

The Dominion Illustrated.

\$4.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

THE SABISTON LITHOGRAPHIC AND PUBLISHING CO

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ALEX. SABISTON, MANAGING-DIRECTOR

The Gazette Building, Montreal.

WESTERN OFFICE:

4 King-street, East, Toronto, Ont.

London (England) Agency:

JOHN HADDON & CO.,

3 & 4 Boulevard-street, Fleet-street, E.C

SOLE AGENTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

All business communications, remittances, etc., to be addressed to "THE SABISTON LITHOGRAPHIC AND PUBLISHING CO., MONTREAL."

Literary communications to be addressed to

"THE EDITOR, DOMINION ILLUSTRATED."

26th DECEMBER, 1891.



Mr. Mercier's Letter.

It seems almost inconceivable that a man who professes statesmanship should write such an epistle as that sent by MR. MERCIER to the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR last week, in reply to the letter of dismissal. Violently personal and totally wanting in dignity, its tone shows how sore and hurt the writer must have felt when he could make such an unwarranted attack on the representative of the Crown. The cool demeanor which characterized the late Premier during the sitting of the Royal Commission showed its first break recently when he inaugurated the ridiculous crusade against hostile newspapers; the letter shows that the mask has now fallen completely off. As a campaign document it will no doubt carry weight with a certain class, but as a befitting answer to the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S message, it ranks well in waste-paper basket literature. Fancy any man pretending to be a statesman, hysterically declaiming to a Governor in answer to a letter of dismissal: "I denounce you before public opinion. * * * * You will shortly receive the price of your national treachery. * * * * I hope to chase you constitutionally from Spencer Wood." Or: "I do not despair of succeeding in saving our cherished province from the abyss into which you and your friends have been seeking for some time to hurl it." Fancy Sir John A. Macdonald, the Hon. Mr. Mackenzie, or the Hon. Mr. Laurier writing in this gallery strain. It is especially funny in the face of a report from two prominent and impartial judges directly implicating him and several of his colleagues, and in the face of the notorious financial scandals in which his ministry has been involved. But it will strike home. Away up in the back settlements, when the villagers in the long winter evenings gather around some man who can read, and get him to retail the news, their hearts will glow as they listen to such frenzy-rolling sentences and fine-sounding words (to enjoy which the village dictionary will be called into requisition); they will shout, "Down with the

tyrant!" "Mercier for ever!" Such is demagogism, and its influence on a section of the population. Whether the good sense of the other residents of the province will counter-balance such misguided zeal is a problem that will only be decided on the 8th of March next.

The Appeal to the Country.

The hearts of the professional politicians of Quebec will rejoice, and the faces of those who are intensely interested (for a consideration) in the welfare of the province will beam at the news of the dissolution of the Quebec House. The act seems a necessity, although an unfortunate one. That even the slightest infringement of any prerogative of the great all-sovereign people should be permitted is not of course to be dreamt of, and they must decide who is right,—the Lieutenant-Governor or MR. MERCIER. What does it matter if the expense and turmoil of a general election be incurred, and provincial affairs generally fall into temporary chaos so long as Hodge and Jean Baptiste are made the arbiters. Did not the "patriots" of '37 die for the germ of this sacred principle? Of course they did—when they could not get away fast enough. The mobility must rule and decide this question, or the country is forever ruined. If 31 representatives support MR. MERCIER and 29 oppose him, why he and his late Cabinet immediately become honest and devoted men, and have been atrociously treated. Let us see what the all-sufficient people will do on the eighth of March, and if they, as a mass, be capable of distinguishing between right and wrong.

Our Programme for 1892.

