

value of Sir John Thompson's professions must be estimated in the light of his deeds. How any fair-minded Conservative could fail to be convinced by the arguments and figures presented by Mr. Mills and Sir Richard Cartwright that a much nearer approach to justice would be made by either of the two plans proposed than by the present Bill, we are unable to understand. Mr. Mills' proposal to have regard to County lines throughout, had the very great merit of laying down a principle which would become a precedent in all future cases, and reduce the possibility of "gerrymandering" to the minimum. Sir Richard Cartwright's solution of the problem, by the simple and seemingly fair method of combining two by two the smallest contiguous constituencies in the Province in order to secure the two additional seats, and leave the others untouched, became so easy, in view of the smallness of the population of several contiguous counties in Eastern Ontario, that the refusal to consider it can be explained on no other than partisan grounds. If Sir John Thompson and his Government persist in carving the two seats required out of Western, instead of Eastern, Ontario, while the unit of representation in the latter is so very much smaller than in the former, we do not see how it can be possible for history to avoid placing their Redistribution Act of 1892 on the same low moral plane with that of their predecessors of ten years before, which is now defended only by one or two of the rashest young members of the House. How such men as Dr. Weldon of Albert, from whom we had reason to expect so much better things, can bring themselves to the support of so obvious an iniquity must be to many of their admirers, as it is to us, a profound ethical puzzle.

ONCE more Canada is threatened with the loss of the bonding privilege by way of retaliation for the alleged bad faith of its Government in the matter of the canal tolls. If we could but see that our Government was in the right, though we might still question the wisdom of the policy which risks so much to gain so little, we could readily understand and sympathize with the feeling which would prompt a refusal to yield a right once claimed, under compulsion. As we have always been compelled to regard our Government as in the wrong in this matter, we are the more sorry that a dead-lock is threatened in consequence. "Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just." Seeing that it may be at least doubtful whether Canada can in this case rely upon that triple armour—and all the more if it is not doubtful—why should not our Government offer to leave the question to the decision of some impartial tribunal? That would be far more dignified than to trust to the hope that the President's threat is a mere ante-election "bluff," and far more honourable than to rely upon the fact, if such it be, that the abolition of bonding would injure our neighbours more than it would ourselves. Let our Government prove the honesty of its convictions by promptly offering to submit the question whether the remission of tolls in favour of Canadian routes is or is not a violation of international obligations, to arbitration. Three disinterested and competent jurists would probably agree upon the matter in a day. By the way, is it not a strange, and to one party or the other a disgraceful, thing that now for the second time there is a disagreement between the representatives of the two Governments as to what was the actual understanding reached at the non-official interview? In the former case Sir Charles Tupper afterwards admitted to Mr. Blaine that his (Mr. Blaine's) recollection of the matter was correct. How is it going to be in the present instance?

OTTAWA LETTER.

THE maiden speech of Mr. W. F. Maclean, member for East York, is likely to win for him the friendship of the large body of people in Canada, who think that the cost of travelling is very great, when compared with other expenses. Mr. Maclean advocated, in committee, on a Bill respecting the Midland Railway of Canada, that rates for passenger traffic should be regulated by Parliament. He pointed out that while within the last thirty years everything we consume had fallen in price, rates for railway traffic remained the same that they were thirty years ago. He claimed that railways should be required to adopt a two-cent-per-mile rate. This was practically the law of the State of New York; and in England there was practically a Parliamentary rate of a penny a mile. Mr. Haggart promised that the subject would have the attention of the Government, and in answer to Mr. Maclean said that it was the intention of the Government to introduce the Bill to amend the Railway Act.

The House has devoted itself very steadily to the

Redistribution Bill in committee. Sir John Thompson made an important announcement when he said that the Government meant to withdraw the provision in the Bill which took the township of Clarence out of the county of Russell and annexed it to Prescott. Mr. Edwards, the sitting member for Russell, expressed his satisfaction at this proposed line of action, but Mr. Laurier could not allow the opportunity to pass without pointing out that this admission of mistake on the part of the Government showed in a conclusive manner the absolutely arbitrary character of the Bill, and that there was no principle to be found in it from first to last.

