

## The Echo

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MONTREAL, July 18, 1891.

THE ECHO is mailed to subscribers at a distance every Friday evening, and delivered in the city early on Saturday. Parties not receiving their paper regularly should communicate with the office.

### THE CIVIL SERVICE.

That the Civil Service of Canada is in need of reform is amply borne out by the facts which have been brought to light recently through the investigation now going on before the Public Accounts Committee. From the heads of departments down to the lowest rung of the ladder there appears to have been corruption and boodling to an alarming extent, and the people of Canada should demand the dismissal in disgrace of every mother's son who can be proved to have been in any way participators in the "irregularities," which is a mild name for what should be properly called stealing. The system of patronage which is carried on to such an extent in this country is responsible in a great measure for the incapacity and dishonesty so often exhibited in public departments. Every little political tool of the party in power must be kept in line by the pap process or made important in the eyes of his fellows through his ability to secure a soft situation for a friend, and the consequence is that many deserving and competent servants are kept at the bottom through favorites and others with influence being pitchforked over them. Civil servants are so numerous in some departments that their whole attention is required to avoid running up against each other, and when any real business has to be done one-half is usually in the way of the other. Thus the business is retarded, and then it comes that those who are really capable and willing to work have to do an extra share. Some of the clerks appear to think they were entitled to be paid for this extra duty, and on the face their demand appears reasonable enough, and we would have respected and applauded their effort to secure extra remuneration for extra work had they gone about the business in a manly fashion. But when men skulk under their wives' petticoats or under fictitious aliases in order to obtain in an indirect way what is theirs by right they lose our respect and nothing but contempt is felt for them. Attached to this form of securing extra pay for extra work there is always the suspicion—the parties themselves are not free from it—that an equivalent has not been rendered for what is sought, and this system of fraud—for fraud upon the government and the public it certainly is—is therefore to be condemned. How long these irregularities have been practiced may not be known, but now that the discovery has been made it rests with the government to take decisive and exemplary action.

We do not hope for much better results in the Canadian civil service, however, until the patronage system is entirely swept away, and the competitive examination method which prevails in Britain has been adopted. The only true system of appointment and promotion is by merit, and this once established much red tapeism and many abuses which now exist would completely vanish. The people should insist on this necessary reform, and in the present instance the government should courageously, vigorously and in the interests of public morality apply the axe regardless whether friend or foe fall under the operation.

### A THREATENED DANGER.

According to a New York paper there are no less than fifteen thousand Russian Jews engaged upon the manufacture of clothing under the sweating system. The statement almost takes one's breath away, and we are amazed that such a state of things as this mere statement reveals should exist in what is presumed to be a Christian city. Under what rank misery, ignorance and actual destitution must these people labor, and who is responsible? Primarily the state, for neglecting to take decisive legislation in the premises, and preventing an invasion of the country by such an undesirable class of immigrants, and secondly the American people who extensively patronize the stores where such goods as are manufactured under the sweating system are retailed. But from all accounts the workingmen of Montreal will soon have to face the same problem that agitates the citizens of New York. The other day we had a large influx of this same class of people and are promised another instalment before long. These people have been driven by persecution from their homes, are wholly destitute and dependent upon charity for food and shelter. Of course, in order that the "charitable" may be the sooner rid of their burden these helpless creatures will be forced to accept whatever work comes first to their hand at whatever wages is offered, and thus they will come into competition with native labor to its detriment. It is high time that the importation to this country of pauper labor should cease. The workingmen of Canada do not fear the competition of free and intelligent citizens of any country, but they protest against being forced to compete with hordes of ignorant paupers dumped here through the mistaken zeal and charity of so-called philanthropic millionaires.

### NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Rumor has it that a movement is on foot to increase the property qualification for alderman from two to ten thousand dollars. If this change is intended to secure a more intelligent class of representatives, its promoters are doomed to disappointment, because that clause would not deprive a single one of our civic ignoramus of his seat in council. The proper qualification for alderman is not dollars and cents, but a reasonably fair share of or'nery every day common sense.

The City Council, goaded on by the Mayor and Alderman Stephens, have taken the bull by the horns, sent Mr. St. Louis about his business and placed the completion of the Tail Race contract under the control of their own engineer, Mr. McConnell. The only mistake is that it was not done sooner, but it is better late than never, and we have no doubt Mr. McConnell will deserve the confidence reposed in him by pushing on the work energetically, economically and without harassing those working under him.

The committee appointed by the Central Trades and Labor Council to investigate the recent dismissal of a Corporation employee had an interview with the Mayor yesterday morn-

ing. The employee in question, it appears, belongs to the Knights of Labor and to this fact, it is alleged, his dismissal was due. A prompt denial was given by the Mayor to this version of the matter, but beyond a general assertion that the man was discharged for incompetency nothing satisfactory was gained. Surely it is due to the party in question, who was discharged in rather an ostentatious manner, which led the public to believe that something very different was at the bottom of it, that his incompetency should have been particularized. It is very easy to make a general assertion of this nature to cover up an altogether different reason, and therefore the committee were justified in assuming the facts to be as stated to them. Mr. Keys, who acted as spokesman, might easily have given the name of his informant, but this would only have created fresh trouble. If somebody in the Corporation employ has to be made a scapegoat of in the Tail Race job, it was rather too bad to select the humblest, and some consideration might, with all propriety, have been shown to this particular individual, who has a wife and several small children to support.

