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## Current Events.

### THE WEEK.

The result of the elections for the Dominion Parliament, so far as they have gone, has been a great accession of numerical strength to the Government. Indeed, their victory would seem to be unprecedented in the history of this country. To those who are in the habit of taking something like a calm and dispassionate view of public affairs, it will hereafter be an interesting and instructive duty to trace the various causes which together have produced the gross results of last Thursday's voting. In the general election of 1867 the Country gave the late Ministry a majority of nearly two supporters to one opponent in the House then elected. The present appeal to the constituencies will, it is now plain, give even a larger majority against Sir John Macdonald and in favour of his opponents. We cannot believe that this extraordinary change of public sentiment is wholly due to the revelations respecting the Pacific Railway Charter. We are aware it is customary for the advocates of the Government to say that the result of the elections is simply the verdict of the people upon the corruption of their predecessors in dealing with that Charter. Of those who formerly voted on the Conservative side there are no doubt many who changed sides on the ostensible ground of the Pacific Scandal. To some of these the Railway Scandal furnished the real as well as ostensible cause of alienation from their party. To others, perhaps, this question was only the ostensible ground. No doubt, some persons, from various causes, desired and intended a change, and the disclosures which have brought misfortune on their party served as a ready and available ground of retreat into the opposite camp. But, apart from this or any other specific question, there are, we believe, causes and influences, inherent in the political party system, which have largely contributed to the overthrow of one party and the triumph of the other. It has been well observed that the unbroken ascendancy of a party cannot outlast a generation; and experience shows that a single generation is accustomed to witness many party vicissitudes. Now it may be said that the party led by Sir John Macdonald have with slight exception predominated for the last twenty years, which is nearly a generation. It is obvious that very few of the voters who exercised the franchise in 1864 went to the polls in 1874. Comparatively speaking those who were active at the former era have passed from the arena, and those who sustain the fight at the present election are a new generation. There are considerations which operate powerfully to induce young politicians to choose the side of the Opposition. The inevitable fact that there will be sooner or later a change of Government is a sufficient consideration to prevent many young and ambitious men from identifying themselves with the party to which such change must be unfavourable. And it is clear that these reasons operate the stronger, the longer the Administration may have continued in power.

In the meantime the party which so long remained in opposition have suddenly found themselves in possession of the Government, and if the late elections are to be taken as a test, the country has manifested a singular degree of confidence in the new rulers. It is to be hoped that that confidence will be shown to be well founded. The new Government will at the outset have such an exceptionally large majority in the House as to make them perfectly independent of the censure of their opponents. Assuming the elements of cohesion amongst the Ministry and their supporters to be as strong as they claim, they will be able to carry their measures and pursue their policy unhampered by the pressure of a strong Opposition. They may well bear in mind, however, that the greater their opportunity of doing good the greater their responsibility in the exercise of that opportunity. The country, although trusting, will be watchful. The new Ministry have been taken at their own word. Their policy so far as indicated presents no prominent features of difference from that of their predecessors. This circumstance is in itself a strong commendation of the general policy of Sir John Macdonald's Government; and paradoxical as it may seem, we believe the impression which, with the consent of the Ministry, has prevailed, that they intend to pursue the general policy of their predecessors has contributed not a little to strengthen

their hands and secure them the confidence of the country.

From Newfoundland we have intelligence of the signal defeat of the late Ministry, of whom Mr. Bennett was premier, and the accession of their opponents to power. It is known that Mr. Bennett and his party were hostile to the confederation of Newfoundland with the other provinces of British North America, and that the party now in power are supporters of confederation policy. It is, therefore, supposed that one of the results of the change of ministry will be the adoption by Newfoundland of immediate measures to bring the Island into the Confederation. We shall hail with pleasure the advent of another member into the happy family of Confederate Provinces. The accession of Newfoundland will complete the list. She is the only Province remaining isolated and we hope she will soon make up her mind to join the partnership and take her chances with the rest of us.

In England writs for the new general election have been issued, and elections by acclamation have already taken place in a few instances. Amongst those who have been thus happy, is Mr. Bright, who is again elected for Birmingham without a contest.

