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The city went off to the country, social, commercial and ecclesiastical life got dissipated—but now the country is coming back to the town once more, and the threads are being gathered up again for further weaving. But the heat hangs on, and nobody can account for it, and everybody is beginning to think that “the times are out of joint.” What is Mr. Mackenzie doing? If he cannot regulate matters better, he should give place to Sir John, who can. Free trade is all very well in the ordinary way—but I go in for protection against this extravagant heat. We want a national policy.

We are getting into one rapidly—it is a policy of misrepresentation and lying on the part of the daily press. Each partizan paper is giving, day by day, “facts for the electors,” which “facts” are a hash of old things that were nasty in their day, and now are disgusting. Some of the statements *must* be false, and it is probable that nearly all of them are. Falsehood is fast becoming a fine art in this country. What a help it must be to the cause of morality.

The Methodist Conference is in session at Montreal, and the report of the work done by the society is a good one. The machinery of Methodism is well adapted to the wants of a country like this. The ministers look like men who are in earnest, and can work hard, and the laymen have the appearance of men possessed of heart and brains for the management of affairs ecclesiastical. I express the mind of many when I say—we wish them all a pleasant session and a great future.

In the Rev. Mr. Coley—as the representative of the Mother Church at home—they have a man of whom English Methodists are justly proud. He holds to traditional Methodism, but has never become a fossil—he is eloquent because he is earnest, and uses pure, unsophisticated English. He is worthy of a hearty welcome.

The election time draws near, and the Liberal party are bestirring themselves in an earnest way. The Premier and his seconds are stumping the country in order to offer the people a continuance of political and economical salvation. To say that the thing is not well defined in their speeches, is to speak simple truth. But then, how can it be otherwise? The matter is not clear to their minds, so how can it be in their speech? They are not Free Traders, as that is understood in England, for they have put on a tariff here and a duty there, and in other instances have taken them off—sometimes, as it seems to many, especially to those who have lost trade by it, not very wisely. Still, the Liberals have a policy—it is to get “in.”

In many parts of the country they are putting forward good men to contest the elections. Notably, Montreal is fortunate in two of its Liberal candidates. Of Mr. Archambault I have spoken before in terms of commendation, and his speeches since then have confirmed me in that opinion. And now Mr. W. Darling is out for Montreal West. The choice is a good one, and proves that the old wire-pullers have ceased to act, if they have not ceased to be. I can hear only good of Mr. Darling. He has been a merchant for thirty-eight years; has succeeded by industry and integrity; has manifested great persistence in adherence to principle, thus winning the confidence of commercial men, who called him to the Presidency of the Board of Trade in Montreal and to a seat in the Council of the Dominion Board of Trade, which positions he filled with honour to himself and advantage to the mercantile community. He stands opposed to a good and strong man, so that a fair party issue will be laid before the electors. Whichever side may win, we may depend upon it that the principals will conduct the contest as gentlemen should.

I wish Montreal Centre was in so good a case, but it is not. Of the two candidates, Mr. M. P. Ryan is certainly the best, which is not saying much. For Mr. Devlin's recommendations are very few and hard to find. He is going to be independent; that is to say, he will be mainly with the Liberals, holding the right to hop on to the fence now and then to survey the political arena and embrace any opportunity for doing good unto himself. Mr. Devlin would be a very good representative of Griffintown, but it should begin and end there.

Our Police Court is the most successful effort ever made for the wasting of time. This is how it is done: The Counsel for prosecution puts a question to the witness, which question is written down in long-hand by a clerk, then read to the witness. Witness replies slowly—the clerk writes: then reads it aloud, and witness endorses his statement—generally with an explanation. It seems to be generally understood that Counsel may take considerable latitude in the matter of questions—so that, as the Court only sits two hours each day, cases may be prolonged almost indefinitely. As evidence—see how the Goff case and the Orange case drag along side by side in Montreal. They are like the Irishman's rope that had no end, because he had cut it off. Life is short for everybody but lawyers.

Sir John A. Macdonald has decided to lay his policy before the workmen of Montreal. That is good. We have not been able to gather much from the speeches delivered nightly in the Toronto amphitheatre, for the speakers, for the most part, have spoken the muddiest English; but surely Sir John will make the thing plain to us. We shall require to know what legislation would be attempted if Sir John should be at the head of our political affairs once again,—that is, what changes would be made in the tariff, and how they would operate for the greatest good of the greatest number—how the expenditure could be cut down and kept down—how the best brains of the party could be got to do the work of the country—and how soon we may hope to be, not only better governed, but less governed. I can tell the Conservatives that they must put out a better programme than they have yet produced if they mean to carry the country. The general impression seems to be—this is a mere question of party—we know the Liberals: they are not brilliant, but are moderately honest—we do not know the Conservatives, and are a bit afraid of them. If Sir John can dispel that fear, he will do a good work for his party.

It looks as if the Earl of Beaconsfield is preparing another surprise for the people. During this century no Parliament has been prolonged to the natural term of its existence; two only having lived through six years,—the one elected in 1820, during Lord Liverpool's administration, and the last Parliament of Palmerston, which was elected in 1859 and dissolved in July, 1865. It was thought that this Parliament would be no exception, and constituencies busied themselves in choosing candidates; but the results of the Berlin Congress have not been so satisfactory as Ministerialists predicted—so there will be no dissolution this year—unless something shall happen by way of a merciful incident.

The results of the Congress are well summarized by the following letter from a Russian to the Editor of *Truth* :—

“We Russians are quite satisfied with the Berlin Treaty. That negotiated by Ignatieff at San Stefano has really been carried into effect. You are welcome to the island of Cyprus, and if you like to send English capital to Asia Minor, we do not object. With Batoum and Kars in our hands in Asia, we are masters of the situation, and if ever it pleases us, we can pour our armies into Asia Minor. In Europe, we have got back the territory that we had to cede after the Crimean war; Serbia's aspirations remain ungratified, and the same may be said of Bulgaria. Both must be our allies. In Eastern Roumelia, as it has amused our Plenipotentiaries to call Southern Bulgaria, the authority of the Sultan is nominal, and the inhabitants will look to us as their only protectors. Our great difficulty has always been the Greeks. They are now alienated from you. If ever a war should take place between Russia and England, we should not attack Turkey, and you would not be able to blockade our Black Sea ports. We are, therefore, much obliged to you for having maintained the neutrality of the Black Sea. We are now advancing towards your Indian frontiers, and if ever, as I have said, a war takes place between our two countries, you will find it necessary to send troops to India, instead of strengthening your European armies with Indian troops. We shall, I think, in the end form an alliance with Persia, which will be similar to that which you have formed with Turkey. Have we, then, designs upon India? Are we anxious to go to war with you? Neither. But we cannot admit inferiority. Look at the map. You will see that our Empire stretches along the centre of Europe and of Asia. You insist that we should be debarred from any outlet on our Southern frontier, and you think that we shall for ever submit to such a restriction, as though we were some paltry Principality. Should you? If peace with you means that we may not have access to the Indian Seas, and that our war vessels may not visit our Southern ports, then such a peace will not be lasting. But whose is the fault? Yours. You strive after the impossible.”

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