

PICTORIAL TIMES

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

AT

1592 NOTRE DAME STREET 1592

MONTREAL.

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PROPRIETOR AND MANAGER.

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MONTREAL, MARCH 19, 1887

THE WEEK.

The fuller returns of elections
coming in during the week place the
absolute majority of the Government
beyond a doubt. It is the part of wis-
dom, as well as of patriotism, to acknow-
ledge this fact, and to settle down to
business at once. We have had quite
sufficient excitement during the past
six months.

Another illusion is that, by some
scheme or other, the government may
be tripped up on a vote at the begin-
ning of the Session. The device will
probably be the Northwest question.
But the attempt will prove a failure.
For every vote thus won from Quebec,
one or more will be lost in Ontario. It
must be remembered that, last year, in
similar circumstances, the Government
got a majority of 96—the largest in our
Parliamentary history—and composed
of over thirty Ontario Liberals.

The true policy is to let well enough
alone. The Liberals have got the Govern-
ment of Quebec; the Conservatives
retain that of Ottawa. The popular
vote has willed it so and there is an
end. The duty of the opposition in
Quebec, as well as in Ottawa, is to
make the most of the situation, and to
give the Government fair play for the
time being.

The Federal Government have quite
enough to attend to, without being
hampered by factious opposition. A
great deal remains to be done for the
improvement of the North West; the
question of free canals will require to
be settled, so as not to cripple the re-
venue, and the fisheries difficulty de-
mands very careful handling indeed.

As to the question of repeal, we can-
not too often repeat what we have al-
ready said in these columns. Secession
is dead, as it deserves. As the issue
should never have been raised, so let us
hope that it will not be revived. In the
speech from the throne, at the opening

of the Nova Scotia Legislature, the sub-
ject was very wisely shelved.

Canada has hitherto been remarkably
sound on the question of divorce, pre-
sented a marked contrast to her
neighbors. But she must have a care
that legal and judicial cranks do not
spoil her record. A judgment was ren-
dered in Toronto, last week, to the
effect that any married Canadian, who
crosses the lines and marries again in
the United States, cannot on his return
be prosecuted for bigamy, provided
that he did not leave Canada with in-
tent to commit the offense.

The tide of immigration is setting in
briskly. The bulk of the new comers
are bound for the North West, where
the Government and Pacific Railway
are interested in having them settled
as soon and in as large numbers as pos-
sible, in order to recoup the vast out-
lay on these territories. But a consid-
erable fraction of immigrants remain in
the older Provinces where they are
welcome.

The government have very properly
set their face against all classes of pau-
per immigration, and even the system
of assisted passages—which had its uses
—has been suspended. But in every
other respect immigration has been
encouraged and the result this year
promises to be exceptionally gratifying.
This may be looked upon as another
sign of Canadian prosperity.

So far as the Province of Quebec is
concerned, in spite of the wonderful
fecundity of the French Canadian race
and the effects of their native thrift,
the demand for labor is greater than
the supply, and foreign immigration
becomes a necessity. In the Eastern
Townships, the Island of Montreal and
Argenteuil valley, there is a clamor for
farm hands which cannot be satisfied
while, in the city of Montreal, skilled
workmen, mechanics and the better
class of laborers, with domestic ser-
vants, are in constant demand.

The affairs of Ireland have taken an
unexpected turn. General Buller, one of
the heroes of the Sudan, who was sent
out to superintend the enforcement
of the law, has realized the exceptional
difficulties of the situation, and has so
reported to the government. His report
is indeed so strong that the Parnell-
ites and Gladstonians rely upon it to de-
mand the stoppage of evictions and the
early production of land legislation.

Another fearful accident on the Bos-
ton and Providence Railway brings
before the public the urgent necessity
of doing something to prevent such
terrible catastrophes. Here was a
second case of a bridge breaking down,
while loaded trains passed over it, and
over thirty unfortunate passengers were
hurled into eternity.

The Quebec Legislature is now in
session, as are the Nova Scotia and
Ontario Provincial Parliament. Let us
hope that the former will follow the
example of the latter and settle down
to business from the start. The new
Government deserves a fair trial and
will doubtless get it.

BRIC A BRAC.

Once more in the sugar bush, where
we broke off last week. The sound of
voices is coming up the slopes, and the
whole party invited to the festival is
gathered under the maples. They bring
baskets of provisions, hams and should-

ers, eggs, and the indispensable allow-
ance of strong waters.

One by one, the guests approach the
huge vessel where the maple water is
boiling and bubbling. Each one holds
in his hand a wooden basin filled with
fresh clean snow, and into that the hos-
pitable host ladles out the golden
stream. With the accompaniment of
new bread, this dish is delicious and
not satiating as other saccharine com-
positions.

After this preliminary repast, the
guests indulge in various amusements.
The older folk sit together at the cabin
door, chatting of their sugar days, while
young people sing, flirt, promenade
and enjoy themselves as only the young
know how. Some go about gathering
dry branches and wood to keep up the
fire, and others saunter a little out of
sight on a visit to the demi-johns hidden
behind the rocks.

