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CONTENTS OF CURRENT NUMBER.

TOPICS—	PAGE
The Torrens System	163
The Latest Scandal	163
Looking to Washington	163
Trade with the Orient	163
British Justice	164
The Bar Criticised	164
Mr. Blaine's Withdrawal	164
France's New Tariff	164
Dehorning Cattle	164
A Protest Against Sport	165
LIEUTENANT-GOVERNORS OR CZARS?	Onlooker. 165
NATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA	M. M. 165
KEATS. (Poem)	Selected. 166
WILLIAM WILFRED CAMPBELL	Ethelwyn Wetherald. 166
PARIS LETTER	Z. 167
PROFESSOR HUTTON ON ATHENIAN POLITICS	John A. T. Lloyd. 167
THE MONARCHY	168
A PARSON'S PONDERINGS	Rev. Geo. J. Low. 169
LE FEU SACRE. (Poem)	John A. T. Lloyd. 169
THE RAMBLER	169
TO THE CROCUS. (Poem)	E. C. R. 170
CORRESPONDENCE—	
On Cromwell's Piety	S. A. Curzon. 170
Fletcher's Saying	W. F. Stockley. 170
AFT AMANG THE DISCORD. (A Doric Ditty)	D. McK. Macarthur. 170
ART NOTES	170
MUSIC AND THE DRAMA	171
OUR LIBRARY TABLE	171
LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP	172
READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE	172
CHESS	173

All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the
editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to
any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

MR. J. HERBERT MASON deserves the thanks of the country as well as those of the Central Farmers' Institute for having called the attention of the latter to the benefits that would follow the general adoption of the Torrens system of land transfer. The adoption of this system throughout the whole Province is only a question of time, but it is surprising that so much time is needed to secure its substitution for the costly and cumbrous system which it is gradually displacing. The advantages of the simple registration of titles, placing them at once and for all beyond dispute, over conveyance by deed, or rather by a chain of deeds reaching indefinitely backwards, are so many and obvious that the wonder is that the old method has so long survived in this busy and practical age. The obvious results of the Torrens system are, as pointed out by Mr. Mason, certainty of title, expedition in showing title, saving of an expense which is often great, loss of time in investigating titles, and, above all, guarantee against loss arising from mistakes. It is, we suppose, but natural that a reform whose ultimate effect would be to take away much occupation from a large class of members of the legal profession should fail to elicit the hearty support of a good many members of that profession, though the fact that this would be a consequence belonging to the future, while the immediate effect would be to increase rather than diminish the work of the lawyers, should minimize any interested opposition from that quarter. To the last mentioned fact, that, viz., of the increase of expense in the first instance, is due the hesitation of Mr. Awrey and other members of the Institute to accept the motion which finally prevailed, approving of the Torrens system and urging the subordinate institutes to discuss the question and instruct their delegates how to vote at the next meeting of the Central Institute. There can be no doubt of the conclusion that will follow an intelligent consideration of the question, or of the readiness of the Ontario Government and Legislature to

replace the present optional statute with a compulsory one as soon as they have reason to believe that the majority of the electors and land owners of the Province desire it.

EVER since the close of last session the atmosphere of party politics has been from time to time agitated by whisperings of coming revelations, which, it is intimated, will prove still more damaging to the Ottawa administration than those of last session. Indeed, the Hon. David Mills, if correctly reported—and we have seen no denial—went so far as to say, in a recent political speech, that, no matter what the result of the bye-elections, the Canadian Government would be hurled from power within one month of the opening of the coming session. This, from the connection, could be understood to mean nothing else than that the Opposition were in possession of evidence of transactions of some kind so discreditable to the members of the Government that it would be impossible for them to withstand the effect of the unveiling process which would be commenced shortly after the re-assembling of Parliament. Many other statements, similar in kind, have been made by other men of prominence in the ranks of the Opposition, so that the attitude of the country may be described as one of expectancy on the part of the friends of the Opposition, and, it is not unlikely, of apprehension on the part of Government supporters. No one, therefore, was, we suppose, much surprised when on Saturday last the *Globe* came out with its first two pages filled with flaming headlines, headed letter-press, and *fac-similes* of receipts for cash—all purporting to show that Sir Adolphe Caron, late Minister of Militia, and now Postmaster-General, had freely drawn on Hon. Thomas McGreevy for election funds, for use in various constituencies in the Province of Quebec during the last general election, the implication being, of course, that said funds were a part of the "huddle" provided by the firm of Larkin, Connolly and Company from the illegitimate proceeds of Government contracts, for connection with which Mr. McGreevy was expelled from Parliament. The documents thus given to the public leave no doubt of the fact that these sums of money were drawn by Sir Adolphe Caron from a fund in the hands of Mr. McGreevy for party uses. That the money so drawn was a part of the funds contributed by the contractors in question, having been by them stolen from the Government, is, of course, as yet only a presumption. Sir Adolphe's explanation that the sums in question had first been placed by him in the custody of Mr. McGreevy as the financial manager of the party, and had been simply withdrawn by him (Sir Adolphe) as needed for legitimate electoral expenses, is satisfactory, if it can be proved, as far as it goes; but will probably be held by the public to need a second explanation, to show whence he obtained these large sums in the first instance. Unhappily we have fallen upon an evil time in Canada, when the simple word of a member of the Government, or of Parliament, which ought to be the end of all controversy, avails nothing save as corroborated by sworn testimony which has stood the ordeal of vigorous cross-examination. So far as we can now remember, not one of those who have up to date been convicted of connection with boodling transactions, either at Ottawa or at Quebec, has failed to affirm his innocence. We mention this unpleasant fact as a sufficient reason for the opinion that the Government cannot refuse the investigation which will be no doubt demanded by the Opposition in the Commons, as it is now demanded in advance by their newspapers.

