

be. De Moltke had accompanied the Crown Prince of Germany to assist at the funeral of the Prince Consort. This was in December, 1861, and when the Second Empire was in its hey-day. They returned to Berlin via Paris, and on landing at Calais were received by Prince Jérôme Napoleon, whose features impressed the Marshal as eminently imperial, and recalling those of Napoleon I. Quite different was Napoleon III., who only looked well on horseback. His Majesty had very short, spindle legs, and a long body. His eyes were lustreless, and his expression impassibility itself—the result, we now know, of profound dissimulation. This Buddha-like tranquillity was new to the French, because the opposite of their character, and so attracted them. Napoleon III. had a superior mind and a strong will, observed the Marshal; was not a king, and looked an emperor only on horseback. Madame de Staël satirized the First Napoleon as a Robespierre on horseback. The Third Napoleon had not the studied theatricalisms of his uncle, and if he assented to keep a gorgeous court, he did so to suit the national love for *éclat*. The Marshal admired the Empress Eugénie, just as did courtiers in her day Marie Antoinette. The Empress was then “thirty”—the Marshal thus proves his gallantry—and had a pair of shoulders of marvellous beauty; her toilette was perfect simplicity, and dispensed with all effects of ornamentation. She spoke rapidly and incessantly—not a crowned head trait—and by her free and easy manners rather shocked the then young (sixty-three) soldier—aged to-day ninety years—who was accustomed to the starch and stays of Prussian etiquette. Guest at the Tuileries, the Marshal could not sleep, his bedroom was so filled with luxurious upholstery, curtains, bibelots, and lights. Perhaps he too thought “what a place to sack!” as Blucher observed when looking on London from the summit of St. Paul’s. Accustomed to frugality, to even parsimony, De Moltke perceived in all this profusion of wealth and extravagance the indices of the beginning of the end. Wherever he went he was astonished at the splendours. But he had a keen eye for everything military. He found the façades of the barracks elegant, but the interiors were filthy. At a military review organized in his honour, the marshal noted the inferior training of the soldiers, their weakness in manœuvring and the handling of their arms. Since 1857 De Moltke has been at the head of the Prussian Grand Army staff; since 1870 France has changed her Minister of War no less than eighteen times.

Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet, by P. Thureau-Dangin (Plon), is a work that will repay perusal, for the light it throws on the history of Europe since 1814. The author is not afraid to state on which side are his sympathies, and where is concentrated his hate. He lays bare the errors of Louis-Philippe, whom Henri Heine—a pensioner on his Majesty’s Civil List, styled the “Modern Ulysses”—in dealing with Turkey and Egypt, and which led up to the Second Empire and the present phases of the Russian and Egyptian questions. France, remarks M. Dangin, by siding for Mahomet-Ali in 1840, and confounding her interests with his pretensions, received humiliation at the hands of Lord Palmerston. The latter would not consent to splitting up the Ottoman Empire into several Greeces, still less, allowing Egypt to become a French protectorate. That defeat of France in 1840 produced a deep and sullen agitation throughout the kingdom; the feeling took root that the pride and the prestige of the country had been let down. The event cost Louis-Philippe his crown, as between 1840 and 1848 there was no possibility open to France to speculate in a foreign adventure, and so turn aside the attention of the country from Guizot’s resistance to the national demand for reform. And not only did Louis-Philippe lose his throne, but he paved the way for Louis Napoleon’s return, and who represented “a principle, a cause, and a defeat,” as the Prince stated when on his trial, and which trial was eclipsed by that of Madame Lafarge’s, and the assertion of chemist Raspail, that arsenic, like good, was in everything, the judge’s armchair included. It was then to restore the prestige of France, that the Crimean war was undertaken; 1854 paid the debt of 1840. The African campaigns during the reign of Louis-Philippe prepared the men who executed the *Coup d’Etat* of 1851; and the Treaty of Paris in 1856 was the glorification of that crime, and the reparation of the blunders of 1840.

December 31, 1887.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTH-WEST POLICY.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—I don’t care much about crying out: “There’s my thunder!” But I have, when the North-West had a battle to fight, fought for her interests. To-day fighting for her meets with nothing like the ignorant optimisms and official *vis inertiae* that I encountered.