During the week, there have been forty-eight contested elections of which the Conservatives carried twenty-eight, and the Liberals twenty. Mr. Gladstone has addressed a mass meeting at Blackheath, England, upon the topics of the day. He defended his financial policy and severely censured the conduct of Mr. Disraeli for endeavoring to turn aside the attention of the country from the real issues before it. Mr. Gladstone urges that it is upon domestic questions and not upon the foreign policy of the Government that the election must turn. If he means that there is just now no serious foreign questions to dispose of, the Premier is undoubtedly right; but in determining whether to grant a new lease of power to the present ministry, the country may reasonably be supposed to take into consideration the treatment of the foreign questions that have been disposed of. As to domestic policy, Mr. Disraeli contends that the Government have been too active and exercised too much interference with private industries; and that as to their foreign policy, it has not been marked by sufficient activity or vigor. Mr. Gladstone's threat that he will not continue to lead his party in case of desertions from or divisions in its ranks, will probably be ineffectual to prevent the one evil or the other.

In France the taste for supernatural occurrences has not become extinct. A short time ago it was announced that there was to be an apparition at a certain specified time and place. On the day appointed many thousands assembled to witness the miracle. It is stated that there was an apparition of the Virgin to a young girl in the presence of the vast audience. That is to say, the girl says that she saw the apparition, which none of the assembled thousands did. The Virgin spoke (but only the girl heard her), and said that Paris was "on the verge of a crisis, terrible, but short, in which for a moment the wicked world would seem to have the upper hand." She was a kee, Would Marshall MacMahon hold office for five years? No. For four? No. For three? No. For two? No. For three months? Here she only smiled, as she always does when asked something which she is not permitted to reveal. The diocesan authorities, says the correspondent of the *Guardian*, maintain the strictest reserve on the above incidents, chiefly on account of some strange revelations respecting a great Pope, who is soon to appear. What a truly wonderful thing is folly; and in the present age of the world which claims so much intelligence, it is difficult to believe that anything so absurd as the above could really have happened in France. And yet there can be no doubt that the farce was performed as stated.

The latest news in reference to Dr. Livingstone seems to confirm the truth of the report of his death. From a London despatch, dated 27th ult., we learn that Herr Brenner, the German explorer of Africa, in a letter to a friend, written at Zanzibar, says that Dr. Livingstone died on the fifteenth of August last. This date differs from that of a previous report, but all doubt has been set at rest by an official despatch received from the Government from Zanzibar. This despatch states circumstantially that Dr. Livingstone died in Lobias, after crossing marshes, with the water at one time, three hours consecutively, above his waist. The

sufferings of his whole party were terrible, and ten of them died in consequence. The Doctor's remains were being brought to Ujiji. From the latter place they would be conveyed to Zanzibar, where it is expected they will arrive this month, and from that place they will be sent to England.

Mr. Spurgeon has been recently lecturing in London on the necessity of religious action as well as religious faith. He said: "There had been much prayer during the past year, in one place or another, for the success of the Church, yet the Church had not succeeded, and the year 1873 could not be said to be a satisfactory year so far as the interests of Christ unity were concerned. This was because prayer had not been accompanied by a sufficient amount of earnestness and faith and action. He was afraid that much of their prayer had been something like that attributed to a child at school who prayed to God that she might know her lessons better than she was in the habit of knowing them, and never studied them afterwards. But God did not answer her, because she lacked the proper disposition to assist herself, and to do His will. It was much the same with us. We prayed for sinners, but what did we in the shape of action to convert and to save them? Peter the Hermit proclaimed throughout the world God's will, and the world listened to him. Some there were who might say all this conduct on the part of Peter the Hermit and other early Christians was fanaticism. He prayed that God might bring us such a state of fanaticism. In the Romish Church, even at the present day, there were hundreds and thousands of men and women who had readily devoted themselves and their property to what they called religious life. With all their mistakes, such Roman Catholics lived for Jesus Christ. Was it right, was it proper, was it good that we who were in possession of the truth and of God's approbation should be less earnest and less real in the cause of Christianity?" Thus from Mr. Spurgeon is significant. It is evidence from an unwilling witness of the necessity of working as well as praying. Mr. Spurgeon, it will be remembered, was speaking principally to dissenters, and in reference especially to his own Church. The Church of England holds much the same views and principles as Mr. Spurgeon, so eloquently advocated in his lecture, and we must add that of late years the Church of England has, as a rule, practised these principles. This remark applies especially to that portion of the Church whose ritual has been the special object of Mr. Spurgeon's wrath. That gentleman denounces what he calls the "Popish Church of England." He can see good, however, in the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church, and when in the humour he praises them on account of their great zeal and good works. He can see something good in ultra protestant dissent; he sees something even better in the church of Ultramontanism; we wonder he cannot see something to approve in the Catholic Church of England. We wonder if prejudice has anything to do with it?

