

## THE DISAFFECTED FRENCH-CANADIANS.

M. Poirier, the candidate for Montreal East, at a meeting of Nationalists held to open the electoral campaign, plunged head-foremost into the Riel issue, and said that "the injury inflicted on the French-Canadians by Sir John when he hanged the Metis chieftain, would never be forgotten by the 30,000 patriots who had resolved to overthrow him. He was in honor bound to avenge the insult to his race, and he meant to do it."

Meantime, M. Mercier's organ, *L'Electeur*, is talking secession and clamoring for a mass meeting to inaugurate a movement for the annexation of the Province of Quebec to the United States, while M. Mercier himself has adopted the contemptible tactics of using the most passionate and incendiary language in a public speech, and suppressing the most violent portions of his harangue in the revised report printed in the *Montreal Herald* and the French organs. This is said to be an old trick of M. Mercier's.

It is difficult to imagine what would content these ungracious Frenchmen. They could by no means, under Annexation, hold the privileged position they do in the federated community of the Dominion, where they have always held the balance of power; and their denunciations of Protestants as oppressors of French Roman Catholics are the height of absurdity and falsehood. The tyranny has lain entirely on the other side, as witness the high-handed proceedings by which, about a year ago, the whole English-speaking community of a district in Quebec were, by a deliberate scheme, deprived of their municipal rights and privileges. The French have always had their rights respected, and more than respected, as of course they know well enough, but they are essentially of the type which seizes an opportunity of difficulty to add to existing embarrassment. They remind us of the Irishman, of the story, who was pulled out of the water, after being wrecked on a coast unknown to him. "Have you a gally at hand here?" cried Pat, as soon as he had pulled himself together. "Certainly there's a government," said the rescuers. "Thin I'm forinst it!" shouted Pat, "Hurroo!"

Any sound people would by this time have been glad to cease stirring up the unsavory remembrance of the wicked and worthless Riel, but nothing is too dirty for the demagogic politician, and the shallow populace he so easily leads by the nose. M. Mercier has perhaps a sincere fellow feeling for Riel, for his portrait, as given in the *Dominion Illustrated*, reveals to the observer of character as shown in facial lineaments a considerable characteristic agreement with the countenance of that worthy.

It is evident that the recent exercise of the Federal Veto, which is the ostensible cause of the present outbreak of factious malignity in Quebec, only affords a desired vent for the expression of anti-British and anti-Federal feeling which has been sedulously and patiently cultivated with a set purpose for a considerable time. If the Quebec Government really possesses under the constitution the power to create courts which has been, rightly or wrongly, disallowed by that of the Dominion, M. Mercier is perfectly aware of the constitutional remedy provided—an appeal to the proper tribunal; but this does not suit his purposes. M. Mercier desires to free his Province from all control, Imperial and Dominion. It is a fine opportunist demonstration, which we venture to predict will not bear the fruits which he and the disaffected French-Canadians he leads hope to see.

## CANADA IN GENERAL.

There seems to us to be just two obstacles to Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States. One is a matter of duty to our own country, the other is only inseparable so long as the Americans remain in the present frame of mind as to protection. We take it that a nation, especially such a nation as Canada, with unlimited resources for manufactures, is incomplete as a nation without a full development of its own manufacturing class and resources. For that development our manufactures require protection against American slaughtering for some little time yet to come.

Full reciprocity in natural products is another, though a very material matter. Against this it is the United States which sets itself. It is at their option to accept reciprocity in fish and coal.

It is acknowledged that if unrestricted reciprocity were inaugurated, there would be a deficiency of revenue which would have to be made up by taxation of some other kind than the Customs duties on American goods, which would be lost. Nothing that we are aware of has been suggested to this end but Direct Taxation. Some one or two politicians have had the courage to hint at this expedient, though there is nothing which presents so alarming an aspect to the ordinary tax-payer. We do not ourselves participate in his distaste. We are of opinion that no conceivable measure would do so much to create that spontaneous and earnest vigilance on the part of every intelligent elector which would constitute the surest check to extravagance on the part of any Government, and that the resultant economy would become obvious in a very short space of time. We are not, however, in the least sanguine that our views will recommend themselves to the majority, or even to any considerable minority, for a long time to come. If they ever obtain, we should heartily welcome the free trade, which would be either cause or consequence of their adoption.