WE have once or twice expressed regret that the much-talked-of conference at Washington, between representatives of the Governments of the two countries, on the question of reciprocity, the prospect of which conference formed the ostensible ground of the sudden dissolution of the Canadian Parliament prior to the late general election, seemed to have been quietly dropped from the Ottawa programme. It was therefore with some surprise that we read the other day the announcement that several of our Ministers were going, and a day or two later that they had actually gone, to Washington, for the purpose of taking part in such a conference. In the absence of information as to the origin of this renewal of the conference pro-

posal, it is impossible to feel so sanguine of a successful result as we should like to do. It must be confessed that the connection of this movement with the bye-elections, just as the former one was connected with the general election, is a coincidence which gives too much colour to the suspicion that it may be little more than a feint for political effect. If the initiative was in this case taken by the Washington authorities there is of course no ground for such suspicion, and good ground for hope of a result favourable to both peoples, as any fair arrangement for the promotion of mutual trade cannot fail to be. But if, on the other hand, as there seems too much cause to fear, the visit is being made as the outcome of permission sought by our own Government, the probabilities of any basis of agreement being reached are, we suspect, infinitesimal, while worse even than the failure of negotiations would be the evidence that the reconstructed Government is not above resorting to deceptive expedients, such as we had hoped we had seen the last of in Canada, for a generation at least. It is not, however, easy to see any special cause of misgiving to prompt the Government to adopt any doubtful expedient of the kind indicated for the sake of influencing the bye-elections. The results so far are entirely in its favour. A decided advantage has already been gained, and that too in constituencies which, from their location, were supposed to be most susceptible to the influence of the unrestricted reciprocity argument. While congratulating the Government on their victory, we cannot refrain from expressing the disappointment that must be felt by all friends of upright and above-board tactics that they have seemingly fallen back upon the old plan of bringing on the elections piecemeal in such order as may seem most likely to be favourable to their own friends and correspondingly disconcerting to those of their opponents. It is surely time that the Government of this Dominion should be above such tricks, and ready to offer a fair and honourable contest. The proposal which has been made by some one, and which will probably be brought forward in Parliament, that the statutes should be so amended as to put it out of the power of the Government to fix the dates of bye-elections, by causing these dates henceforth to be determined by the proper officer, according to an impartial rule, is so manifestly fair and in the interests of good administration, that it is difficult to see on what plausible ground it can be objected to by the Government.

WE should have commented last week upon the remarkably encouraging report brought back by Mr. Shaughnessy, vice-president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, of the possibilities of future trade with China and Japan. Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the comparative value of the United States' market, there can be none in respect to the desirability of opening up the widest possible markets in other quarters of the globe. It must be confessed that the prospects of any important development of commercial intercourse with the central and southern parts of our own continent are not very good, partly because of the superior advantages possessed by our next-door neighbours for securing such trade, and partly by reason of the smallness of the populations in question and their comparative lack of wealth. In the case of China and Japan, neither of these obstacles exists. In point of location and means of communication, Canada has now, we suppose, the advantage over every other country on this hemisphere. The vast populations of those oriental lands, and their thrift, rapidly developing enterprise, and commercial capacity, are such as would make the possibilities of future expansion practically unlimited, were they really to throw open their country for free commercial intercourse and begin to cultivate western tastes in the matter of food and clothing. The people of these countries have certainly been used better, or, as we should perhaps put it, less badly, in Canada than in the United States and, other things being equal, might naturally be expected to prefer dealing with us. If the tendencies of these peoples in the direction of enlarged intercourse with the outside world are half as hopeful as Mr. Shaughnessy's observations have led him to believe; if the Chinese and Japanese are really developing a taste for, and beginning to use, such Western staples in food