From the Gold Coast we have intelligence up to the early part of January. The forces of Sir Garnet Wolseley had penetrated thirteen miles beyond the Prah River and were rapidly approaching Coomassie, the capital of Ashantee. Commissioners from the king had arrived at the English camp to propose terms of peace; but Sir Garnet Wolseley replied that he would treat only with the king in person and at Coomassie.

### Ecclesiastical.

—The Bishop of Delaware confirmed twenty-six persons at Seaford on 22 ult.

—The Bishop of Virginia confirmed twenty-three persons at St. Petersburg on the 11th ult.

—A new Parish, Christ Church, has been organized at Tyler, in Texas.

—The new Church of St. Peters was opened at St. Louis, third Sunday in advent.

—A new church was opened at Wells, Minnesota, on Christmas day.

—Joachim the new Patriarch of Constantinople has received investiture.

—Dr. Harris, bishop of Gibraltar, has been compelled by ill-health to resign his See.

—The Bishop of New Hampshire confirmed eleven persons at West Claremont, first Sunday after the Epiphany.

—The Bishop of Central New York consecrated the new Church of St. James at Skaneateles.

—A meeting of the First Missionary District of Central New York was held

at Waterdown on the evening of the Feast of the Epiphany.

—The Diocesan Board of Missions for Western New York have lately had a series of interesting meetings at Rochester.

—The entire population of Australia is 508,381, which is provided with 601 ministers of all denominations, 921 churches and chapels accommodating 181,914 sitters, 933 Sunday Schools, 6,049 teachers, and an average attendance of 176,506 scholars. The numbers belonging to each denomination are returned as follows: Church of England, 220,000; Presbyterians, 49,000; Methodists, 80,000; Congregationalists, 10,000; Roman Catholics, 145,000; heathens and others, 7,450. It is estimated that one-third of the population attend the churches. —Exchange.

—Mmo. La Marquo meant to evade the Missouri Constitution by bequeathing twenty odd thousand dollars to Archbishop Kenrick, of the Roman Catholic Church. The bequest was to Kenrick personally, but the executor refused to pay it. The Archbishop sued, and it was proved that Mmo. La Marquo had intended the money to go to the Catholic Church, and that the will had been drafted by a Catholic priest. Judge Jones decided that the money could not be recovered by the Archbishop, the bequest being in contravention of the section of the constitution which says that every devise of goods or chattels for the benefit of a minister or preacher, as such, or of any religious denomination, sect or order, shall be void.

—Mr. Max Muller's assertion, in his lecture in Westminster Abbey, that the Jewish Church was not a missionary Church, has drawn out a letter from a Jew to the *London Times*. The writer says: "From the Gospels we know that Pharisaical zeal at one time was not deterred by the perils of the sea when there was a chance of making a proselyte. As a matter of fact, it is known that at the time when Christianity arose, there was a considerable number of proselytes in the cities of Asia Minor, Greece, and even Rome. One of the Maccabean kings converted the Edomites at the point of the sword. The Talmud several times makes mention of the pious Queen Helena, of Adrabeno, and her son Monabes, proselytes, who lived about the time of the destruction of the second Temple. We do not know exactly how they were converted. But it is clear that where there are proselytes there must have been proselytizers."

### Miscellaneous.

—A dock to be constructed in Bombay at a cost of £750,000.

—Two slight shocks of earthquake were felt in San Francisco last week. No damage done.

—Lord Chief-Justice Cockburn has resumed work on his series of articles on Junius.

—Senor Quijano, a lawyer, and Senor Penalver, a planter, have been arrested in Cuba on the charge of being Calist agents. They will be tried by court martial.

—The Dutch Government have just promulgated a law repealing almost entirely the customs duties on various iron and steel articles—iron rails, machinery, and agricultural implements.

—During the month of December there were twenty-eight railway accidents in England, in which three persons were killed, ninety-five seriously injured, and 160 bruised, cut and shaken.

—The cheapest newspaper in the world is the *London Daily Sun*, which is sold at the rate of six copies for a penny, yet its circulation is only 40,000.

—In some of the public schools in England the teaching of telegraphy has been tried with much success. Instruments are lent by the Government, and the children learn very rapidly.

