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SEVEN CENTS.

The Saturday Reader.

WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 20, 1866.

THE LAMIRANDE AFFAIR.

WE do not meddle with mere party politics; but this is one of the historical subjects of the day, and therefore within the limits to which we have always confined our remarks on passing events. We shall not recapitulate the facts of the case, both because they must be already known to our readers, and because the details are of comparatively little importance, in view of the great moral, legal, and international questions involved in the extradition of this man. It is sufficient to say that Lamirande robbed a French trading company, of which he was one of the chief officers, of a large amount of money, and that he covered his fraud by making false entries in the books of the company, which were under his control. By the treaty of extradition between England and France, persons guilty of forgery are liable to be delivered up by either on demand. But the difficulty in the present instance is that, while false entries in books constitute forgery by the law of France, it is not so in England. It is a crime, but a different one in the legal schedule. Notwithstanding Judge Drummond's opinion, and the ruling of a case in England, which to some extent coincides with his view, our own conviction is, that Lamirande, being guilty of forgery according to what was the law of France at the time that the Extradition Treaty was signed, it was the duty of the other contracting party to surrender him; and that there is nothing in the Treaty, or in the Act confirming it, adverse to such an interpretation of the provisions they embody. But this phase of the subject is not now in debate. We have to deal with the mode of placing the supposed criminal in the hands of the French authorities or their representative. That the surrender of Lamirande to the French detective was effected by a clever piece of trickery is generally admitted; and regarding Messrs. Pominville and Betournay, simply as attorneys for the party prosecuting, much blame would not be attached to them for the course they pursued, judged by the common rule of morality in similar matters. They did their duty to their client; and if the law or the existing practice permitted them to pursue the course they took, they may have been morally wrong, but legally and professionally they were not. They were attorneys *ad litem* of the prosecutor, and that was all. But what concerns the public is the fact, that a great crime has been committed; and as a necessary inference, the question is, who committed that crime? Who is chargeable with the act of surrendering Lamirande to the vengeance or justice of a foreign government, in contravention of the maxims of British law and justice.

The parties liable to accusation in this connection are: first, the Governor General Lord Monck, whom we regret to be obliged to mix up in such a dirty business; Mr. Attorney General Cartier; Mr. Solicitor General Langevin, and

the person representing the Attorney General East in this district. Between these the fault must lie. As regards the Governor General, his duty is plain. If Mr. Cartier deceived him, let him dismiss Mr. Cartier; if Mr. Langevin deceived him, let him dismiss Mr. Langevin. That there was deception, there can be scarcely a doubt. The following facts we have upon oath, from Mr. Doutré, the Counsel for Lamirande:—

"On the twenty-ninth of August I went down to Quebec to see the Governor General, and to connect my visit with the interview Mr. Spilthorn had with him at Ottawa. Mr. Spilthorn accompanied me. We had an interview with the Governor, who told us that he suspected what brought us to Quebec. He said there was not a man in the Province so grieved as he was at what had happened to Lamirande. He then said that the warrant for extradition had been asked from him by the Solicitor General, Mr. Langevin. "When Mr. Langevin asked me "for the warrant I told him that I had promised "the prisoner full time to apply for a writ of "Habeas Corpus. Mr. Langevin said that the "warrant would in no way interfere with the "application of Lamirande for such writ." The Governor said: "I said to Mr. Langevin before "signing the writ that if I thought my warrant "would in any wise interfere with the Habeas "Corpus, I would not sign it. Therefore Mr. "Langevin is responsible to me for the advice "he has given. I have not seen him since. I will "send for him before you leave Quebec and have "an explanation." The Governor admitted that he had told Mr. Spilthorn on the seventeenth of August at Ottawa that the prisoner would be allowed ample time to apply for Habeas Corpus. I have in my possession a letter confirming that fact."

We have all an interest in the question. Either the Queen's representative in this country, must remain under the stigma of treacherously breaking his word and promise, or he must have no further connection with the person or persons who abused his confidence. About that there cannot be a shadow of doubt.

It is not our wish or intention to enter on questions of a party character. We know no party, and care for no party. We merely deal with the historical subjects of the day; for these subjects will be the history of the future. We chronicle events and opinions; nothing more.

It is perfectly vain in this Lamirande case to say, that the Judge has committed errors, and that the counsel for the accused party has committed errors. Let us admit the fact. Judge Drummond has undoubtedly fulminated Orders of Court which he did not enforce. It is for him yet to show whether these were mere theatrical thunder, or if he was in earnest, with a previous knowledge of what he was doing. As for Mr. Doutré, our belief is that his course, from beginning to end, has been marked by a succession of blunders, the more extraordinary in a man of his experience and ability. We do not consider it a mistake in him that he did not at once procure his writ of Habeas Corpus, for we believe that the notice given by him to the representative of the Attorney General, and which he was

bound to give, was as good as the writ itself. As soon as that notice was served, the case was fairly before the Court, and any evasion of the jurisdiction of that Court was punishable in the same way that a contempt of the said writ was punishable. We think that it is on this point that all parties are astray. We consider the notice as part and parcel of the writ of Habeas Corpus, from which it cannot be disconnected, inasmuch as the law, or the practice of the Courts, imperatively demands it as a condition precedent to the issue of the Writ. However, on looking over what we have written, we cannot see that we have been able to throw much additional light on the subject. Some facts, nevertheless, are evident: first, that the Governor General has been foully deceived, and that he is bound to place himself right before the world in the matter, whoever may be the sufferers, or whatever the political consequences may be; secondly, that Mr. Cartier and Mr. Langevin are deeply involved in this filthy affair; and, thirdly, that the person representing the Attorney General in this district ought to be at once displaced, unless he can wholly cleanse his hands from any connection with the vile business.

LONDON LETTER.

LONDON, September 27th.

Once more, Mr. Editor, at the risk of wearying you with an unvarying tale, I must ask you to "pity the sorrows" of a London correspondent, in this the dearest of all the dead months. I am like a mariner becalmed on the high seas, and whistling vainly for the wind. Nothing comes to me worth sending across the "great water." Even the *Times*, with all its ubiquity, is obliged to fill its columns with a dreary succession of letters from its readers on all sorts of topics, and the other journals follow suit. Don't visit me, therefore, with your editorial anger, if I fail to make something out of nothing, or if I fill my allotted space with unmitigated "padding."—But it is proverbially "a long lane that has no turning" and I begin to see symptoms of reviving life in this body politic. The Londoners are fast returning from their holiday retreats, driven home prematurely by stress of weather; and when this great city gets full there will be no lack of topics for my weekly budget. Only for this we must, as Henry Russell says "Wait a little longer."

The great event of the week has been the Reform meeting at Manchester, which all accounts agree in describing as a most imposing demonstration. The *Times* (no friend to reformers) admits that there must have been present at the open air meeting no less than 200,000 persons; and that in a steady down pour of rain sufficient to damp the most enthusiastic ardour. Mr. Bright was present, but took no part in the morning's proceedings, reserving himself, as at Birmingham, for the evening's work at the famous Free Trade Hall. His speech on the occasion was not his best effort, though it contained passages full of force and power. He was especially bitter in his attack upon Lord Derby, and, as it is very well known that he attacks nobody