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Parliamentary Notes

As foretold in my notes of last issue the budget debate ended on Tuesday night, or rather on Wednesday morning, of last week; and, as is generally known, the vote stood 117 to 81, or a majority of 36 for the Government. It was a regular party vote and constitutes a fair estimate of the Government's strength in the House. Since then there has been less noise, but more progress. The estimates have been passing through the committee, and the Minister of Militia has succeeded in getting all of his through. When the House adjourned on Friday night the Minister of Agriculture was on a fair way to reaching a similar end. The Premier gave notice that on Tuesday of this week he would move that henceforth Wednesdays would be taken as Government days. Another step towards prorogation, but there is a great deal still to be done. This will leave only one day in each week for private members. But all the private bills are now practically before the House. So far 117 have been introduced, and notice has been given of only 128 in all. As a rule the private legislation occupies the first part of the session, and the public or Government bills come in for attention towards the latter half of the session. The public measures are few in number, but these are all of considerable importance. It may now be safely calculated that prorogation will take place either on Thursday, the 15th, or Thursday, the 22nd of May. This latter date would give us a session of a little over three months, which is a very reasonable time, considering the peculiar circumstances of this year.

There is one gigantic project that will come before the House this week in the form of a bill to incorporate the Montreal Subway Company. There have been considerable attempts made to secure legislation in connection with the uniting of the South Shore of the St. Lawrence with the City of Montreal, and matters seem to be growing a little complicated. Two companies sought charters to build their respective bridges over the St. Lawrence, from Longueuil to Montreal. Evidently one of these bills was killed in the Railway Committee on account of lack of progress made by the company during the several years since it first obtained an act of incorporation. This obstacle being removed the way appeared clear for the second company to secure an act, and its application will be on the list this week before the Railway Committee. Meanwhile up comes this other company, with its vaster project of digging a tunnel from Longueuil, under the St. Lawrence, under St. Helen's Island, and into the eastern and northern suburbs of Montreal. Of course, if this immense undertaking presents any fair prospects of realization, the bridge question will of necessity have to fall through. The question is one of most vital importance, and one that will occupy the close attention of the Committee this week. The result will be eagerly watched, for the incorporation of such a company, with an aim of this nature, would mean the commencement of a work that would dwarf, in its proportions, the famed operation of constructing the Victoria Bridge.

The person who has not occasion nor an opportunity of noting the vast amount of railway legislation that occupies the Federal Parliament, could never dream of the extent of that network of railway that is being gradually flung across the face of this Dominion. When we consider that our immense country holds only about five millions of inhabitants and that the population of the American Republic is now almost eighty millions, it is clear that, in proportion, we enjoy far more transportation facilities by rail than do our neighbors to the south of us. And if the present Government can only be allowed to push to completion its grand scheme for the deepening and improvement of our waterways, we shall, in the very near future, outstrip the Americans in the great contest for transportation facilities. This is a big statement to make, but facts substantiate it, and the question itself is big—big with the prospects of Canada during the coming quarter of a century.

There has been considerable criticism, this session, of the Government's large expenditure of public moneys. That is perfectly right, and it is the honest duty of a faithful Opposition to do criticism. But when it is shown conclusively that every dollar spent was not only a necessity, but even a profitable investment for the Dominion, a means of increasing the country's real assets, that criticism is beneficial to the Government, creditable to the Opposition, and its results are reassuring for the people. It is not for your correspondent to pass judgment upon the leading measures introduced by the different members of the Government so far; above all, as some of these measures are not as yet entirely passed, nor beyond the stage of investigation. But there can be no hesitation in calling the attention of a reflecting public to them, and leaving them to stand for justification upon their own merits. Of these we have the programme outlined by Hon. Mr. Borden, Minister of Militia, and the highly approved of an ex-Minister of Militia in the person of Hon. Mr. Tisdale. The amendments concerning "Bills of Exchange, brought in by Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick, the Minister of Justice. These alone would furnish ample subject for serious study, as they constitute ample evidence of the departmental grasp of each of the afore-mentioned ministers. Not being a critic in the sphere of practical politics, but only a recorder of passing events, I leave to the judgment of your readers the appreciation of these few questions in their details, as I leave to their sound common sense the easy task of appreciating the whole administration as exemplified in its programme during the present session.

WHAT HAS IRELAND DONE FOR DUMB ANIMALS?