The complete returns of the New South Wales elections are now to hand, and are even more decisive against the Government than was anticipated. Never before, perhaps, were the party lines so sharply drawn at any election. The issue was clear and plain. The policy which Sir Henry Parkes pledged himself to stand by, and which formed the war for his supporters in the colony was Federation under the Crown and Free Trade. Mr. Dibbs, the Opposition leader, nailed to his colors the words "Republicanism and Protection." The main feature of the election, however, is the return of a Labor party, numbering a fifth of the whole Legislative Assembly, pledged, first and foremost, to force attention in the labor problem, and avowedly protectionist and republican. The Government have come back from the polls with a following of 51, the Opposition with 57, and the Labor party with 26, so that the capitalistic victory over the strikers last year has been wiped out, and the balance of power placed in the hands of the labor representatives. The latter will of course, naturally take sides with the Opposition leader, who on the resignation of the present Premier, will be charged with the formation of a Government. In New South Wales it is a matter of the greatest significance that labor is indeed king.

Mrs. Langtry, according to a London story, has had a difficulty with one of her jealous lovers. Abington Baird is a wealthy parvenu who has been following her up lately and supporting her financially. Coming home unexpectedly "three sheets in the wind" he found the Lily entertaining another young man, which so roused his ire that he ignominiously expelled the favored one and then went for Madame a la the great Boston expert, and so crushed and bruised the tender flower that she is said to be disfigured for life. The story goes that she has accepted \$125,000 as a solatium for her wounds.

### THE TRADES' COUNCIL.

The regular meeting of the Central Trades and Labor Council was held in their hall, Notre Dame street, on Thursday evening—Mr. L. Z. Boudreau, president, in the chair.

Credentials were received and accepted from Mr. P. A. Chabot, representing Montreal Assembly, and Z. Brien and — Monitin, representing Bricklayers' Union.

In regard to the misunderstanding between the Builders' Laborers' Union and the Plasterers, it was moved by Delegate Easton, seconded by Delegate Ryan that the Organization Committee be instructed to wait on the Plasterers' Union and ascertain if they are willing to work in harmony with the Builders' Laborers' Union, as per agreement of March, 1890. Carried.

On motion the meeting then proceeded to the election of delegates to the Trades and Labor Congress to sit this year in Quebec, and it was agreed to limit the number to two—one French and one English. A con-

siderable discussion took place on the nationality of one of the nominees, and it was ultimately decided that the delegate in question should be classed according to the union he represented, which was an English-speaking one. The gentlemen elected were Messrs. L. Z. Boudreau and J. B. Dubois, with W. Keys and O. Chappel as alternates.

The property qualification committee having failed to report it was decided to re-construct the committee, and that the matter be left in the hands of the President.

On motion it was decided to appoint a committee to inquire into the circumstances attending the dismissal of one of the Corporation employees by the Mayor.

### THE WIDOW FLYNN'S CASE.

It was moved by W. Darlington, seconded by W. Keys, that a special committee be appointed to arrange for holding a public indignation meeting on the case of the Canadian Pacific Railway's persecution of Widow Flynn, and to collect funds for the purpose of bringing the case before the Privy Council. Carried.

The following were appointed a committee—W. Keys, W. Darlington, O. Fontaine, U. Lafontaine and J. B. Dubois.

An invitation from the Quebec Trades' Council was read, asking the co-operation of Montreal in the celebration of Labor Day in that city, which takes place on September 1st. The invitation was heartily approved, and the delegates to the Congress were instructed to officially represent this body, and it was also hoped that as many as possible would avail themselves of the invitation.

On motion the Council decided to ask the three city members to support Col. Amyot's compulsory voting bill.

A letter was read from Ville Marie Assembly, asking the Council to protest to the City Council against the way in which the water tax question was being shelved by the special committee. Left over till next meeting. This was all the business of importance and the meeting adjourned.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

To the Editor of THE ECHO.

SIR,—The revision of the voters' list for Dominion elections in Montreal Centre is being proceeded with. Applications for the registration of names should be made before the 1st of August. The public have already been notified of this by you, and at present the object of my writing is to inform those of your readers interested in the matter that the names of all persons not appearing on the assessment rolls of the city will be struck from the last revised list and that it will be necessary for such whose names do not appear on the municipal assessment roll, but who claim a right to vote at Federal elections in this division, to make special application to me for registration of their names on the voters' list. Thus the names of the income voters and sons of owners entered as such on the last revised list will not appear on the list at present being prepared unless these persons, by solemn declarations in writing, made by themselves or by some person whose name is already registered, prove a right to vote in this electoral district. To follow any other rule would result in a most incorrect list by retaining on it the names of persons who had registered as residents in this district seven years ago but who long since have removed from it.

Your obedient servant,  
HENRY J. KAVANAGH,  
Revising Officer for Montreal Centre.

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