With the present number the weekly issue of the DOMINION ILLUSTRATED closes, it having been decided by the publishers to change it into a monthly magazine of sixty-four pages, to appear under the name of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY. The first number will appear in January, and we ask the assistance of our subscribers and friends to make the new venture a success. No pains will be spared to make the magazine bright and attractive from a literary and artistic standpoint, and representative of the best class of Canadian literary work. It is almost unnecessary to point out that if the new magazine is to exist and flourish, it must have the financial support of the Canadian public; the price is such as to bring it within the means of every family in the Dominion, viz., \$1.50 yearly, or fifteen cents for single copies. Those of our subscribers who have paid in advance for the weekly DOMINION ILLUSTRATED will receive proportionate credit for the MONTHLY on basis of \$1.50 per annum; or if preferred the money will be refunded. We have secured such a brilliant list of contributors that from a literary standpoint THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY will not be surpassed by any periodical on the continent. Among those who will from time to time write for us are Dr. Bourinot, Douglas Brymner, William Wilfrid Campbell, F. Blake Crofton, Dr. Drummond, Mrs. S. Almon Hensley, James Hannay, Miss E. Pauline Johnson, J. M. Le Moine, Rev. A. J. Lockhart, Archibald Lampman, Miss A. M. Machar, Miss MacLeod, George Martin, Dr. Wolfred Nelson, Professor Charles G. D. Roberts, Duncan Campbell Scott, Dr. George Stewart, and Arthur Weir.

Literary and Personal Notes.

Mr. John Fiske's work on "The Discovery of America" will be published early in 1892. It has involved a vast amount of research, and Mr. Fiske is reported to regard these two volumes as his most important contribution to American history.

Mr. Samuel J. Tilden's bequest of almost the whole of his large fortune for the purpose of establishing a public library in New York was declared void by the courts, and the same fate has met the will of the late William B. Ogden, who devised about \$4,000,000 for charities.

Professor Gildersteeve, of Johns Hopkins University, was in the Confederate army and a firm believer in the cause for which it contended. In the *Atlantic Monthly* for January he will state with frankness and force the reasons for his course, in an article entitled "The Creed of the Old South."

A correspondent of the *Scottish American* recently called attention to the Americanism "wild and woolly west" and the similarity of the latter adjective to the Scotch word "Wally." Another correspondent claims that the two words are not in any degree synonymous; but as "wally" or "wallie" (used in the West of Scotland) means strong or active, it seems not improbable that the word is really an imported one, mispronounced.

There are no Tom Hoods now in the magazines; only a number of metaphysical botanical poets, who write things which might have been shaken out of a dice box. But, for a change there is a poem with a strong human interest in the January *New England Magazine*. It tells the story of a babe dying in the streets of cold and starvation on Christmas Eve, and is by Agnes Maule Machar, of Kingston, best known to Canadian readers as "Fidelis."

Mr. Earnest Cruikshanks, of Fort Erie, has recently published in a western paper the substance of a very interesting letter (now in the Ottawa Archives) describing an engagement at the mouth of the Rock River, Iowa, between a few British soldiers under Lieut. Graham, and a detachment of Americans under Capt. Zachary Taylor, about 800 strong. The latter were in boats, which the King's troops pounded so vigorously with two small cannon, as to force the whole expedition to retreat.

We were surprised to notice in a recent number of the *Winnipeg Free Press* a bitter and unjust attack on Dr. George Beers, one of our most popular and patriotic litterateurs. It would be a good thing for Canada if many more of her sons were as fearlessly loyal as Dr. Beers. Such men deserve every encouragement from journals which claim to be patriotic, while it is impossible to condemn too strongly those pessimists who, by their public utterances, are doing their best to injure Canadian national life.

The Lundy's Lane Historical Society has had printed a very interesting document which was presented to the Society by Mr. J. H. Lane, of Pictou, N.S., son of Captain Lane of H.M. 98th Regiment, who served actively in the war of 1812-14. The paper is a District General Order issued by Lieut.-General Drummond immediately after the victory at Lundy's Lane in July 1814, and promulgated to the King's troops in Canada in a General Order issued by the commander of the forces at Montreal on the 4th of August of that year.

The November number of *The Canadian Musician* contains an excellent portrait and biographical sketch of Mrs. J. E. M. Whitney, one of the leading musical composers in this city. Mrs. Whitney has from childhood been intensely interested in music. She has already published quite a number of compositions, among them being "The Otter," grand march; "Toujours a toi," "Belair," "Debonnaire," "Lasylo," waltzes; "Pensee Fugitive," "Berceuse," "Love's Secret," "Rondo Brillante," "Tarantelle," and "Remember Me;" besides these she has a number of compositions in manuscript. Mrs. Whitney is a member of the Paris Society of Authors and Composers; her success reflects much credit on this city.