Mr. George T. Angell writes in Our Dumb Animals:

The first movement ever made in the British Parliament to obtain some law for the protection of animals from cruelty was by a distinguished English statesman, who was met by such a storm of ridicule that he abandoned the attempt. Some time later there came into the House of Commons, from Galway, on the west coast of Ireland, Dick Martin, who was noted widely for two things: (1) that he was very fond of animals, and (2) that he was equally fond of fighting everybody who he thought insulted him. He had an established reputation as a fighting man. One day he brought into the House of Commons a bill for the protection of animals from cruelty. Someone immediately gave a cock crow. Martin at once stepped out on the floor of the House of Commons and said he would be very much obliged for the name of the gentleman who had seen fit to insult him. He waited, but the gentleman did not give his name, and then went back to his seat amid the cheers of the House of Commons, and his bill became a law of Great Britain and the first law in the world for the prevention of cruelty to animals.

Some years ago when we had the privilege of addressing in one of the large halls of Philadelphia 800 of the police, with 32 officers, we were told by the ex-Mayor who presided that a large proportion of the men seated before us were of Irish birth or parentage, and so we related the above incident and then told them that it was a proud thing for old Ireland that the first law in the world for the prevention of cruelty to animals came from the brave heart of one of her sons. We need not say that this statement was followed by great applause, and will probably never be forgotten by any one of those present.

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MGR. FALCONIO.

Mgr. Falconio For Washington

The Washington correspondent of The New York Freeman's Journal writes: In the first week of May it will be one year since Cardinal Martinelli received his elevation and took the accompanying oath to appear at the thresholds of the Apostles within a year. At the present writing there is no sign that the Pope has dispensed his delegate from this condition, and it is reasonable to look for Cardinal Martinelli's departure at any moment. Those close to the news admit that Mgr. Falconio will undoubtedly be the next delegate Apostolic to the United States. This prelate is now in Canada, but has recently spent much time in this country. Reliable correspondents say that the promotion was promised Mgr. Falconio, and this Pontiff is noted for his fidelity in fulfilling promises. In some quarters the fact that the Monsignor is a Franciscan monk does not tend to make him popular, but it is also rumored that henceforth all delegates Apostolic sent to the United States will be members of the religious order. This is Rome's answer to a certain indiscreet sermon preached here some years ago. The new delegate lately spent nearly six weeks in Chicago, and this visit shows which way the wind blows. The great city of the west is causing more solicitude just now than any part of the country, and it is necessary that the new delegate be thoroughly informed on the situation. Another settlement which will come after the departure of Mgr. Martinelli is the selection of the next rector of the Catholic University. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will have the duty of selecting Mgr. Conaty's successor. It is a foregone conclusion that he will not succeed himself, since he has been elevated to a titular see and his name has been sent to Rome in connection with vacant sees. When the first rector was removed the Board of Trustees

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tees stated that henceforth all rectors would be selected from the priests, and not bishops. The next question is the most momentous question now before the American hierarchy. The Catholic University has reached a period of existence when it must be pronounced either a success or a failure. The past two years have been hard ones, and there were times when the scholars of the country have been tempted to declare that it has failed. But those who know the struggles which must come to all young institutions are loath to take such a pessimistic view. The next year must see a centralization of Catholic scholarship force and thought. They must see the university attract to it the scholarship which admittedly exists in the American Catholic Church, and they have the names of the university men connected with the great movements which are stirring the world and shaping the destiny of the nation. The upbuilding of a national university hers with the millions of Carnegie behind should incite Catholic scholars and scientists to renewed effort. But, in the opinion of men of letters here, the Catholic University can only succeed by casting out all mediocre material and gathering to itself the master minds of the time

THE ASSASSIN IN RUSSIA.

St. Petersburg, April 15.—The Minister of the Interior, M. Siplagune, was shot at and fatally wounded at 1 o'clock this afternoon in the lobby of the Ministerial Offices by a man who held a pistol close to the Minister's person. The wounded man died at 2 p.m.

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The Pope of the Vatican and the Pope of "Saturday Night."

It is a great pity that the Pope of Saturday Night has felt himself called upon to differ from the Pope of the Vatican. The two in harmony would have been a great power for good in the world, but when the two are in opposition, the effect must be disastrous. The fact that they are in opposition goes to show that two infallible Popes, at the same time, are too much, and cannot consistently reign except on the old grammar principle that two negatives make an affirmative.

