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## THE TIMES.

Quoth the *Journal of Commerce* anent the Political Economy Society: "We shall keep our eye on this society or club, and shall not be deterred by any abuse its members may hurl against the press, from vindicating its privilege to criticise freely those who engage in such discussions as have been promised in the programme." I hope the public will at once and fully appreciate the disinterested valour of the *Journal*. We may all follow our different vocations by day and sleep soundly by night, for treason in our midst is now impossible. The *Journal of Commerce* has an "eye," that "eye" will be kept "on this society or club." No chance now of sneaking away to Washington one morning, with all our eight parliaments and other belongings comfortably stowed away in freight cars—not even half a chance to saw through a link in the chain that binds Canada to Great Britain. Gentlemen of the Political Economy Society, you are watched—be careful.

The courage of the *Journal* is magnificent. It will "not be deterred by any abuse." The pity of it is that such a great and good and rare quality should be wasted. The *Journal* has girded up its loins, and buckled on its sword, and rushed with a shout into the arena to do battle for the press, and behold!—nobody. For no member of the Society—so far as I am aware—has uttered a word of protest against newspaper criticism. What they have done is to denounce the vile habit which some of our newspapers have fallen into of imputing bad motives to men and placing labels upon them. They have also protested against that evil and shame which the *Journal* promises to practice when it proclaims its intention to "criticise freely those who indulge in such discussions." I earnestly hope that the writer of those words will reconsider his determination. It is always wrong to introduce personalities into merely political discussion or criticism, and can only lead to recrimination. Let him criticise the speeches or policy of the members of this Society by all means, but if he should criticise the speakers too freely they may be provoked to the enforcement of the advice usually given to "those who live in glass houses."

The *Journal of Commerce* appears to be capable of passing through several changes of mind in a brief period; as for example:—

"We must confess that we take exception to the title of the club. We hesitate to express any opinion as to what view France, since its last revolution, may take of the science of political economy, but we are still living under the British Crown, and words have a known signification which we naturally ascribe to them. Writers on political economy profess to investigate the nature of wealth and the laws of its production and distribution. An eminent writer on the subject, Mr. Macculloch, has dwelt on the distinction between enquiries on this subject and those on the creed and laws of a people, which, he says, 'are essentially different, and have never been supposed to be otherwise.' The misnomer may have taken in others, as well as Mr. Bouthillier, but now that it is understood that the chief object of the Political Economy Club is to discuss subjects which would never be taught by a professor of the science, the title can do no great harm."

It takes exception, and then mildly approves; hesitates about French views of the science of political economy, but boldly affirms

that words have "a known signification which we naturally ascribe to them," because "we are still under the British Crown." Undoubtedly the *Journal of Commerce* understands "the nature of wealth and the laws of its production and distribution," but it certainly is not very happy in its methods of reasoning and conclusions. The British Crown has done many very good things, but it is not recorded that it ever undertook to define the meaning of the term political economy. Mr. Macculloch would be a much better authority; and, taking the definition he gives of it, and that contained in the *Journal* itself, to discuss Legislative Union, Imperial Confederation, Annexation, upon the ground that one or other is necessary to the development of the resources of the country—to promote trade, or to curtail expenditure, is surely to come well within the narrowest definition of the term political economy.

Political economy concerns itself mainly about the principles of administering the wealth of a country with a view to its increase, regulating public expenditure, providing for the ordinary wants of the people, and endeavouring to maintain and increase their comforts. And it has always been found that the economical condition of a people is affected very materially by the kind of Government and civil institutions they may have. We, in Canada, at any rate find that public economy has a great many things to say about the distribution of wealth, and if the writer in the *Journal of Commerce* were only a student, to say nothing of being "a professor of the science," he would join the Society he has decided to "keep an eye upon," and bring M. Bouthillier back to learn some needful lessons about legislating for the country.

The Hon. Peter Mitchell has put his letters from Manitoba to the *Montreal Herald* into pamphlet form, which he calls "*Notes of a Holiday Trip*." The writing bears evidence that it was done in a hurry, and that there has been no such careful revision of it since as the subject and the author's reputation demanded. For example, the Hon. writer tells us of the district which lies between St. Paul and Milwaukee: "Until we reached a town called Sparta, I did not see \* \* \* any traffic on the highways which were in sight," did he see any traffic on the highways which were not in sight, I wonder? But apart from such small slips, the pamphlet is very good and useful, for it contains what at present is very much needed, reliable information for immigrants. The more literature we get of this kind the better. For Government agents, as a rule, are utterly unreliable, and intending emigrants in Great Britain are puzzled to know what kind of a country they are coming to, and how they are to get here. Mr. Mitchell's pamphlet answers almost every possible question. It is fair, and apparently complete.

M. Chauveau has received the promised reward of his political tergiversation. M. Chapleau could hardly help himself in the matter; he has accepted such peculiar and questionable forms of friendship that one is led to wonder when and where his patronage will stop.

The Chauveau business is bad enough in all conscience, but the muddle over the Board of Arts and Manufactures is ludicrous in the extreme. Can any one tell why the local, or any other government, should have the appointment of members of that Board? and if it should, why should it be counted as among the conqueror's legitimate spoils? To give men a seat on a Board of Manufactures who know nothing of the manufacturing business, and to put men on the Board of Arts who could not tell the difference between a water-colour and