

TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

OLD SERIES.—17TH YEAR.

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DRAWING NEAR.

As the 30th of June approaches, the interest in our Bible Competition increases. Those who have already competed can do so again upon the same terms as before. The long lists of acknowledgments from prize-winners which we from time to time publish, is sufficient evidence of the disposition and ability of the publisher to carry out his engagements. Those competing during the next few weeks are almost certain to secure one of the larger prizes in the middle and consolation rewards.

THE PAST PARLIAMENTARY SESSION.

Looking back upon the session just closed no feeling can arise save pity for the condition to which political life in this country has come. This we do not say with the characteristic spirit of the pessimist who cannot see anything bright in sunshine, nor is it penned from the standpoint of the fault-finder, who sets out to be critical and condemnatory even where he is grossly ignorant. To the common-sense view of the case we must once more address ourselves.

Now, how much really valuable legislation has been introduced into the Dominion Legislature during the past session? How many of the "acts to amend an act,"—we are speaking of the session just passed—have been worth an hour of the country's time? We are aware that the "pablis" is ever revising its own opinion," as Carlyle puts it, and that experience of the operation of any new legislative measure must tell in the scale.

But a number of our representatives never cease tinkering with acts, and the changes they induce the House to make are seldom worth the time lost. As a class the lawyers of the House are in this respect the greatest nuisance. Nor do they tinker and change always, or even in a majority of cases, because they believe that the proposed change must be for the better; but purely for the sake of getting their names before the House, into the papers, and before their constituents and the country. The writer has often seen an entire day wasted over a matter of business that the City Council of Toronto would dispose of in fifteen minutes. A great number of our public men who are regarded good speakers are mere wind-bags. They pretend to study a question, and really believe that they have studied it; but when they stand up in the House to talk, any person can see that they have looked merely upon the surface. It is true that a great number of these wind-bags talk in such a way as to convince the listener that they have some smartness; for as a rule the wind-bag is a lawyer. The trade of a lawyer is to talk; and above all other things it is his trade to talk from the standpoint that suits his own interest. He is contented looking at the surface as he is at the heart of a matter; and he can make a speech, quoting Broome and Bacon, about

a broom-handle. There are two or three legal gentlemen belonging to the House of Commons who are conspicuous at the bar for ability to apply principles, and to present a case; such men are also prominent in the role of legislator.

But the great bulk of talking members, for all that, are wind-bags; and there is a fair proportion of that class of orator to be found in the Privy Council. Anybody who will turn to *Hansard's* reports for the last session, he will find that more than half the session was wasted in discussing of "scandals," and the hanging of a malefactor, properly sentenced, by a proper tribunal of the country. The remaining half was devoted to business; but the amount of useful business done could be accomplished, if one and all were bent upon work and not talk, in a week.

It may be, however, that much of the talk, not pertaining to business during the late session of Parliament did some good. It revealed the fact, which some charitable people refused before to believe, that even those Canadian public men of the highest repute for probity, are simply adventurers, and engage in political life for the furtherance of personal ends. The time will, we suppose, come in Canada when men will sit in the Parliament as they do in England, without pay; and when the honour of a seat in Parliament will be a higher ambition, than the emoluments of a seat. In Canada the politician is nearly always on the alert to "turn a dollar" for himself or his friends; in England money is not the consideration, and you never have presented to your gaze such a spectacle as the letting of that contract to Ouderdonk.

But corruption is not alone the rule in political affairs in this country, but it is the rule proclaimed. "To the victors belong the spoils" is the motto of Sir John and his party; and his papers have gloried in heralding the dishonorable declaration.

No change may ever be expected to come while the present political parties rule the country. They are in the ruts, the same ruts in which they have travelled since, at least, Confederation, and they could hardly be expected to cast off these methods. They have become not the second, but the first, nature of party. Relief then can come only from the young men; but there is no ground whatever for hope if the young men will blind themselves to the car of the old political sinners. We all rejoiced the other day at the establishment of the Young Men's Liberal Union; but now to our sorrow we perceive that this body is to be hitched on to the creaky car and wheezy horses of the parent.

As for Conservatism, there is no talk so far of establishing a young men's party. Devotion to the chief who has led them as king to victory, devotion to the party itself, seem to absorb the attention and the enthusiasm of the followers. Of the two parties—Conservative and Reformer—we regard the former as the abler, and the latter as the purer. And we have seen, through a very long and melancholy experience, that virtue and mediocrity never win

in any field; either in politics, which is the lowest of the callings, or in theology, which is the highest.

Emphatic proof of poverty of brains in the Reform party has been given us during the late session at Ottawa. With an opportunity such as seldom comes to an Opposition, that party returns from the Capital weaker and more discredited than it has been since the day that John A. Macdonald rode triumphant to power upon National Policy.