His comparison of the Pope's encyclical in favor of Christian unity, with the deliberations of the Protestant ministers for the same purpose, recently held in Toronto, is sadly out of place. There can be no unity where the principle of unity is absent. There can be no unity where there is no recognized authority or head. The scheme of unity on other lines has been often tried, and has as often failed. The Protestant principle being that the Holy Ghost inspires each individual, and that each one must be his own pope. If this principle is a principle or truth, it places the Holy Ghost in rather a strange light. It makes him the author of all the sects, and if so, of all the contradictory doctrines taught by the sects. Unity will come and it will come through communion with the Pope. There is no one else has any authority in matters of religion. They have opinions, that is all. No one else claims it, nor is it recognized in any one else. It is difficult to accept an infallible Pope, what must it be to contemplate the edifying spectacle of millions of individuals who claim infallibility?

Saturday Night apparently does not recognize the right and duty which the Pope exercises in proclaiming to the world the things that are of God, and the peace of the world. If not, who else is to speak? But he will say: I am a Protestant. What is a Protestant? Will Saturday Night give an intelligent definition of Protestant? Does Saturday Night give his views on Cathedra, and does not claim infallibility? There is a story told of a certain other old lady entertaining the views of Saturday Night, who went to Rome to convert the Pope from the errors of Popery, and the interview ended in her own conversion.

The writer says that the decisive "measures" and "enforcing," recommended by Leo XIII., are opposed to the spread or practice of the teachings of Christ. It is a pity this writer is not in Rome to advise His Holiness as to the proper methods of spreading and teaching the doctrines of Christ. His presence in Rome no doubt would keep Rome from many blunders Rome, we are told in history, was once before saved by a goose.

Then, again, in order to show what tyrants Popes have been, and may be, if they had the power, he instances the persecution of Galileo.

The story of Galileo has been and is so well told, and so often repeated and has proved so serviceable to numerous pretenders wishing to palm off their stupid dreams for some new discovery in science, that it is almost a pity to spoil the story by contradicting it. Yet, the story as he tells it, is false from beginning to end. The trouble here with Saturday Night is he got his history at second hand, and those informations at second hand may be at tenth hand, should be cautious.

How often has it been proved by Protestant authors that the Pope is anti-Christ, that he has hoofs and horns, that he has forbidden the Bible in the vulgar tongue. Granted permission to sin, put the Blessed Virgin in the place of Christ, paid divine worship to images, and all that kind of doctrine and practices? Given Protestant history and there is no difficulty in proving all this and more. The fact is that the channels of Protestant history, in its relation

to the Catholic Church, being so grossly and wickedly corrupted, it is easy to account for the blundering ignorance with which Protestants generally approach Catholic affairs.

The truth is that the heliocentric theory was taught in Rome by Cardinal Nicholas Cusanus just one hundred years before the birth of Galileo, and afterwards by Copernicus, a Catholic priest and canon, who was professor of astronomy in Rome in 1500.

Galileo was not condemned for teaching this theory, nor was the theory itself condemned. What, then, are the facts in the case? It appears that he wanted to make it a religious question and reconcile it with the Scriptures. No censure was passed on himself or his theory. He was simply required to speak as a mathematician and confine himself to his discoveries and his scientific proofs, without meddling with the Scriptural question. But with this he was not satisfied, he would not obey. For this he was cited in 1633 to appear at Rome and was condemned, the question turning on his contempt for authority, and not at all on the truth or falsity of his doctrine. While at Rome he resided in a splendid apartment in the palace of the Fiscal of the Inquisition. Not in a dungeon. These are the main facts, though much may be said on the same lines. Saturday Night giving a genuine quotation from a genuine brief of any Pope condemning any scientific proposition, proved to be such, will give to his readers a discovery such as has not yet been made. That he can quote plenty of history to this effect there is no doubt, but that is not enough.

The late Clarke Wallace suffered a martyrdom of mental agony on account of the "aggressions of Rome," and of the Pope's unlawful interference with the liberties of the people. It is to be hoped he is now at rest, but it seems Saturday Night has done his mantle.

