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Artist and Editor
Associate Editor

J. W. BENGOUGH.
PHILLIPS THOMPSON.



Comments

ON THE

Cartoons.

NO WIGGLE TO THE WORMS.—The Dominion House has been dissolved, and on March 5th next ensuing the general election of members to compose the new Parliament will be held. Sir John and his party are going to the country on the old N.P. issue, though with a

notable absence of the jaunty confidence in the attractive power of that bait even amongst the loose fishes of the electorate. This doubt is expressed in the semi-official announcements of some extraordinary commission which is to proceed to Washington, "at the invitation of the American authorities," to negotiate for Reciprocity in natural products. We simply don't believe that any such invitation has been received; or, if so, it has not been to discuss Partial Reciprocity, a proposition over which no American statesman will consent to waste a moment's breath. Unless Secretary Blaine is a most untruthful person, this alleged invitation is a cock-and-bull story invented at Ottawa for purely political ends. Mr. Blaine was interviewed only a few days before the dissolution of Parliament was announced, and he most emphatically declared that there was nothing whatever before the American Government touching the question of trade with Canada, nor was he aware of any such matter soon coming up in any shape or form. Moreover, the dates have a decidedly fishy look about them. In the announcement made in the *World* of February 3rd (which had all the appearance of an official document), it was stated that the Canadian delegates would start for Washington on March 4th, the date of the opening of the new Con-

gress, and, curiously enough, the polling here was fixed for March the 5th, the day our "commissioners" will arrive there, and before they can do anything. This, it will be observed, neatly provides for a very catching hustings cry. "Fellow Canadians, don't put a stumbling block in the way of our Government in their effort to secure the great boon of Partial Reciprocity. Therefore, don't vote against Sir John, for if you do the Americans will understand that you are opposed to Reciprocity. Vote for the Government!" It is a clever dodge, and perhaps it will work. But it is all based on the supposition that the Americans will consider a Partial Reciprocity scheme, and once more, we repeat, they will not. Meanwhile it is not unlikely that the Hitt resolution may be passed by both Houses of the present Congress. This makes a square offer of Unrestricted Reciprocity, and Sir John will have to say, before polling day, whether or not he will accept it. He will, no doubt, try to evade this question by saying that it is the proposal of a moribund Congress, but the people of Canada ought to know that the new Congress may be counted upon as ten times more favorable to trade extension than the present one. This event, if it should happen, will put the astute old gentleman in a tight box. But at present the issue is plainly one between Unrestricted Reciprocity and the N.P. The Government has confessedly no other bait on hand but the old worms, and the wiggle has utterly departed from them. "High wages for workmen," "big prices for farmers," and "tall chimneys for every village,"—all these silvery phrases of past campaigns are only fitted now to raise a laugh.

'TIS THE VOICE OF THE VENTRILOQUIST.—Should the Hitt resolution be passed, what would Sir John say? Yes or no to Unrestricted Reciprocity? If he were entirely his own boss just now he would say Yes, for nobody knows better than he what a boon it would be to the people of Canada as a whole. But he is at present "in the hands of his friends" of the Red Parlor, and perforce must say No—or shuffle with the question until after March 5th, meaning No all the time. Sir John is getting old, but he hasn't got softening of the brain; and when he talks "loyalty" bosh, saying in effect that trade in natural products is "loyal," while trade in manufactures is treasonable, the explanation is that for the time being he is only a lay figure worked by the Ventriloquial Combines. It is the Professor's voice not the Premier's that we hear.



HA! Our other Sir John has scored a point at Washington. Contrary to the sanguine predictions of all the "eminent authorities" over there, the Supreme Court has granted the writ of "prohibition" asked for, to restrain the court in Alaska from further dealing with a Canadian sealer seized for fishing in Behring's sea. The whole ridiculous difficulty is now likely to be argued out before the same august body. We congratulate Sir John Thompson on his hit. And now let us enquire when his eminent colleague, Mr. Foster, is going to "get a move on" and apply for a "writ of prohibition" against the liquor traffic. Perhaps it has slipped his mind that this is what he was put in the Cabinet to look after.

THE OLD FLAG—THE OLD LEADER—THE OLD POLICY.
—Empire.

And apparently the old chestnuts.

THE "Disgusted Conservative" and the "Old Reformer" who slates the leaders of his party with intense bitterness, are looming to the front in fine shape just now. Making a very considerable discount for the number of "Old Reformers" who are simply Tory editors in disguise and *vice versa*, there is no question that there is a vast amount of genuine dissatisfaction with existing parties among those who have at one time or other been their enthusiastic devotees. Under the spoils system this is