

THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

MINISTERIAL MOVEMENTS—THE CRISIS IN MANITOBA—REVIEW OF THE SITUATION—AN IMPARTIAL STATEMENT.

OTTAWA, JUNE 25TH, 1879.—Since the session there has been a singular calm in the political atmosphere of Ottawa. Sir John A. Macdonald has not yet left here en route for England, as was expected. He probably awaits the papers in the Letellier matter from the Imperial Government; and it is understood that he is afterwards to see the Governor-General. After that there will probably be some news. Sir Charles Tupper left on Wednesday for England, and Sir Samuel Tilley the week before. The departure of these important members of the Government is understood to have relation to financial matters respecting the Pacific Railway, under the resolutions sanctioned by Parliament at its last session. Mr. Langevin, it appears, remains in England to await his colleagues. Although the Ministry has not as yet given any sign as to its proposed action respecting Governor Letellier, you may take it as an absolute fact, as I have from the first told you would be the case, that this question will come back to Canada for settlement in accordance with the advice of the Dominion Ministers.

The political crisis in the Province of Manitoba contains many points of great interest, and questions affecting the rights of minorities. It is not at the first or even the second sight a desirable thing that parties in that Province should be divided by a sharp *race* line, which also probably means a *creed* line as well, and when one thinks of the passions which have been excited in the past by questions of this nature, one feels a certain reticence in entering upon the discussion of the Manitoba crisis. It is true that the interests do not appear to be of great magnitude, if viewed in relation to the number of the combatants, but they are of great interest in themselves and of a nature to excite the liveliest sympathies in the old Provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

There does not appear to be any ambiguity as to the facts in the issue. There was a Norquay-Royal Government in power, supported by a majority of the Legislative Assembly. But this majority was mainly composed of French-speaking members, the majority of the English-speaking members voting against the Government. Mr. Royal (the leader of the French party) and his followers were not satisfied with this state of things, and so they held a meeting and deputed Mr. Royal to tell Mr. Norquay that he should strengthen his position by getting more English support. What, in short, they wanted was what we in the old Provinces of Quebec and Ontario formerly knew as the "double majority," they undoubtedly recognizing in this a principle of protection for a minority. Upon receiving this intimation, Mr. Norquay communicated with the English-speaking members, and the next day (May 29) he wrote a letter to Mr. Royal in the following terms: "Referring to the conversation we had yesterday, in which you stated that you were deputed by the members of the House representing French constituencies, to inform me that they could no longer continue their support of the Government, on the ground that the Government had not the support of the majority of the English members of the House, I have the honour to request that you will place the department over which you preside at the disposal of the Government, believing as I do that the lack of support to the Government from the English speaking side of the House is owing to your presence in the Cabinet." Here was a turning of the tables with a vengeance! Mr. Royal was deputed to ask Mr. Norquay to strengthen his position, and Mr. Norquay answers, viz., an abrupt dismissal of Mr. Royal, which, as premier, he had the power to do.

Mr. Royal does not appear to have lost much time in the circumstances, as he at once called a meeting of the French members who had deputed him to make representations to Mr. Norquay, and on the same day he sent a letter to him, resigning his position, as did also Mr. Delorme, his colleague, both acting apparently upon an unanimous resolution of the French members. In this letter Mr. Royal told Mr. Norquay that the representation which he was deputed to make did not constitute "a menace to the Premier," but was "moved by an earnest desire to see his Cabinet supported by a larger number of the English speaking members, in accordance with the understanding at the time of the election in October last." Mr. Royal further said that he "did not believe in a strict and ever-existing double majority, yet a Government to be strong and efficient, must command, if not the absolute support of the two sections, at least a support which is not, as in the present case, almost exclusively composed of one section of the representatives of the people." The weakness of this position is, that if Mr. Royal did not want absolutely a "double majority," he should have been content to go on with the Government as it was, the

French having substantially the reins of power in their hands. But then he had not reason to expect that Mr. Norquay would have made so sharp a turn about.

Mr. Norquay, it appears, did approach French members, and asked them to join his Cabinet; but they declined. He also asked Mr. Dubuc, M. P., to resign his position as member of the House of Commons, and take a portfolio. This Mr. Dubuc also declined to do.