MRS. PRESIDENT CLEVELAND.

At last the President has taken his bride, and the *New York Sun* announces, in large black letters at the top of a voluminous report of the wedding, that he has "whisked her away to the mountains for the honeymoon." Miss Folsom is said to be about 22; and is described as a sensible, cultivated and very handsome young person. But judging from the descriptions that we have read of the young woman from time to time, the portraits with which the United States press has been teeming are not at all like her. In these portraits there is a heaviness and a rigidity of outline, a nose slightly turned up and a head by many odds too large.

Now Miss Folsom as described many weeks ago was said to have a

Clear broad white forehead crowned low down with hair

Of gold and brown, more soft than sleep or tears; Nose neither small nor great but straight and fair— Like sought but smooth sea shells her delicate ears.

Look on this picture, and on the coarse, flaring, vulgar cartoons in the *New York Sun* and other American papers, and see if you will not feel tempted to use strong language.

We are glad for the sake of Miss Folsom—that was—that this wedding is over; for if anything in the world was ever thoroughly sickening it was the deluge of newspaper writing that spread over the States respecting this match. Our American brethren may sneer as much as they like about the fuss our English brothers make over social matters; but surely in this respect they have fairly beaten England herself. "All these dozens of columns of matter is something more than mere 'newspaper talk'; it is nothing less than snobbery, and snobbery of the most fattest, vulgar kind. Fancy setting out the entire wedding service, the very words of the ceremony, in print, and interpolating them with the observations of the journalist!

Now this sort of thing might be excused if Mr. Cleveland were very distinguished as a statesman, and Miss Folsom prominent as an artist, authoress, philanthropist, or even actress. But Mr. Cleveland is like his predecessor, the late Mr. Garfield, by no means one of the most distinguished statesmen in the United States, but a mere compromise. Let us make ourselves plain. Supposing that in the Democratic party there be two very distinguished men, each one aspiring to Presidential honors. Each man has a following, and one is about as powerful as the other. The convention is called to choose a candidate for the Presidency, and the balloting commences. Neither will give way

before his rival, and the consequence is a threatened split in the party, which would mean a complete wreck of its fortunes. Then comes in the "dark horse," a man without much name or individuality; a sort of Chips-and-Porridge who lacks opponents just as he lacks followers. Thus came in Garfield, and in much a similar way came Mr. Cleveland, whose marriage has shaken republican social life to its foundations.

Now we repeat that unless the man is distinguished in some notable and worthy way there is no justification for all this cap-tosing. But his bachelor life has not been above reproach; indeed upon his personal character there is a stain that all the waters in the Mississippi cannot remove; nor all the printer's ink in the Republic cover up. However, we repeat, we are glad that it is over. Through a Washington correspondent we learn that nearly \$100,000 worth of presents reached the White House. Several American Ministers and Consuls-General notified the State Department that their presents had been sent. The costly presents were displayed in the State dining-room, and were inspected by the guests after supper. Secretary Lamar presented a cut glass smelling bottle studded with diamonds; Secretary and Mrs. Endicott gave four solid silver candlesticks, large and massive; the Postmaster General a brooch in the form of a bowknot of Etruscan gold, the edges bordered with diamonds; the Secretary of the navy and Mrs. Whitney a brooch in the shape of a branch with leaves and flowers, all formed in diamonds; Collector Hedden, a platinum salt dish on solid gold with seed pearl studding the feet; with this was sent a pepper mill bearing an engraved scene of the revenue cutter waiting for the surveyor to go down the bay to meet the *Noordland*; from Surveyor Beattie, of the New York Custom House, came diamond bracelets with appropriate Scriptural quotations in Hebrew on the clasp; from Congressman Campbell, a solid gold horseradish dish with a garden scene picked out in diamonds representing the opening in the third act of "Faust"; from Governor Hill, of New York, an elaborate jewel case, with a French music box attachment that plays delicious airs each time a jewel is taken out or returned; from Hubert O. Thompson, a valuable jeweled Chinese clock made in Peking, and valued at \$900. Not one-third of the presents have been opened. From Mr. Bissel came a large diamond flower to be worn as a pin or as a pendant.

MR. RAMSAY'S VOLUME OF VERSE.

Mr. Andrew Ramsay's volume, "Muriel and Other Poems," A. Hovey & Co., Toronto, has made its appearance, and for some promise expressed in these columns some time ago. The book contains 86 poems, clearly printed on good paper, and is bound. We have declared it to be one of the best volumes of song that we have seen in the Canadian press, and we are glad to see it, affected or not.