of inducing the Canadian people to join the Americans in their rebellion. Dr. Franklin, who knew well the power of the press, thought it well that they should bring along with them their own printing materials, so that they might the more easily issue their manifestos. One Mesplet, who attended to the mechanical part of the work, remained in Montreal after the deputation had returned, and turned the establishment of the Congress on Custom House Square into a legitimate printing office. His business prospered, and he found it to his advantage after a while to start a newspaper. THE GAZETTE thus owes its existence, almost directly, to the most distinguished printer of the American Continent, although it has not inherited his political principles. It is now the oldest existing newspaper in the Dominion of Canada. The Quebec Mercury, founded in 1805, comes next. Le Canadien was originally founded in the following year, but its publication was arrested for a considerable time before the year 1831. The Newfoundland Royal Gazette and Advertiser, already mentioned, is next in seniority, and the Montreal Herald first saw the light in 1809. The Kingston News dates from 1810; the Acadia Recorder from 1813; the Halifax Chronicle and Brockville Recorder from 1820; the St. Catharines Journal from 1824; La Minerve from 1826; the Christian Guardian from 1829; the Picton Gazette and Carleton Sentinel (Woodstock, N. B.) from 1830; the Cobourg Star, from 1831; the Yarmouth Herald and St. Andrews (N. B.) Standard and the Sherbrooke (Q.) Gazette from 1833; the Kingston Whig and the Belleville Intelligencer, from 1834; the Ottawa Citizen, from 1841; the Toronto Globe, from 1841; the Montreal Witness, from 1846; the Montreal Evening Star, from 1869, and the Toronto Mail, from 1870.

The number of newspapers that have been issued since the foundation of the old Quebec Gazette, in 1764, throughout the length and