He next wrote a letter to Lieut.-Governor Cauchon, to request to be allowed to finish the session without filling the two seats in the Cabinet, vacated by Messrs. Royal and Delorme, but this the Lieut. Governor flatly refused to do, in a letter which he wrote him in reply. His Honour's letter was sufficiently short, and he told his Premier the request made to him was not constitutional. There are only five seats in the Council, and two out of five would, of course, make a big vacancy. It might have been a luxury at this stage to have dismissed Mr. Norquay for making an unconstitutional request, and what would have been held to be oppressive action. But that style of thing is not in fashion after what has happened to His Honour of Quebec.

Mr. Norquay in this state of things fills up his Cabinet with two English speaking members, putting Mr. S. C. Briggs in the place of Mr. Royal as Minister of Public Works, and Mr. John Taylor in the place of Mr. Delorme. This completed the sharp *race* line. Mr. Taylor, however, it appears, has obtained his re-election in his mixed constituency by a large majority.

At the ministerial explanations that were made in the Legislative Assembly on June 4th, Mr. Norquay announced that the two principal measures of the new government would be, 1st. A re-distribution of seats, the effect of which would be to give a largely increased majority to the English speaking members; and 2nd. The abolition of printing documents in the French language, with the exception of the statutes. Mr. Norquay said the last measure was necessary as a matter of economy, and stated that the printing during the last eight years had cost the Province \$83,167.47. One of the papers states that the cost during last year was over \$12,000. This expenditure for printing was certainly excessive in comparison with the means and population of the Province, and Mr. Norquay said the saving was to be applied to the improvements of roads, of which certainly there is great need. It appears from the subsequent proceedings of the House that these measures, as announced, have been pressed through with a rigour or harshness which has not taken into any account the feelings of the French. I think, for my own part, that this is to be regretted, but such a result could not have been long postponed at the rate in which the Anglo-Saxon and Teuton population has been pouring in the Province from Ontario, the United States and Europe. It is plain that the setting up of a barrier of reticence or sentiment against the interests of such elements, would be a very vain thing! But there would have been a very great propriety, in view of all that is past, and of the position which the French have occupied in the Province of Manitoba, to have postponed all action respecting the re-distribution of seats until after the authentic results of the census of 1881 were known, and it would have been much better to have made economies in the printing on the old basis, than to have passed a sweeping measure very deeply wounding to the old inhabitants, and really sweeping away what they understand to be a constitutional right, guaranteed to them when the Province entered into the Confederation. There appears, however, to have been no clause in the Act which guarantees Manitoba against itself in this matter, and it is the Legislature of Manitoba which has done this act of violence. It is unfortunate that political feelings become more exaggerated and bitter, in small communities, and the unhappy result we see, makes one regret that the "double majority" question was mooted by Mr. Royal when he was in power with a majority. It would have been much better to have gone on as things were; and, as the adage says, have "let sleeping dogs lie."

It is better as things stand to look the hard facts fairly in the face, and I do not think, as I have said, there is much reason to hope for any tender delicacy at the hands of the Teuton and Saxon majority which is so rapidly peopling Manitoba, and the adjoining territory. But the minority has still the safeguard which was made a part of the Canadian Constitution for the protection of the British minority in the Province of Quebec, when Sir George Cartier was leader, viz.: there is an appeal reserved to the Federal Parliament on the part of minorities as against possible Provincial majorities in matters pertaining to education and religion, and there is always more hope of justice in the wider area of the general parliament, than from such majorities as are likely to be in Manitoba for some years to come.

There is a further point. Mr. Royal stated that Mr. Norquay admitted, that when the French consented to have the Legislative Council abolished from motives of economy, they gave up their sheet anchor. But this argument cannot have any practical bearing now, except in as far as it may be a reproach to Mr. Norquay. And at best, where the seat of power is the people, the majority will get over all forms, sooner or later.

Mr. Royal is a man who has grace and polish of education, but does not seem to be popular among the English. Perhaps he could not be with his sympathies.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

ST. JEAN BAPTIST CELEBRATION.—Our double page in this number chronicles pictorially the scene of the celebration of the national holiday of our French fellow-citizens better than any written description could do. The procession this year is admitted to have been one of the finest ever held.

THE GERMAN EMPEROR AND EMPRESS.—The golden wedding of this illustrious couple was celebrated on the 11 June last, amid great and genuine rejoicing throughout the German Empire. In connection with this event our readers will doubtless be pleased to view the portraits of their Majesties as they appeared on the morning of their wedding fifty years ago.

