

The Canada Citizen

AND TEMPERANCE HERALD.

A Journal devoted to the advocacy of Prohibition, and the promotion of social progress and moral Reform.

Published every Friday by the

CITIZEN PUBLISHING COMPANY,

OFFICE, 8 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO.

Subscription, ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, strictly in advance.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, APRIL 3RD, 1885.

MEN, WOMEN, AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

It is reported that Vice-President Hendricks and Senator Voorhees of Indiana, waited the other day on President Cleveland and urged him to dismiss Republican office-holders and appoint Democrats in their stead. It is reported also that the President declined to do so, and that the refusal will cost him the support of many members of his own party. It is to be hoped that all these reports are true, for if they are there is some hope for the political future of the United States. The great need of the time is civil service reform, and on that issue Cleveland was elected more than on any other.

There is a growing conviction amongst thoughtful observers in the United States that something like a social war is impending in that country, and if it breaks out it will involve Canada as well. The socialists are not merely organizing but drilling and arming. What may happen on a large scale was foreshadowed a few years ago by the labor riots which spread from Pittsburgh, and by the more recent and more local disturbance at Cincinnati. The whole power of the Federal Government may yet be required to suppress a revolt more widespread than the secession movement of 1860, and infinitely more dangerous to the progress of civilization. A war between different orders of society would create industrial confusion such as no war based on geographical conditions could possibly do. The danger is due largely to the existence of gigantic monopolies like those controlled by Gould and Vanderbilt, and to the importation of cheap labor from China and Europe to increase the gains of the monopolists.

To write a commentary on the proceedings of the Ontario Legislature which was prorogued on Monday last, would be to task exceeding alike my powers and my space. One point, however, is worthy of note—the part played in legislation by the private member. Under our system of responsible government the ministry of the day are held, and properly so, responsible for all the legislation of the session. This makes it necessary for an important public bill to be taken up as a Government measure if it is to be allowed to become law, and the effect of the theory is to greatly restrict in practice the sphere of the private member in legislation. There is no reason, however, for private members to become the ciphers they now are. They might formulate in resolutions such principles as they believe to be sound, give Parliament a chance to discuss them, and take part in the political education of the community by repeating year after year the assertion of the principles. There is far more independence in the British Parlia-

ment amongst the private members than there is with us, and this in spite of our youthfulness as a political community.

A good example of what a thoughtful private member may accomplish is afforded by the Sunday Observance Bill brought in by Mr. Wood of North Hastings, and carried on its final reading by an overwhelming majority. Another is the bill brought in last year by Mr. Waters of Middlesex, to confer the municipal franchise on unmarried women. This also was carried by a good majority, and at the last election a considerable number of women did vote for members of municipal councils. There is no reason why women voters in Toronto should not decide the composition of the council, at least to the extent of keeping out of it brewers, hotel-keepers, and others interested in the liquor traffic. There are always from three to half a dozen alderman whose business is either to make or to sell alcoholic beverages, and this year the Mayor must be added to the list. The task of ascertaining what women have votes, and of securing that they shall be polled on the municipal election day, is no easy one, but if they can be induced to turn out they will soon revolutionize the city council.

Why should there be a session of the Provincial Parliament each year? If there were one only in each alternate year a great saving would be effected in a variety of ways. A good deal of tinkering legislation would also be prevented. And what consequences would there be as an offset? Many of the States of the American Union have adopted the biennial system, and others are following their example from time to time. It seems to work well over there; why not here? True, we have a different system of administration in Ontario, but is the difference of such a kind as to make it necessary to hold annual sessions here? If this cannot be shown, then sooner or later the biennial system will be introduced and the private member who identifies himself with the principle will win credit to himself and confer a benefit on the whole community.

On more than one occasion during the late session the question of counsel fees came up for discussion. When A goes to law with B and wins his case the costs of the suit are laid on B, and part of the costs is always a fee for A's counsel. If B wins the case then A must pay for the services of B's counsel. In other words, the unfortunate man who loses must pay for the services of the man who by his skill as a pleader procures his defeat. If the courts were infallible in their findings and the right man always won, the iniquity of this system would not be so great; with fallible judges and juries, who make frequent and palpable blunders it has become intolerable. The great majority of men go to law in good faith, and the loser always feels sore over his defeat. His lacerated feelings are not soothed by the fact that he has to pay for the services of the counsel on the other side as well as the services of the counsel employed in his defence. There are thousands of intelligent laymen all over the country, who have suffered this injustice, and who would welcome the abolition of this absurd infliction on the community. If some private member of the Ontario Legislature will only initiate a movement to abolish the taxing of counsel fees amongst the costs charged to defeated litigants, he will soon bring about a much needed reform.

I suggested recently that within a year the Queen of England and the Mahdi might be found in alliance with each other. Already this quasi-prediction seems in a fair way to be carried out. General Graham will apparently break the power of Osman Digma near Suakim without much fighting except what is of the most desultory kind. To reach Khartoum from Suakim would be a costly, formidable, and useless undertaking. To reach it from Wolsley's headquarters on the Nile would be equally so. The Mahdi has a very insecure throne and would probably be glad to make peace. If he proposes a convention on the basis of the abolition of the slave trade he may be listened to, and England may relieve herself of an absurd war in which she cannot gain even glory.

The defeat of the French in China is ominous of trouble for the Ferry administration. Democracies are proverbially exacting. They tolerate no failures in generalship or administration. Any chain of events which produces chronic or wide-spread dissatisfaction soon saps a government's