Corn Laws Reimposed on Britain

London, April 15.—Mr. Kruger, besides staggering humanity, has driven the last nail in the coffin of free trade. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach has required considerable pressure and he has yielded reluctantly. Sir Robert Giffen, who was once the hope of the stern, unbending Cobdenites, has been coaching him in the columns of The Times, and at last the cue is taken. The taxation of corn is resumed. Although the abolition of the corn laws was the supreme end of Mr. Cobden's agitation, which converted England into the pioneer free trade nation, the hands on the dial plate, as devout Cobdenites will say, are now turned back. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach sought to minimize the importance of the new taxation by describing it as a revival of the registration duty on wheat and flour, which Mr. Lowe ought never to have repealed, and which had nothing to do with a protective system, but Sir William Harcourt did not allow the House to be deceived by sophistries, and characterized the taxation of food as incompatible with a free trade system.

The budget speech created a great sensation in the Commons, where both the extent of the deficiency and the nature of the new taxes were surprises. Experts had estimated the deficit inaccurately at £20,000,000 of £25,000,000 sterling. It was £26,821,000, and was increased to £28,000,000 by the sea transport of soldiers and gratuities on the close of the war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer declined to tax sugar, tobacco or wine, but added a penny to the income tax, a penny to cheque stamps, and introduced a three-penny registration duty on grain and flaxseed on flour and meal. After providing £5,150,000 sterling by new taxation he proposed a fresh loan of thirty-two millions, covering the balance by Exchequer bills.

The budget speech contained fewer jokes than usual, for Sir Michael Hicks-Beach appreciated apparently the seriousness of his departure from the policy handed down by two generations of free-trade financiers. It was received with mixed signs of doubt and approval on the Government side, and with evidence of delight and relief by the Opposition benches. The demoralized Liberal party had at last found an issue on which all factions could unite. The commonest comment made was an expression of surprise that the Government had waited until peace was in sight before abandoning Cobden's principles, and had restored the registration duties on grain and flour for the sake of raising 2,650,000 pounds, which might have been obtained by increasing the sugar duties.

The budget speech was a clear evidence that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had yielded to pressure from Mr. Chamberlain. The Secretary for the Colonies was evidently determined to have the duties on foodstuffs before the assembling of the Imperial conference,

when the colonial Premier came to the coronation, so that there could be some basis for the preferential treatment of Canada and the other colonies.

Mr. Balfour's admission that a communication had been received from the Boer leaders through Lord Kitchener served to explain the extraordinary Cabinet conferences. The attempts made by news associations and despatches from Holland to minimize the message as a demand for direct wire communication with Utrecht was wholly successful. The British Government had evidently been soundly respecting the preliminaries of peace. The press is on guard against Missions, but there is a hopeful feeling that the end of the war is near.

There is a decided lack of enthusiasm in the press comments on the budget this morning. Radical papers condemn the proposed duties on corn and flour, and even one or two of the minor Unionist papers regard the imposition as a tactical blunder. They think it would have been wiser to add a trifle more to the loan. Leading Unionist organs, such as The Standard and The Telegraph, have nothing but praise for the duties, but they call upon the Chancellor to reconsider his proposal to add a penny to the tax on cheques. This new departure has already caused great irritation in the banking world.

THE CATHOLIC PAPER.

The Catholic paper is a Catholic institution, which the daily is not. The Catholic paper voices, in its editorial page, Catholic opinion—which the daily does not. The Catholic paper makes it a business to correct misrepresentations of Catholic doctrine, to defend Catholic rights to praise Catholic achievements, to promote Catholic interests—which secular papers do not and cannot do. The Catholic paper is a Catholic truth society in itself; it goes into a hundred secular newspaper offices, where it silently, but effectively, dissolves bigotry by the light of its information and the vigor of its tone. When Catholics are attacked by new movements of bigotry, what is the fortress and outpost of their defense? The Catholic paper. When Catholics are ignored or inadequately recognized in public matters, what is the medium of protest? The Catholic paper. What cultivates among Catholics the proper interest in Catholic news, events and doctrines? The Catholic paper.

THE POPE IN EXCELLENT HEALTH.

Rome, April 15.—The Pope today granted a private audience to Burke Cockran of New York, who tells me he found the Pontiff amazingly stronger than at his last audience five years ago. Pope Leo showed wonderful memory, recollecting all the circumstances about Mr. Cockran and New York affairs, speaking in a firm voice. From another source I learn that the Pope has expressed satisfaction at the new bonds of union between the United States and the Holy See, resulting from the mission of Governor Tait with a view to a settlement of the Philippine question.

SENT TO THE PENITENTIARY.

The two burglars, Lawrence and Staley, who recently attempted to rob St. Mary's Church, Barrie, have been sent to the Penitentiary to serve five years each.

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