The debate was resumed in committee the first thing on Monday morning. After a speech from Mr. Mills, in support of his amendment, that county boundaries be adhered to in the redistribution, a vote was taken upon the same, resulting in the usual majority for the Government. The yeas and nays were not demanded, the Opposition being content with a count of the members. Then the details of the Bill were taken up. Besides making the concession in regard to Russell County, already referred to, the Government made another very important step in the direction of conciliation. All through their speeches the Opposition have urged that the village of Merriton be left in the county of Niagara to which it naturally belongs, instead of being added to Welland. To this Sir John Thompson agreed.

Then a long discussion took place over the general policy of the Bill in taking the two members, necessary for the increased representation in Toronto and Nipissing and Algoma, from the Niagara district, and amendments came thick and fast. Mr. Mills, Sir Richard and others could not see why certain ridings in the Eastern part of the Province below the unit of representation were not united, and the densely populated portion of the Province, already under-represented, let alone. But the Government, having made what they consider reasonable concessions, did not fancy the idea of allowing the Bill to be cut to pieces entirely.

It was a surprise to almost everyone when the close of Monday's sitting showed the Bill, as far as it deals with Ontario, to be practically passed. Besides the admission made in regard to Russell, and the restoration of Merriton to its former love, the clause annexing London west to London proper has been dropped. Col. Denison proposes that West Toronto shall be divided into two ridings, Bathurst Street being the dividing line, and that all west of that street shall be known as West Toronto, and all east of it as West Centre Toronto.

Everything in the shape of Parliamentary business gives way to the Redistribution Bill, and whatever else is done, however important it may be in itself, sinks into obscurity. Mr. Carling is putting through a Bill to amend the Patent Act, which, it must at once be perceived, is a matter of great importance. The chief provisions of the Bill, as explained by the Minister, are to extend the life of a patent from fifteen to eighteen years, and to do away with the necessity for models. The Bill did not pass its second reading without discussion. Sir Richard Cartwright questioned the desirability of extending the period of patent right, and Mr. Mills did not approve of the provision making it optional to furnish a model. This will be discussed further in committee.

The good people of Ottawa have long since got sick of the deliberations of the Senate and House of Commons, and have gone quite "lacrosse" mad. For many years this city has striven for the mastery in lacrosse, and on Saturday evening the capitals came home from Cornwall with a well-earned victory over the strongest team in Canada. Great was the reception the victors received, and the individual players are so many lions of the hour.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union of the Dominion held its annual session in this city, the latter part of last week and the first of the present week. It is generally considered that the estimable ladies who comprise this growing association have not much of an opinion of the way in which the Parliament of Canada conducts the business of the country, and that they are particularly disappointed that the House has not yet declared in favour of Prohibition. But however they may disapprove of Parliament in general, there is one member of the Commons at least whom they regard as a modern Sir Galahad. Mr. Charlton has had a hard time with his Sabbath Observance Bill, and has not received that consideration to which he thinks he is entitled, but he has pluckily persisted in his duty. All his disappointments and discouragements must have disappeared like mists before the sun when he found on his desk in the House, the other evening, a basket of beautiful white roses, sent to him with the compliments of the ladies of the W.C.T.U.

On Wednesday the House commenced morning sessions, the Speaker taking the chair at eleven o'clock, rising at one for lunch and resuming again at three. There is a determination on the part of the Government to get through with the work as speedily as possible, and the Opposition being somewhat mollified by the concessions already made in the "gerrymander," will probably withdraw to a certain extent from the policy of obstruction. It is scarcely probable, however, that prorogation will take place before the middle of next month. Even if the Redistribution Bill goes through this week, there yet remains the Criminal Code, and there are more supplementary estimates to be voted, including the railway subsidies, which must give rise to some discussion at all events.

T. C. L. K.

[All Rights reserved.]

TWO KNAPSACKS:

A NOVEL OF CANADIAN SUMMER LIFE.

BY J. CAWDOR BELL.

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued).