Meantime, the resources of Canada are almost as great as those of the United States. Our corn is not so fine as that which can be produced further south, and we cannot grow oranges, lemons and bananas, but in other fruits our product is as good, and in other grains, in coal, in iron, and in other minerals, we are at least on a par. All that we require are, a larger population, which is steadily accruing to us, some increase of enterprise and energy, and a patriotic and self-relying spirit. Our territory is enormous, and with increase of population we should suffice to ourselves for an internal trade proportional to that which makes the States self-containing to so large an extent. Population will, we think, be found, when the next

census is taken, to have reached a number at which the natural increment alone will ensure an augmentation advancing in a ratio rapid enough to be palpably and practically felt in decreasing intervals of time. At the same time our exports of natural products to Great Britain alone are fast gaining in importance, and already there is a diminution of the wailing of pessimists that all is hopeless with us. The facts have indeed become too strong for them to keep it up. Perhaps they have begun to think that they would hardly merit such thanks as those of the Roman Senate to the Consul Varro after the tremendous defeat of Cannæ (partly due, moreover, to his own rash generalship) for, not even in that hour, despairing of the Republic.

When we contemplate the immense national advantages and capabilities with which our happy country has been blessed by Providence, if only He will be pleased to grant us immunity from foreign aggression and domestic faintheartedness, we sometimes begin to wonder that so many speculators on our future can see nothing but two alternatives before us—Imperial Federation or Annexation!

## "PUT UP OR SHUT UP."

If our present deplorable relations with the United States do not lead to earnest efforts for Imperial Federation, there will be small hopes for the final success of the scheme. For we never can have a stronger illustration of the dangers of our existing status than we now have. If we were equal and paying partners in the Empire it is unlikely that the present crisis would exist at all, or that demagogues in the Senate or elsewhere would have been so prompt to refuse arbitration, to repudiate conventions, or to fish for the votes of rowdies by rowdy abuse of Britain or Canada. We know, from various utterances, that at present many Americans assume that England will never take arms in our behalf. Only the other day a Republican organ observed that "the new democracy of England would never fight with us 'about the Canadians.'" Even in Canada many people feel that Britain will not put her foot down so firmly or so readily in defence of Canadian interests as in defence of Scotch or Irish or English interests. "To the proposition that England would run any hazard in order to sustain our case," says the *Toronto Mail* of the 18th, "it is probably a sufficient answer to say that we do not contribute to her treasury, that we do not allow her a voice in our internal affairs, that we do not even recognize her kinship in matters of trade, but treat her precisely as we treat the foreigner."

But if a serious crisis should occur under Imperial Federation, our neighbors would be much more anxious to arrange the difficulty than they are now. They would know that no provinces of the Empire would grudge to Canada in her need a support which she was pledged to reciprocate in theirs. There would be no question then that Canada would be backed in all her just contentions—backed more promptly, more fully and more powerfully than she is in her present condition as a "dependency." The strong arm of the Empire would be nerve by an awakened spirit of imperial patriotism.

If the lovers of leading-strings really form a majority in Canada, they might succeed in prolonging her inglorious tutelage for ever, but for three dangers. The first danger of course is forcible annexation—a possible consequence of a war with the United States.

The second danger is that Britain may sooner or later deliberately decline to go on shouldering unreciprocated responsibilities.

The third danger is that the carping abuse of Britain by certain papers in the colonies, whenever she makes a compromise or fails to jump instantly at the throat of any foreign power in defence of any disputed colonial right, may at last provoke unpleasant reprisals. Suppose that some day, after an unusually shrill chorus of barks from a certain class of Canadian journals, some of the great British papers should retort in effect: "Gentlemen, if you don't like the way we protect you, you are quite welcome to protect yourselves or to get some other protector, if you can find one cheap enough to suit your ideas. But before you either criticise our military, naval and diplomatic services, or prescribe how and when we are to employ them, would it not be more graceful and more manly to contribute something to their support? To use the forcible language of your republican neighbors, perhaps, gentlemen, you will kindly 'PUT UP OR SHUT UP.'" Should any considerable portion of the British press be teased into adopting such a tone, more bitter words will follow on both sides, and we shall meet a fate which all true friends of Britain and Canada dread far worse than friendly annexation or independence—we shall part in anger.

Strange to say, those who snarl and nag most at the mother country for hesitating to risk her vast commerce in defence of every local claim are generally persons who sneer at the notion of contributing a cent to the imperial establishments. It is a melancholy truth that sponges commonly are both thankless and exacting.

The formation is reported of a French syndicate to complete the line of railway from Pembroke to the Sault Ste. Marie, to take over the North Shore road from the C. P. R., and to acquire running privileges over the Intercolonial to St. John and Halifax. The object is to remove grain from Minneapolis and the N. W. to Canadian Ports. In addition to the French capitalists the company is stated to include the Hon. Mr. Chapleau and other prominent Canadians. Construction is being rapidly pushed on the only portion of the line not completed. Another line is nearly completed which crosses the country from Riviere du Loup to Edmunston by Lake Temiscouta and the Madawaska River, connecting at Edmunston with the New Brunswick Railway, which will shorten time and distance to Montreal. A branch line is also to be established between the New Brunswick Railway and the Intercolonial. In view of this healthy railway activity no great apprehension need be entertained that Canada will suffer much if the threatened Retaliation Policy should be put in force.