

had much clearer and stronger grounds for the procedure. The sudden dismissal of the Mercier Cabinet caused a profound sensation throughout the Dominion, and led, on the 17th of December, to a long and very coarsely abusive letter from the late Premier to the Lieutenant-Governor, which by no means helped his cause. And the old year went out darkly and gloomily on the eldest Province of the Dominion, and it was very difficult to predicate the final result of the crisis that had arisen.

The hurried manner in which the members of the Mercier Cabinet had to vacate their posts, caused them to leave a number of very compromising documents behind them, which revealed a most astounding system of public plunder, such as no one could ever dream of existing under a constitutional form of government. These were promptly gathered up by the new Cabinet, and led, on the 15th of January, to the issue of a fresh 1892. commission of enquiry. Its proceedings speedily developed the most impudent pilfering of the public exchequer, by one device or another, which had ever been known in modern times in this or indeed any other constitutionally governed country, if we except perhaps the Boss Tweed robberies in New York, and the proceeds of which were traced directly to Mercier and other members of his Cabinet, and to the notorious Pacaud, the prime agent in the majority of cases. These exposures and the canvass for the approaching general elections went hand-in-hand, and the excitement became very great. "By race cries," said the *Daily Witness*, of Montreal, "Mercier came into power, and by means of bribes to religious bodies he confirmed himself in power. In order to strengthen his position he sought to clothe and adorn himself with the robes of approval and praise of the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church, thus confirming and increasing the influence of that church over the electors in things political. If the prestige and influence of the Church has suffered as it never suffered before in Quebec, by the swift and sudden downfall of one whom they have praised and honoured and upheld above all others, while all the time he was wallowing in a slime-pit of disgrace and dishonour, it is by Mercier's fault not by his intention." "The injury you have wrought" eloquently said that Nestor of Reform in the Eastern Townships, Robert Sellar, "does not end with the injury you have inflicted on your race and church. You have brought such disgrace upon the Liberal Party that it staggers under the load of shame you have heaped upon it. You have piled debt upon this poor province that is going to levy tribute on the labour of its farmers for years to come; debt incurred in the name of public improvements, but which, in reality, was created that your followers might be enriched. You have sown the seeds of distrust between the two nationalities, and did your best to teach the French to look upon the English as their enemies. You have aroused prejudices and awakened aspirations whose realisation would cause the disruption of the confederation. Worst of all, you have lowered the standard of public morality, created a class who make politics a trade, and regard the public revenues as their means of becoming rich, and so debauched the public conscience that honest government in future is rather hoped for than expected. Not until you got into power did anyone dare to say that this province is unfit for self-government. The fair name of Quebec you have besmeared in the mire of corrup-