

an oil painting, must convince everybody that we are subjected to the working of a policy of absurdity. If M. Chapleau would but firmly decline to lend himself to the perpetration of such degrading jobs, I am confident that he would win and keep the support of all those reasonable people who care to lift politics out of the mud.

But it is only fair to state that M. Chapleau and his friends are not altogether responsible for such mixing and muddling of contrary things, inasmuch as their predecessors in office set the example. When M. Joly seized the reins of power, the Board of Arts and Manufactures was decently defunct, so far as all practical work was concerned. But the Rouges, in the first flush of victory, wanted everything that was to be had, remunerative and honorary; so they cleared away one set of figure-heads and erected another set—just as, and no more, efficient. The return of the Blues to power suggested another change, of course. So absurdity is perpetuated.

It is surely a very unreasonable demand on the part of the Coteau Bridge devisors to ask leave to obstruct the navigation of our great national highway, the St. Lawrence, for the sake of any foreign or other scheme. If the bridge be not granted by our Parliament—as we may trust it will not be—those people will simply have to substitute a ferry for their “Canada and Atlantic” rail, in order to reach the American shore; but is it not much more rational that they should be required to do so, and that *they* should be a little hindered in their daily traffic (while retaining a good deal of construction money in their pockets), than that all Canada should be inconvenienced, and have to endure a fixed delay for every vessel ascending or descending the great arterial traffic-stream of the country? And then, if in addition to this really fatal objection, the river navigation would be seriously imperilled by the proposed bridge piers, as Mr. Page declares it would be, it only makes the case against the speculators the more complete, if that were needed. The building of the “Canada Southern” railroad gave European investors a poor opinion of Canadian morality in public enterprises, for it nearly ruined, for the time, the Great Western, which had been built by them in the faith of our fulfilling our engagements in the spirit as well as in the letter. Do not let us repeat the folly!

Why Mr. Parnell should have the extraordinary privilege of addressing the United States House of Representatives and Senate will be a puzzle to everybody in Great Britain who does not understand the condition of American politics. The gentlemen who were instrumental in getting the House to agree to the proposition—Messrs. Young, of Cincinnati, and Cox, of New York—have to count and consider the Irish vote, which is very large. They probably hoped to be outvoted on the motion, but a large percentage of the Representatives have to order themselves so as to secure the approval of the Irish. What good can come of it is not quite clear, for the Representatives know as much of the Irish and Ireland as Mr. Parnell does; he can hardly hope or expect to induce the House to side with him in his political agitation against England. The Americans are quite willing to help the distressed people of Ireland, but to give anything more than an indifferent hearing to this second-rate agitator they will not, and it is a pity that they have allowed themselves to be driven to this display of excessively bad taste for the sake of pleasing a faction of the people.

Mr. Parnell has kindly consented to visit Canada in the interests of Ireland, and has sent forward the following appeal:—

“The extreme urgency of the distress in Ireland has induced us to appeal to the people of Canada. Famine is already upon the people of the West of Ireland. Thousands are at this moment starving, and up to this time the British government has taken no step to save the people from this awful fate. We appeal, then, to the people of the Dominion to help us in saving the lives of the peasantry until we shall have succeeded in arousing the government to a sense of its duty. The necessity is pressing even if the government were to move at once, which they show no signs of doing. The machinery employed by them is so cumbersome that no relief could reach the people for about six weeks. In the interval thousands must perish. Let relief committees be formed in every city and town in the Dominion, and all the subscriptions be

forwarded immediately to the credit of the Irish Famine Relief Fund to the National Bank of Montreal. We guarantee that all money lodged to their account will be within a week used in saving the lives of the peasantry of Connaught.

CHARLES S. PARNELL.

JOHN DILLON.”

From the wording of this appeal, it is evident that Mr. Parnell has thought it better to change his programme. When he left Europe for America, undoubtedly his primary object was to conduct a political crusade in America against England; he asked for money to carry on the agitation at home, and made far more of that than of the destitution of his fellow-countrymen and women. But the practical and sober-minded Americans advised him to the effect that that play would not take among them, and he changed his *role* accordingly. What is it to be in Canada? We are told on every hand, almost, that the visit is with direct and only reference to charity—but the very appeal forwarded contains a charge against the British Government, and one that certainly is not true to fact. Mr. Parnell evinces no desire nor intention of dropping the agitator and assuming simply and solely the task of raising money on behalf of the famine-stricken people of Ireland. The movement, in all the main features of it, is political and anti-English, of course.

Even if Mr. Parnell could allow his politics to remain in abeyance for a while, it is difficult to see why an official and representative reception should be accorded to him. He may be, and probably is, a most excellent man; the political movement he is leading at present may be needful for Ireland and righteous for all concerned; the appeal for charity is good—very good, and will meet with a quick and generous response; but surely there is nothing in him or his mission that can demand or claim a reception by the municipal and other corporations. If any proof is needed that he is still a political agitator, we have it in his recent speech at Buffalo, in which he said he believed “Ireland had a right to a nationality, and if it were possible to gain one he believed that every Irishman’s blood should be shed in her defence. He did not know that a peaceful settlement could be obtained, but if not the landlords would have to go.” If that is the kind of man we are to meet with official honours, I have not yet learnt to understand the nature of either loyalty or patriotism.

It is not yet too late for Mayor Rivard to reconsider the situation and alter his plans. He should not use his civic position to commit the city of Montreal to an expression of sympathy with those who have so loudly declared themselves the bitter enemies of England.

The Irish land question can very well stand over for a little while longer; during a famine is hardly the best time for a discussion of great changes, as one party to the debate, at least, will in such a time be excited. Changes there should be in all equity, but they should be considered and made in calmer days. The matter that presses now is relief for those starving multitudes. To give anything in the shape of funds to help on a political agitation now is money wasted, and a sin. It can only tell against the people who suffer the severest pressure of the famine. Men can scarcely hope to get great benefactions from England in money, while they lose no opportunity of abusing the English people and Government, and talking treason. The duty of England and all English-speaking nations is to contribute money for the support of the impoverished Irish.

“The Maine muddle,” as it is called, has entered upon its last phase, and Republican order is being evolved out of Fusionist chaos. All parties are calmly awaiting the decision of the Supreme Court. Throughout the whole of this anomalous affair, the attitude of the people shows what a profound respect there is in the general American mind for law and order. They knew that this was one more party move and fight for office; that it was merely political and involved no great principle of social economy or Government—so they have quietly looked on upon the partizan battle. In no other country in all civilization, probably, could the same thing have happened, and it gives another proof of how well the American people know the true value of party politics, and how to govern themselves.

EDITOR.