In one of your notes on the North-West in the issue of January 5, you say: “It becomes the duty of Canadians to see to it that every legitimate inducement is held out to immigrants of the right class, and every removable obstacle speedily taken out of the way. One such obstacle, of a very formidable kind, is presented by the system of reservations which operates to withhold from settlement so large a portion of the most desirable lands in the North-West. The evils resulting from this system are patent to every observer who has lived in or passed over the prairies. The *Winnipeg Call* has recently rendered good service by calling attention to this matter in a series of effective articles. It points out that ‘a settler on an even section is surrounded by four odd-numbered ones which are practically withheld from settlement. If he happens to be in a fairly settled district these sections will most likely be included in a grant to a railway company, and will be held at a price which few people will care to give. If they remain in the hands of the Government they are probably

a considerable distance from railway communication and, therefore, in a locality where close settlement is all the more desirable. These lands, in the latter case, may be either reserved from disposition entirely, in order to enable railway companies to complete the selection of their grants, or they may be for sale at \$2.50 or \$2 per acre. In any case they are locked up, for, in the first event, no one could get them even if he would, and, in the second, no one would care to pay that price for them, as any immigrant having sufficient means to buy land would sooner pay a trifle higher rate, and obtain an improved farm in a well settled locality.’” You appear to be under the impression that this is a new policy propounded by the *Call*.

The writer of this letter at the close of 1883 advocated the settlement of the odd sections.

When Mr. White became Minister of the Interior the *Leader* of August the 6th, of which I was then the editor and proprietor, laid down a policy for the North-West, and conspicuous in the planks of that policy was the settlement of the odd sections. On this head the article said: “Reserving the odd sections works great hardship. There are four more than those reserved for the railway reserved—viz., two for the Hudson Bay Company, and two for schools. Thus in every township sixteen have to do the work of thirty-six—with only sixteen sections occupied the township is unsocial—lonesome—a peculiar hardship on a treeless prairie. . . . The odd sections taken back from the C.P.R. should all be thrown open for settlement. . . . Settlement is retarded, and two families would enrich Canada four times, aye, ten times as much as the money which the section is supposed to represent to the railway.”

On September 24, 1885, in another article in the *Leader*, you may read: “Half of every township practically a law-enforced desert. . . . The loneliness is awful, especially for the women.” Again and again is the subject dealt with, and Mr. White declared himself afterwards when he visited Regina as holding the same opinion respecting the policy of reserving the odd sections as the *Leader*, and if I remember he has expressed that opinion in Parliament. He has not expressed any opinion respecting the policy of taking them back from the C.P.R.

The writer of this letter, when inflated views of the value of land still continued, not only condemned the policy of reserving odd sections, but advocated taking them back. At the time it was thought Quixotic, and was a policy supposed to be unwelcome, alike to the Government and C.P.R., and I seemed to be pouring water on the sand. But it seems it was from a golden urn. I am, etc., NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

Regina, January 10, 1888.

THE MISTAKE OF PROHIBITION.

In a speech at Sebago Lake, last summer, Mr. Blaine said that the principal prohibitory statute now in force in Maine has been amended from year to year, since its first enactment in 1857, “as leading Temperance men have requested” and that “the changes to make it more effective have averaged nearly one for every year since the original law was passed.” The same course has been pursued in Vermont for a longer period, except that prohibition there has not yet, as in Maine, been “put into the constitution.” And in other States, as the movement has increased in energy or desperation, its tendency has been to plunge deeper and deeper into legislation, or root itself in the fundamental law.

I shall undertake to show that, so long as public sentiment makes this constant strengthening of the law necessary, prohibition is a mistaken method of restricting the liquor traffic,—that it is in violation of some of the essential conditions of efficient government under our popular system. For while Americans are a law-abiding people, it is with the general understanding that they are their own lawmakers, with all that that implies. . . . The prevalence of this principle is doubtless responsible for the disregard of those laws which do not express the public will. Such laws in theory, almost as indeed in fact, are dead letters. . . .

All the political conceptions upon which our government is administered run back to Fichte’s primary rule, that each man has the right to live in society with just that amount of liberty which will not intrench upon the liberty of other men. This alone implies the necessity, as it gives the right, to regulate and repress in every contingency when this heritage of liberty is invaded or overthrown. But experience has shown that in making and enforcing prohibitive regulations in a popular government the people must be substantially of one mind in regard to their necessity and utility. The will of a bare majority, or even a decided preponderance of sentiment, does not afford an adequate basis for the interference of the corporate power with the exercise of those rights which the minority may insist upon as personal or natural. Nothing short of that public will which Sismondi tells us “is the sum of all the wills, of all the intelligence, of all the virtue of the State,” is a sufficient support for prohibitive laws. A system of strict regulation, or repression, must embody substantially the entire will of the people and have the approval of all their intelligence and virtue. . . . A government that rests like ours upon popular convictions can easily gain heights of legislation which it “is not competent to hold.” What John Bright has called “legislation by hurricane” is the most difficult of all to sustain. When the public will falters or feeling subsides, the administrative function becomes weak and inoperative. The inevitable failure of continued energy, which Demosthenes complained of in the Athenians of his day, ensues; and while those who have a personal or pecuniary interest in the violation of particular laws will make great habitual efforts to defeat their operation, those who have nothing to gain from their enforcement beyond the general public welfare will follow their natural inclination to “mind their own business.”