THE SOUTH AMERICAN WAR.—IQUIQUE.—The port of Iquique, Peru, has been blockaded by a Chilean fleet, and off that town took place, on May 21, the naval battle between the Chilean wooden vessels *Esmeralda* and *Covadonga* and the Peruvian armour-plated frigate *Independencia*, which resulted in the sinking of the two Chilean vessels, and the running ashore and complete wreck of the *Independencia*. Iquique is the next important Peruvian port to Callao, and contains a mixed population of English, Americans, and Germans, owing to its large export trade of nitrate of soda, guano, and silver. Troops had been moved there from the beginning of the war, but unfortunately the port is completely open and unfortified. The town is a sandy-streeted, wooden-housed, new-looking place, with a few decently laid-out streets, and a bit of a plaza, with a clock-tower and a faint show of greenstuff in the middle. As Iquique is the principal port of the nitrate of soda trade, the loss to the revenue of Peru by the blockade will be enormous.

THE FIRE AT THE AUTUEIL RACE COURSE.—The Paris races are always attended by great crowds of spectators, not so much for the races themselves as for the fact that they do draw these great crowds, so that all who attend them are sure to see and to be seen, the grand *desideratum* with most of the people of the region. The expectation that the Prince and Princess of Wales would be present on that Sunday was naturally an additional attraction, and half Paris went out to the race-course, despite the miserable weather. Oddly enough, one of the three great covered stands which are always filled to their utmost capacity by spectators willing to pay for a spectacle which the vast majority of those present witness gratis, ranged in a dense crowd all round the course, suddenly burst into a blaze, to the terror of its occupants, who had but just time to rush out of it, when the whole building became a mass of flame. Happily, the staircase and doors were wide and easy, so that the crowd of occupants got out very quickly and no one was hurt. As some time elapsed before fire-engines could be procured and a supply of water organized, it was feared that the other stands might take fire; but such was not the case, and their occupants witnessed a spectacle even more exciting than the races.

THE PEACE COMMISSIONERS OF AFGHANISTAN.—The scene represented in our sketch is the procession conducting Yakoub Khan, with Sir Samuel Browne on his right hand, and Major Cavagnari on his left, from the hill above the Khat stream at Gandomuk along the road to the camp, a distance of three miles. The two conspicuous mounted Afghans, riding close behind the Ameer and his new-found English friends, are Daoud Shah, who is the Sipah Salar or Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan army, and Habib Ullah Khan, the Finance Minister or Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabul Government. Another is Mahomed Hashim Khan, a son-in-law of the late Ameer Shere Ali. The gentleman seen through the space between Sir Samuel Browne and Yakoub Khan, at the farther side of the roadway, is Mr. Jenkins, second Political Officer. The guard of honour in the rear is formed of a detachment of the 10th Hussars, under Major Wood. The road is lined with soldiers of the 45th Regiment (Sikhs) of Native Infantry. Among the hills in the background is that called "the Forty-fourth Hill," which derives its name from the last fighting stand made there after the retreat and destruction of the army in January, 1842, by a few of the 44th Infantry, who escaped from the passes of Jugdulluk. The Ameer was courteously entertained by Sir Samuel Browne in the British camp, and formal visits of ceremony occupied the first two days.

VARIETIES.

A LESSON IN HUMANITY.—The Japanese are very kind to animals. Professor Morse tells us that a boy is never seen to throw a stone at a dog or a bird, and crows come into the city of Tokio and lodge on the houses. They pay for their kind treatment, for they act as scavengers, picking up what rice or fish may fall to the ground. In a crowded thoroughfare he has seen a dog lying asleep in the middle of the road. No one disturbed him, but carefully turned out from him. He once threw a stone at a dog to see how he would act. The animal rose to his feet to let the stone pass, and looked surprised, and took only the same notice of a second assault—quite different from how a dog belonging to a Christian would be likely to act.

AN INTERESTING LIFE.—In the death of Mr. John Sheppard, of Frome, in his 94th year, another link has been snapped connecting the present with the last century. He was an intimate

friend of John Foster, and made important contributions to the biography of that distinguished essayist. Mr. Sheppard printed a remarkable correspondence which occurred towards the close of 1821 between himself and Lord Byron. In looking over the papers of his deceased wife, who died almost in the first year of their married life, Mr. Sheppard came upon a written prayer which Mrs. Sheppard had composed at Hastings in 1814, in which she pleaded in most affecting language on behalf of Lord Byron, who was then also sojourning at Hastings. Mr. Sheppard transcribed the paper and sent it with a touching little note, explaining its authorship, to the illustrious poet. Lord Byron replied in what is perhaps the most note-worthy letter he ever wrote.

