

brand of anti-protectionist as he was when he undertook to "run" the *Victoria Times*, and came near running it into the ground, and the same thinly-disguised votary of the gospel, according to St. Blake and St. Laurier, that he has been ever since he came to Vancouver. THE HORNET congratulates him on his outspokenness—albeit it has come somewhat late in the day. We now know, exactly, where to find him—when we need him.

But, not content with giving the scribe of the *P-I*, this profession of his faith, in so far as Dominion politics are concerned, he volunteers the gratuitous piece of information that Mr. Henry "Lorryea," Mr. Blake's successor in the leadership of the Grits, in the Dominion House, is coming on a visit to British Columbia to do some missionary work for his party. Well, we venture to predict that, having been able, without any serious mental discomfort, to stand the visit of Commandant Booth, we shall be able to listen to "Lorryea" without being seriously discomposed by the oratorical efforts of the flighty Montreal Frenchman. It will be a "modern instance" of "St. Anthony's sermon to the fishes." Only that, and nothing more.

But the cream of the interview is in the wind-up thereof. "There is a growing feeling of bitterness between the Island and the Mainland, which will surely end in a division of the territory into two provinces, and many of the far-seeing people say that, as it must come sooner or later, it might as well come now." So speaks Sir Oracle. What a contrast to his utterances in the *World* of very recent dates! The "growing feeling of bitterness" he either pooh-pooed as without shadow of justification, or characterized as the work of a few "fanatics," "disappointed place-seekers," or "traitors." Those very same men he now speaks of respectfully as "far-seeing people." Verily, as his Hibernian running-mate, O'Brien, would say, "wonders will never stop ceasing!"

But where shall we seek for the why and the wherefore of the thushness? Can the leopard, then, change his spots, or the Ethiopian his skin? Perhaps not; but the time-serving politician never has any difficulty in changing his coat—when he finds that it does not *pay* to wear the one he has hitherto flaunted in the face of the public. Such men have always the horse sense to recognize and adopt the course that pays best, or, at least, to quickly abandon the one they have been following, as soon as they discover that there "is nothing in it"—for them. And, truly, with the historical example of Gladstone's many political somersaults before us, we are forced to the conclusion that those men are "wiser in their generation" than some honest people.

THE HORNET was, one day, a passenger on the tram between this city and Westminster, when the car, without any apparent reason, all of a sudden slowed down, and finally came to a dead standstill. After a considerable time had elapsed, and there was still no sign of progress being resumed, one of the passengers asked the conductor what was cause of the stoppage. That official, in a matter-of-course tone of voice, replied, "*The juice has given out!*" Can it be that a similar cause has produced the sudden and most unlooked-for surcease in Bre'r McLagan's thick-and-thin support of the policy of Theodore, surnamed the Truthful? We are not in a position to assert positively that such is the case, but there is no question that appearances favor the theory that the "hoodle spring," which Mac has fondly believed to be perennial, has suddenly dried up, and that there is, therefore, no longer any "palm oil" in the Government "Gilead." It certainly looks that way. Very much that way.

As to Mr. McLagan's ideas on the annexation of Canada by the United States, none of the readers of his paper have been allowed to entertain even the shadow of a doubt, for a long time past, although he has not, we believe, been, hitherto, quite so outspoken as he ventured to be when he found himself standing on American soil, and breathing the congenial atmosphere of "The Land of the Free and the Home of the Knave." Hear how he vaticinates in a manner worthy of a Fourth of July orator. "The time is not far distant when no one will know there is an artificial line between the United States and Canada." "Artificial line," quotha! What flippancy! We submit that any man, who has the audacity to speak thus lightly of the 49th parallel, would have referred irreverently to Mason and Dixon's line, and belongs to the same sacrilegious category as Sidney Smith's rash friend, of whom it is recorded that he was known to have spoken disparagingly of the equator. We venture to assure Bre'r McLagan that the rebel rubber is not yet fashioned that will obliterate that highly indispensable line, and, when a Yankee foot crosses it, there will be found a *chreux de frise* of British and Canadian bayonets for the invader to breast and cut his way through, before the Union Jack is lowered, and the spangled rag, which Mac and his sympathisers delight to designate "Old Glory," is run up in its stead.

Now that the by-law, sanctioning the purchase by the city of the Vancouver Street Railway and Electric Light system, has virtually received its quietus—and very properly so—at the hands of the Council, the way has been cleared for the consideration of the proposition to enable the city to secure control of the system at once, and, ultimately, to purchase the property on such terms as shall be fair to those who invested their coin in the venture, and yet cost the City little or no money.

Had the purchase by-law been passed, it would, taken together with the expenditure to be incurred in connection with the work to be done on the Water Works and the procuring of the new plant required for perfecting the Electric Lighting system, have exhausted the borrowing powers of the City, and have rendered all other necessary work impossible of performance for some years to come. The price proposed to be paid for the system would, moreover, have proved insufficient to pay the creditors of the Company 10 per cent., and would have robbed the shareholders of every cent they had invested. It has been a matter of astonishment to us where the advocates of the plan were able to discover any advantage in the scheme for either of the parties concerned.

What, then, is the position now? The City is offered a controlling interest in the Company, with a majority of representatives on the Board of Directors. It has, moreover, the option of purchasing the balance of the stock at a maximum price of \$99,000, if the business is paying at the rate of 6 per cent. If the system pays less than that percentage, then, for every point less than 6 per cent, a deduction of 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent will be made from the maximum price; and, during the interval between the passing of the by-law and the time when the City has the option of purchase, the City will receive the major proportion of all profits earned.

In addition to this, it is to be noted that the City, by agreeing to purchase on these terms, does not incur a single cent of liability; for, long before the bonds are due, the Company will have handed to the City sufficient, from the returns of the system, to pay them off; and, even if that were not so, another issue could be made to take up the maturing series.