THE mile and a-half was soon covered, and the trio stood before a roomy farm-house. A boy, not unlike Tommy, but better dressed, was swinging on the gate, and him the detective asked if he could see Miss Du Plessis on important business. The boy ran into the house to enquire, and came back to the gate, accompanied by the lady in question. She changed colour as her eye took in The Cavalry, immovable as a life guardsman on sentry. The detective handed her his professional card, and explained that he and his two friends had been entrusted with the duty of protecting her property and herself. "You need have no doubts, Miss Du Plessis, for the Squire, as a J. P., knows me perfectly," he continued.

"I have no fear, Mr. Nash," answered the lady, in a pleasant voice, with just a suspicion of a foreign accent; "your name is known to me, and you are in good company."

Wilkinson, standing by his friend's stirrup, heard this last statement, and blushed, while The Cavalry thought he had heard a voice like that before.

"Has Mr. Rawdon seen you, or have you seen him?" asked the detective.

"Neither; but the two Marjories have been here, and have told me about him. They do not seem to admire Mr. Rawdon."

"The darlins!" ejaculated the lawyer; whereupon Wilkinson pinched his leg, and made him cry "Owch!"

The rest of the conversation between the plotters at the gate was inaudible. At its conclusion, the lady's face was beaming with amusement.

"Give me that bundle for Miss Du Plessis," said Nash to Coristine, who lifted his hat to her, and handed the parcel over.

"Now, for instructions," continued the commander-in-chief. "The Cavalry will go to Bridesdale, that's Squire Carruthers' place, and keep Mr. Rawdon from going to church, or bring him back if he has started, which isn't likely. This branch of the Service will also make sure that all children are out of the way somewhere, and inform older people, who may be about, that Miss Du Plessis is coming to the house during church time, and is very much altered by night-watching and sick-nursing, so that they need not express astonishment before Mr. Rawdon. Fasten these knapsacks about you somehow, Horse-Doctor; put the beast up where he'll get a drink and a feed; and go to church like a good Christian. The Infantry will halt for the present, and afterwards act as Miss Du Plessis' escort. Infantry, attention! Cavalry, form threes, trot!"

Coristine took the knapsacks, made another bow, and trotted away, while the dominie walked up to the gate, and was introduced to the fair conspirator.

After showing the detective and his bundle into an unoccupied apartment, Miss Du Plessis returned to the sitting-room where she left the dominie. In the few minutes at their disposal, he informed his new acquaintance of his chance-meeting with her uncle, of whose arrival in Canada she was in complete ignorance. The imparting and receiving this news established such a bond between the two as the schoolmaster had hitherto thought impossible should exist between himself and one of the weaker sex. Yet, in her brief absence, he had taken pains to dust himself, and shake up his hair and whiskers. His companion was preparing to tell how she had heard of him from Miss Carmichael, when another young lady, almost her counterpart in general appearance, entered the room.

"Now," said the newcomer, in a deep but feminine voice, "now the false Miss Du Plessis will go on with her nursing, while the real one takes Mr. Wilkinson's arm and keeps her appointment at the Squire's."

Miss Du Plessis clapped her hands together and laughed heartily. Wilkinson, thinking, all the time, what a pretty, musical laugh it was, could not help joining in the amusement, for Nash was complete from his wig down to his boots. The colonel's niece threw a light, woolly shawl over the detective's shoulders, and accompanied the pair to the gate, where, before dismissing them, she warned her double not to compromise her to Mr. Rawdon.

"I hope soon to have the pleasure of meeting you, Mr. Wilkinson, under more favourable circumstances," she called after that gentleman, as they moved off, and then ran into the house to hide her laughter.

The dominie felt his face getting red, with a pretty young lady hoping to meet him again, on the one hand, and a not by any means ill-looking personation of one hanging on to his arm, on the other. After a minute, the detective withdrew his hand from his companion's arm, but continued to practise his assumed voice upon him, in every imaginable enquiry as to what he knew of Miss Du Plessis, of her friend Miss Carmichael, and of the working geologist's intentions. He was thus pretty well primed, and all promised well, till, within a quarter of a mile of the house, a vision appeared that filled him and the disguised Nash, to whom he communicated his fears, with grave apprehensions as to the success of the plot. It was no less a person than the veteran, Mr. Michael Terry, out for a Sunday walk with the Grinstun man. Their dread increased as the old man came running forward, crying: "An' it's comin' back yez are, my darlin'!"