

THE WANT OF CONFIDENCE MOTION.

To the surprise of some and the disgust of others a motion has been made in the House of Commons censuring the Government for its conduct in dealing with Riel. The resolution has been made by M. Landry, the member from Montmagny, a gentleman who is above all things else a demagogue, and who took his short stout person through Montmagny denouncing the Government, after the execution of the North-West rebel. One could not find any censure for the man in moving this resolution if its object was really to get all the evidence respecting the conduct of the Government towards the people of the North-West; but it is plain to everybody that this miserable little man has allowed himself to be made use of in order that the ends of public justice may be frustrated. It is asserted by the *Globe*, and we agree in this contention, that some member of the Conservative party has put Mr. Landry up to make this motion, in order that the Government may be able to avoid bringing down a large array of documents which are indispensable to a thorough knowledge of the state of affairs. The resolution will, of course, have to be discussed, and the discussion will involve the whole question of the Government's administration of affairs in the North-West. Without proof of the negligence of Government, or corrupt dealings by its agents, it will be impossible for the House of Commons to condemn the administration; and such evidence, if it exists, it will be impossible to bring down before the resolution of Mr. Landry has been voted upon. We are entirely without feeling in this matter, our sole desire being to see that all the facts are made known; that the Government is acquitted honorably if it has done its duty; to see that it is punished if it has failed to do it.

But every sort of imposition is distasteful to us. This man Landry is one of the most loud mouthed demagogues about the rights of the French people, in the whole country. He added not a little to the flame of fanatic passion that recently raged through Quebec. He has always posed as the champion of his people; he tries to pose higher than ever now;—and the resolution which he has put upon the notice paper is intended to betray his people. Mr. Landry is not the champion of the French people; he is their Judas. Let us not be misunderstood in censuring Mr. Landry. We are not saying that the French as a race have had a grievance at the hands of the administration;—we are merely pointing out, that for the sake of shielding the Government whom he professes to oppose, this wretched little man is betraying the people of his Province.

If this is not the case we shall be glad to make proper retraction. But there is only one way in which M. Landry can prove that he is not acting a treacherous part, namely, by withdrawing his motion, and withholding it till the judgment of the French members and Reformers in the House think that it ought to be introduced. We are not desirous of seeing the Government defeated; on the contrary it is our great wish that it should come unsullied and triumphant out of the ordeal. But though the heaven's fall, justice in the matter should be done; and we do not want to see any man endeavor to thwart the ends of justice, most of all when he comes crying that he is there to see that justice must prevail. It is very natural that the Government should endeavor to save itself; every government that has ever ex-

isted has sought to do this in the hour of danger.

Supposing that M. Landry presses his resolution there will really be very little information before the House save that contained in the blue book which has a report of the trial. We are not aware that the report of the commission appointed shortly after the outbreak will be available. But the report of the trial is almost valueless for the purpose of Parliament; the evidence satisfying itself with seeking for acts committed against the law, and not enquiring into the motives or the reason. The reason lying under the insurrection, the papers in the hands of Government do not contain; and it is these reasons that the House of Commons wants.

Truth made a suggestion and a prediction in connection with the matter last winter, and the prediction has been fulfilled. It pointed out that Mr. Blake should have called for a Parliamentary Commission or one that would answer the same purpose, to enquire into the whole matter. Sir John might have refused on the ground that there was no precedent for the appointment of a commission to enquire into an alleged maladministration of a department; but in making the refusal the Prime Minister would leave himself open to the charge that he was afraid of an investigation, and this belief would be general over the country. And if he consented all the facts could be obtained under oath, and though the majority of the commission might declare, as it would be pretty certain to do, that the Government was not culpable, yet the facts would be before the public and they could judge for themselves;—as in the case of the Pacific Railway commission where, although the judges exculpated the ministers, the evidence before the country proved ruinous to the administration. Suppose Mr. Blake should bring a mass of facts into the House respecting the conduct of officials in the North West, any member might arise and say, "We refuse to accept these statements; they are irresponsible;—they are not substantiated by oath." And the House very likely would throw out all such evidence.

On the whole, we think that Mr. Blake has badly mismanaged this affair. If he would try to be more practical instead of being magnificent, he would be more serviceable to his party and to the country. The loftiness of his motives, his integrity, and his great gifts we do not impugn, but it is, positively, enough to make one angry to see how lacking he is in some vital and practical points of duty.

"EMPIRE IN DANGER."

A considerable concourse of persons met on Monday evening in Temperance Hall, Toronto, to discuss the question described by the heading to this article. Mr. Warring Kennedy presided. Amongst those present were Prof. Goldwin Smith, J. L. Hughes, Public School Inspector, John Hewitt, ex-Mayor Cox, Peterboro'; Rev. Dr. Potts, Rev. Dr. Wild, Rev. Prof. Clark, Hon. James Young, M. P. P., and R. McKay, M. P. P., E. F. Clarke, Major Bennett, Marcellus Crombie, James Elain, John Hallam, Wm. Bell, John Graham, J. J. Funston, R. L. Fraser, Ald. Shaw, and Wm. Lee.