—Sir Walter Scott's novels are now sold at three pence a piece in London, and the dealers say that his books are read now only by the humblest class of buyers.

—Mr. Bright says in a letter to a friend that he has not written out his speeches for the last thirty years. He simply thinks over what he has to say, and forms an outline in a few brief notes.

—The repairs to the Madeline in Paris, necessitated by the injuries received by that building during the Commune, are now completely terminated. They have cost 20,000 francs.

—The official report of the engagement on the 6th of January near Puerto Principe, Cuba, states that 800 insurgents made an attack on 47 Spanish soldiers who were out foraging, killed 39 of them and wounded three.

—Some stir has been created in Paris by the appearance of a pamphlet in which the idea is put forward that the Prince Imperial is not too young to reign, and that he ought to be called to his father's throne.

—So no wags having stated in *Harpur's Bazaar* that the line "though lost to sight, to memory dear," originated with Ruthven Jenkins, and first appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine for Marines* in 1701 or 1702, the *London Illustrated News* fell into the trap, and having published that statement felt constrained to publish another to the effect that neither the magazine or "Ruthven Jenkins ever had any existence."

—Dr. Schlosser of Holland has found that his own countrymen are the largest consumers of coffee in the world, and, next to them, the Belgians. In England, the annual consumption of coffee by each person is one and one-eighth pounds; in France, two and one-half; in Germany, four; in Denmark, five and one-half; in Switzerland, six; in the United States, seven; in Belgium, eight and one-half; in Holland, ten and one-half. It is to be considered, however, that the English are notoriously a tea-drinking people, preferring it to coffee, not only for the evening meal but for breakfast as well.

—The number of fatal accidents which have recently occurred on the principal gold-fields in Australia have pressed upon the attention of the Victoria Parliament the necessity of doing something to stop the fearful loss of life which has recently been taking place, and a bill with this object has passed the Legislative Assembly. Its distinguishing features are that it places upon the managers and proprietors of mines the onus of providing that they are not responsible, by defective machinery or otherwise, for any accidents which may occur in working their property, and makes any damages recovered a first and preferred charge upon the mine and plant.

—An exchange says: At a prayer meeting in Halifax Dr. Parker spoke of the rescue of the Loch Earn's crew and the Villa du Havre survivors by the British Queen. He said that the Loch Earn's crew, knowing that their vessel must sink, had almost given up hope but were cheered by the prayers and predictions of a clergyman on board, who assured them that relief would come. After they had been taken on board the British Queen the captain of that vessel told them that he had had a most unaccountable feeling that there was something for him to do; that three times during the night he changed the course of the vessel, bearing northward, that he told the watch to keep a sharp look out for a ship, and as soon as he saw the Loch Earn he bore down upon her. The British Queen is a Nova Scotia vessel.

—Bazamo's place of exile is thus described by a London cotemporary:—South of Canoes, in front of the harbour, may be seen the Lerius Islands, St. Marguerite and St. Honorat, about two miles distant. The former, which is four miles in circumference, is associated with one of the most interesting historical problems that have ever perplexed the world—that of the Man with the Iron Mask; and it is on this island fortress that Bazamo is now a prisoner. According to a reporter in the *Telegraph*, the ex-Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Rhine is a prisoner in the strictest sense of the term, and no one has been allowed to see him, with the exception of General d'Audel, from Nico, and the commandant of the gendarmery, who escorted him to the island, but has now left. The writer is inclined to think, from inquiries he has made, that Bazamo occupies the very room in which the Man of the Iron Mask languished so many years.

—Much is said about the degeneracy of our age. It is thought that we have lost the vigor and strength of our forefathers, and are growing weak and sickly. But statistics, carefully gathered, tell a very different story. The average size of Englishmen is larger than it was three centuries ago, for the armor worn by the knights of that time cannot be put on to-day, save by small men. The average duration of life is also longer. Account registers have been kept in Geneva since 1600. The average of life was then only twenty-two years and six months; it is now over forty years, or nearly double. In France, four hundred years ago, the annual mortality in Paris was one in sixteen; now it is one in thirty-two, which shows about the same ratio as in Geneva. In England, two centuries ago, the annual mortality was one in thirty-three—now it is one in forty-two. It is pleasant to know that the world is improving, and that the vigor and health of our race are gaining steadily, instead of declining.