MILITARY DRAUGHTSMEN.—Sir Garnet Wolseley and General Craiklock, who is now in command of the lower Tugela division, served together as subaltern officers in the 60th Regiment. Among the many talents they have in common is exceptional skill in draughtsmanship, and it was in connexion with this that a rather amusing incident arose at the relief of Lucknow. When Lord Clyde made his victorious entry into the town, he was surprised to find the external walls of one of the palaces extensively ornamented with curious pictures, representing a wide variety of Hindoo gods, but with English faces; and one and all had the same features, which happened to be those of a well-known 90th officer. Evidently some one must have added these heads to the native artist's work just before the entry took place, and the Perthshire volunteers had no difficulty in deciding who that "some one" was. And he had been remarkably busy elsewhere, for Lord Clyde declared that it was the very same face which had met him at every dak bungalow on his road up country—a bald head, with three hairs sprouting from the forehead, and a Brobdingnagian nose swallowing up the rest of the countenance.

ENGLISH DELICACY.—Mrs. Mary A. Livermore tells the following story of English politeness: "I was once the recipient of a very marked politeness in London. My husband and I received a verbal invitation from Lady Vilas, whom I had met once or twice pleasantly, to come to her house next evening and meet a few friends of hers. We accepted and went. But I was deceived by the informality of the invitation, and supposed it was merely to meet half a dozen neighbours or intimate friends. So we went out riding in the afternoon, stopping there on our way back to the hotel. Judge of my amazement to find the house illuminated and a very large and brilliant party assembled in full dress in my honour. There I was in a plain carriage dress, bonnet, black gloves! I went right into the house and to the ladies' dressing-room, whence I sent a note to the hostess saying I had misapprehended her invitation and was not in appropriate costume. She ran up and reassured me by telling me they had come to see me and didn't care for the dress, and carried me right down with her. All in full dress, and the ladies without hats, and hair elaborately dressed; I with brown dress, bare hands, bonnet on. I soon recovered the self-possession which the *faux pas* somewhat disturbed, and was greeted with splendid cordiality. In a few minutes Mr. Livermore edged around behind me and whispered, 'Didn't you think, Mary, that all these ladies had on white kids when you came in?' I looked around, and they were all bare-handed! Moreover, I observed that a half-dozen had bonnets on. This half a dozen rapidly increased, till we were in a majority; and I soon discovered that no lady who arrived after I had removed her hat. Now that is what I call politeness!"

BEACONSFIELD AND HIS HAT.—A correspondent writes:—I trust whoever may undertake the Boswellian task of recording the idiosyncracies of the great men of our time will not overlook the comedietta, nightly enacted in the House of Lords, of Lord Beaconsfield and his hat. When in the lower House Mr. Disraeli was noted for the care which he displayed in regard to that particular article of male adornment. Unlike his great rival, he was never known to appear in a shabby hat. Having taken his seat on the Treasury bench, he would stoop down and gently deposit his "tito" as far as possible under the seat, where it would be safe from the risk of a chance kick, and in taking it out from its resting place he would mechanically brush it round with his coat sleeve, prior to putting it on his head. Now that the Premier has been translated to a more dignified sphere, his hat is a perennial source of trouble to him. He walks down the House from the Prince's Chamber with his wonted jauntiness, takes his seat on the front Ministerial bench, fixes his eye-glass, and stares across the table to where the leader of the Opposition should be, but probably is not, sitting. Then in an apparent fit of abstraction he bends forward, thrusts his hat between his legs and finds that it won't go below the seat. Evidently astonished at the sudden check to his usual procedure, he solemnly adjusts his eye-glass and examines the red leather screen which has caused it; then smooths down the hat with his coat sleeve, and deposits it under the table in front of him. As the Lord Chancellor rises to put the question "that this House do now adjourn," the comedy is repeated. Lord Beaconsfield feels below him for his hat, is manifestly surprised at not finding it, awakes out of a brown study, and picking up the missing article, walks off with it in dignified style. Whether this amusing scene is due to long force of habit, or is merely an intentional eccentricity, I am unable to say; but it is regularly looked for and as regularly witnessed by the usual frequenters of the House.