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Comments on the Customs.



“WE CANNOT CHECK MANITOBA.”—The application for an injunction to restrain the Red River Valley Railway, made by the C.P.R. through Mr. Browning, having failed, the Dominion Government have now come plainly forward as the opponents of Mr. Norquay and his colleagues. It has all along been manifest that the Syndicate was acting upon an understanding with the Federal authorities, and this move puts the matter beyond question. The Dominion Government have asked for an injunction prohibiting the line from crossing certain lots which are claimed as Crown property, and it is not unlikely that the instrument will be granted. But if so, what then? Will the provincial powers bow to the mandate of the court and leave their road half completed? They say they will not, and if they don't what will the Dominion Government do about it? Without the assistance of those “British regulars,” it is very hard to see what they can do. Certainly no Canadian volunteer regiments would go to the front to sustain such a rotten cause as that of the C.P.R. in the present case—for the clear public opinion is that Manitoba has just as much right to build the Red River Valley Railway as any province ever had to build a line within its borders. Once more public attention is called to the remarkable alacrity displayed by Sir John and his colleagues when serving the Syndicate. This potent corporation has only to give the word of command, and the Cabinet of Masterly Inactives fly to do its bidding. It matters not how dirty or difficult may be the task, or how dangerous to the interests of the Conservative party, let the Syndicate point its finger, and the Government instantly obeys.

Isn't it about time that the public should begin to enquire for the secret of this potency on the one hand, and this abject, slavish fear on the other?

THE IRRESISTIBLE MARCH OF THE RURAL VOTER.— Since our last issue several meetings have been held upon the Commercial Union issue, and each has been a magnificent demonstration in favor of this statesmanlike project. The farmers of this Province (and no doubt of other provinces also) are, without regard to their political leanings, all but unanimous in the opinion that unrestricted reciprocity with the United States would be a vast boon to Canada. At a meeting in Peterboro', we are informed, a contrary opinion was expressed by resolution, but unfortunately no particulars as to this gathering have been given in the daily papers, and we are left in the dark as to its composition. Some of the names connected with it are suggestive of ward-politics, however, and others are well known in connection with the “Imperial Federation” scheme, which is very far from practicable. The salient point of the discussion just now is the significant attitude of Sir John Macdonald. With the wily old gentleman, who has always had a keen sense of public opinion, “mum's the word” at present. It is said that he put a kindly quietus on some of his ardent followers in this city who were on the point of giving their views against Commercial Union, and we may confidently look for a concluding gurgle of opposition shortly in those obedient organs, the *World*, *Hamilton Spectator*, and *Belleville Intelligencer*, which have been for some time laboring under the impression that the “old man” wanted them to talk against it. Of course, they can talk just as well the other way if he says so.

THE FISHERY COMMISSION.—Since our cut on page twelve was engraved, the selection of Canadian representative on the Fishery Commission has been made. Sir John himself is to act. We trust he will prove equal to the occasion, notwithstanding his advanced years, and the cleverness of his opponents.



THE opera houses are in full swing for the season, which promises to be prosperous. Miss Maddern is the present attraction at the Grand; while the Toronto is treating its patrons to a rollicking Hibernian play, entitled “True Irish Hearts.”

THE cyclorama of the battle of Sedan is certain to be one of the leading permanent attractions of the city. It is being liberally patronized, and every one who sees it becomes perforce an advertiser of its merits. Art critics will be particularly interested in the masterly treatment of perspective and figure drawing in the extensive painting.

A SUGGESTION.

THE dress reformers do not see why ladies should mould themselves into unnatural wasp-waisted forms, and they accordingly object to the corset as being unhealthy. Our agricultural editor thinks that the dress reformers would confer a far greater boon on humanity by endeavoring to persuade the wasps to wear bustles.

OUTSIDE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

MR. AUGUSTUS SLABLEY—“And so you like novels of the old school, Miss Edith?”
Miss Dewey—“Oh, I just dote on dear old Hawthorne! I was so sorry that I wasn't able to get his ‘Moses from an Old Manse’ out this afternoon!”