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CONTENTS:

THE TIMES.
SPECIALIZING INDUSTRIES.
"PROTECTION" FOR HONESTY.
A CRITICISM.
IRELAND.
SUCH IS HISTORY.
SUPPLEMENTARY ADULT EDUCATION.
SELF-CONCEIT.

THINGS IN GENERAL.
POETRY.
CORRESPONDENCE.
PRIZE QUESTIONS IN CANADIAN HISTORY.
TRADE, FINANCE, STATISTICS.
MUSICAL.
CHESS.
&c., &c., &c.

THE TIMES.

THE POLITICAL DRAMA.

We may as well confess now that it was an evil day for the Province of Quebec when M. Letellier so rashly and ill-advisedly raised the Constitutional Question. It seemed then as if the storm would blow itself out in a few days, or weeks at most, but for more than a year it has kept up a perpetual bluster, and to judge from present appearances and noises, we cannot venture to predict as to when and where we shall find the end of it. What dry winds of argument have beaten upon our poor heads, and what floods of rhetoric we have had to stem; mile upon mile of talk at Quebec week after week; stump orations full of "sound and fury;" newspaper leaders, in which the high and mighty "we" deals out thunder; street debates; club discussions; the appeal reasonable and the appeal *ad captandum vulgus*; the tears of political martyrs, and the prayers of political saints; fifteen Councillors astonishing their friends by showing that they possessed ingenuity enough to make fools of themselves; Frenchmen, acting despotically under the banner and in the name of Constitutionalism; Frenchmen and others frantically grabbing at office, daubing themselves as patriots the while; men clinging to party with loudly asserted zeal, and only giving party up in the sublimity of despair when there appeared a chance of personal gain to be had by jumping the fence. In truth we have had talking, scheming, buying, and abuse enough to swamp one of the great European powers. What can this poor Province do? We cannot govern ourselves, and nobody else cares to govern us, so we must get a little deeper into debt, and then—Repudiation.

There is nothing in the present state of affairs at Quebec to give us the slightest hope of a more settled government and more economy in the administration of affairs. The Council met on the twenty-seventh, and adjourned—determined to do nothing toward putting an end to the absurd and disgraceful situation into which they had brought us—unless they could find a chance of doing something in favour of their pets, the *Bleus*, to whom they imagine this Province belongs. They had said to M. Chapleau: Evidently you cannot succeed in wresting office from M. Joly while the Assembly can command the ordinary supplies; very good, we will lock up the money for a time,—now go to work and try what you can do. M. Chapleau went to work, and here is the result: M. Joly is beaten by a majority of six at the first trial of party strength. That is to say, M. Chapleau and his friends have succeeded in decoying five of M. Joly's supporters from their allegiance. But how has this end been secured? How is it that Messrs. Chauveau, Flynn and Lynch do now approve that which formerly they condemned, viz., the action taken by the Council in stopping the supplies? What has changed their opinion in this matter? They talk in a high falutin' way about patriotism, and "the interests of this Province," as if they imagined that people would be stupid enough to believe them to be actuated by disinterested motives. The truth is that this last is the most miserable act of a most miserable drama. We have taken leave of honesty and honour, and well nigh everything else a people should care for.

When M. Letellier dismissed the DeBoucherville ring, M. Joly undertook to bear the responsibility, and at the first opportunity carried his case to the people. The Legislative Councillors have practically acted in precisely the same manner as did M. Letellier, and the question comes: Does M. Chapleau assume the responsibility for the action of the Council in stopping the Supplies? If he does not and will not, then he has executed a wonderful piece of legerdemain, for the motion on which M. Joly has been defeated was to all intents and purposes a condemnation of the Councillors. To vote that down, as M. Chapleau has done, is to approve tacitly and really, if not in words, the measures they took for putting an end to the Joly Administration. It is easy to trace the logical issue of this. We have allowed that the Legislative Councillors have the right to stop the Supplies at any time that they may wish to embarrass a Government. M. Letellier, a Liberal representative, in the interests of his party dismissed a ministry having at the time a majority in the House; for that he was dismissed by the Dominion Government, which meantime had become Conservative—so that now, should the power change hands at Ottawa, the Quebec Council would be dismissed. Really, everybody's "usefulness is gone." Government is reduced to the merest haphazard, and we have to go on in a happy-go-lucky fashion, which precludes the possibility of sound and honest administration. The end of it must be, as I have said, repudiation. After that the deluge, or Legislative Union.

MR. BLAKE AGAIN.

Mr. Blake has overcome his recent disgust of Canadian politics and electors, and, determined once more to give both a trial, has become a candidate for the representation of West Durham. Very many who are outside of his own particular party hope he may be returned to the Dominion Parliament, and as matters now stand he has a good prospect of success. I have before spoken of Mr. Blake in terms of almost unqualified praise, as a man remarkable both for ability and integrity, a man with such powers of intellect and conscience and speech as might make the kind of statesman we so much need. That he has conspicuous ability even his opponents will not deny; he is among our best speakers of the first rank, and no one has ever accused him of any kind of trickery. It was well and right to say all that in the day of his defeat, for it is anything but generous to put on a too critical air when speaking of a man whom fortune has deserted. Job's three friends went to comfort him, and made a mess of it by being too critical. But now that Mr. Blake is about to return to Parliament, it will be in the way of kindness to point out the defects in his spirit and manners which have led him into trouble and failure.

In the first place Mr. Blake is, by the nature of him, a visionary. One would have thought that his legal experience, bringing him into contact with men and things as they are, would have corrected this; but his imagination has held its own against all the ugly facts of political life, and once Mr. Blake is set a-going he talks of abstract rights and "the people" as if we were oppressed by landed proprietors, or by an insolent aristocracy, who had the will and the power to keep from us our just rights and privileges. There is no such thing as class dominance amongst us. "The people," whose cause Mr. Blake is so persistently and gratuitously championing, turned the Liberals out of office and Mr. Blake out of Parliament at the last elections. "The people" went to the Cabinet of which Mr. Blake was a leading member, and asked if something could not be done in the way of improving the state of affairs. No, said Mr. Cartwright, all of us put together do but make a poor, helpless "fly on the wheel"; and