

Mr. E. Stanley Bent, a prominent Police Court lawyer, in Manchester, England, was a year ago sentenced to five years penal servitude for receiving the portmanteau of a gentleman who had been robbed, from one of his clients whom he had defended. Money and bonds are not so easily identified, but if a robber goes red-handed to a lawyer with a large sum of money, the lawyer should exercise some very considerable discretion before becoming a *particeps criminis* to defraud a robbed man. Perhaps the hint will not be lost.

The commercial deputation which a few days since went to Ottawa to urge upon the Government the necessity for a reduction of tolls on the canals, the abolition of the tonnage dues on shipping at Montreal, and the assumption by Government of the Lake St. Peter debt, obtained very scant encouragement from Hon. Mr. Langevin. In his reply, as published, he practically says action must be deferred till the Government can deal with all the subjects and all the interests involved. What delay may be expected when the canal question, the Lake St. Peter debt, the towage, the pilotage, the Quebec Graving Dock, and the special interests of the various Provinces, have all to be considered, harmonised and arranged, I leave my readers to judge. Such a policy means indefinite postponement, and is in fact the way not to do it. Our mercantile friends should be up and doing, bring every pressure to bear, and insist upon progress being made in whatever direction may be immediately practicable to remove the disabilities of the St. Lawrence route in the race of competition for the carrying trade both of Canada and the Western States, to secure which trade so large an amount of public money has been invested.

Sir Charles Tupper gave them more encouragement, and practically said that an immediate reduction of dues upon shipping might be favourably considered. This would be at once a step towards the end desired, of making Montreal a free port, as far as shipping is concerned. Once started in this direction rapid progress would undoubtedly be made, and I say, begin at once—why not on the first of May, and gain a whole season?

In this connection I notice the meeting of the Board of Trade held on Wednesday, a report of which in the *Montreal Herald* of the 29th ult. will well repay perusal, and I cordially commend the resolution passed.

The Hogan-Beaufort Company's Abbatoirs, as proposed for the city of Montreal, will comprise twenty-five acres of ground, situated north-east of the Gale farm in Hochelaga; and this seems to me in every way the best place for it. It is easy of access by Ontario, Sherbrooke and Rachael Streets. An abbatoir at the west end of the city would be a nuisance and be sure to cause trouble in the matter of drainage; but being at the east end the drainage will be below the city into the river. The Company propose to do their own drainage and attend to their own supply of water, roughly estimated at 80,000 gallons per diem. Ample accommodation will be given to cattle dealers and butchers. Well macadamized roads will be laid out from Papineau Road to the abbatoir grounds. The Company have obtained a twenty-five years' exemption from taxes from the Municipal Council of Hochelaga. The Company intend to spend nearly \$100,000 in buildings alone, comprising slaughtering, rendering and melting houses. Cattle sheds and yards are also to be built on an extensive scale. The report of the joint Finance and Market Committees recommended the scheme, and there is no reason why the City Council should not decide in its favour.

Mr. Mackenzie's resignation of the leadership of the Liberal party was hardly a surprise. Since the beginning of the session it has been evident that Mr. Blake was the first favourite, and would be asked to lead the Opposition. This can readily be accounted for. Mr. Mackenzie was first henchman to the Hon. George Brown, and was perfectly pliable in the hands of his chief. Lately, however, the Senator's influence has been on the wane, consequently Mr. Mackenzie lost ground with his own party. Then, many of the Liberals felt that while he is honest and industrious, and a good Minister of Public Works, he is over obstinate, not over eloquent, and lacking that force of character needed to make

a successful leader. Had Mr. Mackenzie been a little more adroit, a little more masterly with sundry of his Cabinet he would have been returned again to office. A good opportunity was offered and lost, and many of his followers resent it. Not Gritism, but the Calvinism in it has killed him.

But the question may fairly be asked, what is the net gain to the Liberal party? Mr. Blake is in many respects a man of marked ability—unquestionably the most eloquent speaker in the House—a good debater, and a man of great personal integrity, but I venture to predict that he will not prove a success as a leader. The party is disunited, and Mr. Blake is not the man to unite it. He has force of character, but it is repellent and not attractive. He has not the knack of smoothing down the displeased, and turning away anger with a soft word; on the contrary, he takes no pains to hide his contempt for the less able men by whom he is surrounded. On that account he is not personally popular among the M.P.'s, and if they follow him it will not be because they entertain an affection for him. The *Globe* will hardly be able to get up an enthusiastic admiration for him for a time, and Mr. Mackenzie, unless he has an extraordinarily good temper, will not give him an undivided affection. Undoubtedly Mr. Blake has undertaken a difficult, if not an impossible task, in assuming the leadership of the Liberal party in Canada.

A correspondent sends to me what he calls

#### A CATECHISM ON PAPER CURRENCY.

Q.—What is the earliest mention of anything of the nature of paper currency?

A.—A passage in the treatise attributed to Plato under the title of "Eryxias" seems to show that the Carthaginians had a leather currency. "For example these Carthaginians use a currency of this kind. In a little bit of leather is tied up something generally of the size of a gold ounce; but what it is that is tied up, nobody knows except the doers. After which they put a seal upon it, and use it as money; and he that has most of these, is held to have the most wealth and be the richest man. But if anybody among us had ever so many of this kind of thing, he would be no richer than if he had a number of pebbles from the hill."—*Eryxias Plato, Aldi II. p. 401.*

The seal spoken of, to make the thing feasible must have the stamp of either a public or private bank, which it was punishable to counterfeit.

Q.—That when everybody complains of want of money, to make more money must surely be the remedy.

A.—The newspapers used to be full of advertisements of a "Vegetable Syrup," which was extolled for "sweetening the blood." On which somebody said "What *will* sweeten the blood, if treacle-and-water will not?" The man who wants money, wants the means of raising money; but he will raise no more though bank-notes were doubled in number and two went in place of one.

Q.—That scarcity of money is the bane of commerce.

A.—By scarcity of money is meant a scarcity of people willing to lend money. Which, whether it be the bane of commerce or not, is a different thing from a scarcity of coins or notes.

Q.—That money ought to be made cheap.

A.—If this means that a saving may be made by using a cheap material like paper instead of a dear one like gold, and the difference of cost be put to the public account, this has been attempted to be impressed already. But if it means that bills ought to be discounted at the public expense, it might as well be argued that the Bankrupt List ought to be put down by application of the Consolidated Fund.

[If by *cheap* is meant of *little worth*, the answer may be referred to the next paragraph.]

Q.—That we want a cheap currency, in order that everybody may be able to get it.

A.—A Cambridge scholar wanted to entertain some friends economically; so he went to a spirit dealer in the town and said: "Can you let me have some cheap brandy?" "O yes, Sir! can let you have very good at 18s. a gallon." "Can you let me have some cheaper?" "O yes, Sir! can make it as cheap as you like, *with the pump in the yard*. So it is with currency. All the cheapening of currency is to be *with the pump in the yard*.

Q.—That there ought to be free trade in money, as in everything else.

A.—Free trade in money means that there shall be liberty to issue paper to any extent, and the working classes be cut down in their substantial wages in consequence. It may be useful to see what unlimited issues would come to. School-boys have often thought of the convenience which would arise, if the pastry-cook would take pebbles for half-pence, and everybody else agree to do the same. The end of which would be, that prices paid in pebbles would rise,