Despite the attempts to mistify as to the object of the gathering, the manifest motive was a protest against the proposed legislation of Mr. Gladstone. We do not say that Mr. John Hallam and Mr. J. J. Funston, *et hoc genus omne*, are not better judges of the situation than Mr. Gladstone,—the foremost statesman of his age—but we think

that one and all should have had the courage to state boldly why they had assembled in this little hall over two thousand miles away from the heart of the empire. Prof. Goldwin Smith said among other things: "It might be asked why they were met there to discuss a question between Great Britain and Ireland. They were met because statesmen were trying to grasp public sentiment. Mr. Gladstone was trying to catch public opinion, so as to crystallize it into an Act of Parliament, and we in Canada have a right to speak of it, because, though living in Toronto, we form a part of this great Empire—(cheers)—and the throbs at the heart of the Empire are felt throughout the whole Empire, and when one of the members suffers all the rest suffer with it. (Cheers.) They would be wanting in patriotism if they did not enter their protest against any measure which had a tendency to weaken the stability of the British Empire. They have a perfect right to express their sentiments, whether for or against the great constitutional question which was moving Britain from one end to the other."

Now, had this statement fallen from the lips of Mr. Funston, or Mr. Hallam, or Mr. Fraser, we would have considered it extremely proper, and we should have more confidence in recommending it to Mr. Gladstone as a chart for his future guidance, but considering that it is the declaration of a gentleman who is the parent of most of the separatist feeling amongst us, the complexion of the matter is altered. Mr. Smith declares that the throbs at the heart of the empire are felt to the remotest bounds of the empire. Why, he is the gentleman who has ridiculed the connection of Canada with England; who has over and over again in the *Bystander*, in the *Week*, in the *Canadian Monthly* told us that by the laws of commerce, and geography, and common sense our portion should be with the country to the south of us. The whole stock-in-trade of his "opinion" has been hostility to connection with the Mother Country; and that very connection has furnished him with material for some of the most brilliant epigrams that he has ever penned. We do not wish to throw ridicule upon Mr. Goldwin Smith, for his pen, on the whole, has been employed for the elevation of the people; but all the same, if he will in the eyes of the public blow hot in one breath, and cold in another, and set himself on exhibition as a weathercock, we cannot allow his conduct to go unchallenged.

Of course, we hardly know what to say when we come to deal with the case of a gentleman like Dr. Potts. Eminence to him as a zealous, able and popular preacher, is the first attribute that we have to accord; but with respect to his utterance at the Temperance Hall the question is brought down to this: Which of the two gentlemen is the better judge of this question, he or Mr. Gladstone? Of course we are unable to settle this point, for the question is further narrowed down to this fact, Which of the two gentlemen is the greater statesman? As that is a question which never can be answered upon this earth we must abandon the point.

As to Dr. Wild,—he seems to have had a sort of special fitness to deal with the question, being endowed with the prophetic vision which neither Goldwin Smith nor Dr. Potts claim to possess. In his case therefore the case is narrowed down to this; he can see into the future, as far even as to the period when the Ten Tribes shall be rehabilitated and set up nationhood on their own account, while poor Gladstone is only "going blind." As for Prof. Clark, of

Trinity, the least said about his connection with this national movement the better. We do wish that Mr. Gladstone would try and get over here and consult with Mr. Funston and ex-Ald. Hallam before "doing anything."

Sir Richard Cartwright and the Hon. A. W. McLellan have had a bout upon finance in the House of Commons. The new Minister, it appears, was a little confused, and came in for a mauling at the hands of the heartless ex-Minister of Finance. The *Globe* seems to think that it takes only one swallow to make a summer, and it falls into a fit of jubilation over the pouncing received by the Minister. But Mr. McLellan, though not bright, is by no means a numskull; but a sound-headed, capable and extremely successful man of business. He has not had much experience in debate so far, in the House of Commons; and to put him against Sir Richard for a battle of words, is like throwing a Christian to the lions. As for Sir Richard, his powers as a speaker are constantly increasing; and it is safe to say that there is not a member of the House of Commons who is not in dread of his tongue.

It now transpires, by a statement of the Minister of Justice, that the third respite given to Riel was given in order to allow the insanity commission time to report upon the sanity of the prisoner. It will be remembered that it was charged against the Government that though it appointed this commission, it hanged the prisoner without waiting for the report upon his sanity. One ought not to too readily credit the sayings of the party papers.

Our contributed articles this week are exceptionally varied and interesting. A contribution on "Great Britain," by H. M. H., gives some startling facts and figures showing the extent and influence of that wonderful organization, the British Empire. Our second article is by Rev. W. S. Blackstock, on Temperance in Canada, which shows the marvellous change in temperance sentiment in this country during the last two or three decades. "The Unformed Race," by Mrs. Annie L. Jack, is of the utmost interest to mothers. Another bit of history is given us in Mr. Fraser's "Blue Bonnets," and "A Sufferer," in an article suggested by our cartoon last week, relates some rather unpleasant personal experiences with the dreadful plumber.

"Fanny," who figured in the delightful Dilke, Crawford episode, has got sick of the attractions of London society and divorce courts, and has set sail for Australia to break some other heart.

One by one the participants in the late rebellion, who were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, are being released by order in council. This is always the course pursued under like circumstances by the Imperial government; and we think that such a proceeding is wise, provided that none of the persons selected for clemency have been directly concerned in the brutal murder of unoffending and unsuspecting settlers. We have already referred to a case in which, in our judgment, clemency has been abused.

The constantly recurring misunderstandings between capital and labor remind us in this country of two stupid dogs—that we are all alike tollers, that there is no permanently rich class and no class permanently poor. It ought not to be impossible, therefore, for labor and capital to join forces and achieve a common prosperity.