The host gives the signal for taffy
or *tire* making. This part of the fun
is reserved for the girls. They throw
aside their mantles, push back their
hoods, tuck up their sleeves and plunge
their white fingers into the rapidly
cooling masses of syrup. The girls get
ruddy with the exertion; they pant,
they strain, they duck their heads when
their lovers creep behind to steal a
kiss, or they run behind the shame-
less robber and slap his naughty cheeks
with their sticky palms.

Under the rapid kneading the dark
syrup becomes glossier, then it reddens,
next it grows a golden hue, till finally
it gets whiter and whiter, thinner and
thinner, and the taffy is done. Then
the principal repast takes place. All
the provisions are brought out and
spread on a long table. Maple water
and sugar are the accompaniments of
every dish. The feast winds up by the
celebrated maple omelet.

Whatever Soyer or Francatelli might
say, this is a pleasant dish, though too
rich to be partaken of copiously, and it
ought to be difficult of digestion, con-
sisting of eggs hard boiled and broken
into maple syrup, slightly diluted and
piping hot. Exercise is necessary after
such a meal and dancing begins.

A fiddler is soon found. He leans
his left cheek lovingly on the instru-
ment, and has just run his bow across
the discordant strings, when suddenly
a loud crash is heard in the gorges of
the mountain. It is the roar of the
storm. The maple tops writhe and
twist in the sweep of the winds that
come up in eddies from the river far
beneath. The sky is suddenly darkened.
The snow falls thick and fast. The
portents are sufficiently significant to
startle the whole party. The dance is
broken up and every one scampers
away as fast as he can.

The maple and the birch are the
kings of the Canadian forest. Two
strong, tall, unbending trees, they stand
as fit pillars to the entrance of a boreal
climate. For fuel they rank first among
hard woods, and each has its special
advantage. The maple is more appre-
ciated for its heating properties; the
birch is more valuable for its bark.

The ash of the birch is a fair thing to
see, white as snow and soft as flour.
The leaves of the maple and the bark
of the birch are national emblems in
Canada, being associated with the
history of the country and entering
largely into its domestic comforts.

The annals of New France may be

compared to an album of maple leave
bound in a scroll of birchen bark and
Le Moine, of Quebec, has adopted the
idea for the title of a series of his works.
The solid beams of the Canadian house
are turned out of columns of birch, as
sound, if not so fragrant, as the cedars of
Lebanon, and the furniture of the
Canadian home is wrought of bird-eye
maple, susceptible of the velvetest
polish, and more beautiful, because
more variegated, than walnut or mahog-
any.

PERSONAL.

Lieut. Governor Masson has returned
from Bermuda, considerably improved
in health.

Mr. W. E. Sandford, a wealthy dry
goods merchant of Hamilton, has been
raised to the senate.

It is not generally known that General
Buller, of Sudan, and just now of
Kerry fame, has a brother in Montreal,
practising as an oculist.

Archbishop Taché, of St. Boniface, is
slowly convalescing from a grave illness,
at the mother house of the Grey Nuns,
in Montreal.

Madame Christine Nilsson has become
the Countess Miranda, and will probably
retire from the stage, taking up her
permanent residence in Paris.

Dr. Wolfred Nelson, late of Montreal,
is sojourning in Central America, whence
he writes glowing letters about the
country to one of our city dailies.

A number of Montrealers are seeking
health and recreation in the everglades
of Florida. Among these are Dr. Rod-
dick, and Messrs Donald Macmaster
and Robert McGibbon.

Rev. Sam. Jones is in Montreal doing
remarkably well. His discourses took
from the first and his eccentricities
seem to suit this climate better than
was expected.

The Abaté Passaglia, a great theolo-
gian and once a shining light in the
Jesuit order, has just passed away at
the age of 73. He was a man of extra-
ordinary eloquence.

Hon. James McShane, Quebec com-
missioner of Public Works, has resigned
his seat in the Montreal City Council,
and a new election has been ordered to
replace him.

Mr. J. J. Curran, Q. C. and M. P. will
deliver an address on St. Patrick's
night, at Westport, Ont., and the in-
habitants of that locality may expect a
treat.

Count de Lesseps, as a citizen of the
world, and one of the most illustrious
of contemporaneous Frenchmen, has
been received with exceptional honor
at Berlin.

Mr. L. A. Senecal, formerly member
of the House of Commons, and President
of the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation
Co., has been named Senator for the
division of Mille Isles.

Ex. Alderman Gilman, of Montreal,
has been elevated to the Legislative
Council of Quebec, in the room of
Hon. Mr. Webb, appointed sheriff of St.
Francis district.

Mr. W. Bell Dawson, a son of Sir
William Dawson, has been an
assistant Toronto engineer. He is a
graduate and medallist of McGill College
and a graduate of the Paris Ecole des
Ponts et Chaussées.

Hon. Mr. Blake is said to be in poor
health, and there is talk of his resign-
ing the leadership of the Liberal party.
It is to be hoped that the rumor is
premature. Canada can ill spare a man
of Mr. Blake's abilities and character.

The election of Mr. Dawson for
Algoma seems at last assured, after a
great deal of counting and counter-
counting. Mr. Dawson is well known by
his famous road from Port Arthur to
Lake of the Woods.