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Comments on the Cartoons.



SIR JOHN CONVERTED AGAIN.—Everybody who is at all familiar with Canadian political affairs knows that Sir John Macdonald has always been a stickler for the Federal veto.

He has shown his fondness for this prerogative by using it freely and frequently—not permitting himself to be troubled very often by any considerations of strict constitutionality. In short, it is notorious that he has, time and again, disallowed Provincial legislation, simply to serve the interests of political friends or powerful monopolies, and this in the face of his own oracular deliverance that the veto was intended to be used only in two classes of cases: (1) When Provincial legislation was *ultra vires*; and (2) when such legislation was against the general interests of the Dominion. Sir John now holds and declares that in no conceivable case can the veto be properly used, for he has been converted to the Grit doctrine on the subject, and that is what the tenet of "Provincial Rights" amounts to. At Westport, lately, the new convert spoke in open meeting, and confessed his new-found faith in these

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terms—"Be it (the Jesuit Estates' Act) right, or be it wrong, that is no affair of ours. It is within the limit of Quebec's constitution, and they have the right to pass it if they choose. What is the meaning of free Government? It means a Government where the people have the right to rule or misrule themselves as they choose." This is just what Oliver Mowat said at the time of the disallowance of the Streams Bill; what Greenway said when the Manitoba Railway Acts were vetoed, and what Mercier said when this same Sir John annulled the Magistrates' Act of Quebec. No doubt the Grit evangelists will exult with great joy over the conversion of this hardened sinner to their way of thinking, and we might all rejoice if we did not believe the Reform doctrine to be heretical. Let some one of its adherents—say Mr. Laurier or Mr. Mowat—give us a plain answer to this question: What could be done, consistently with this view of Provincial Rights, supposing one of the Provinces were to pass an Act incorporating and endowing with public funds the organization known as the Fenian Brotherhood? We have asked this before, but have paused in vain for a reply.

ROYAL FAVOR.—By a Dominion law, the North-West Territories (a magnificent domain which is being rapidly settled by a splendid type of people) are under Prohibition. The Government of Canada very wisely decided that it would be in the general interest to keep that new land free from the blight and curse of liquor. The law referred to was accordingly passed, and every description of drunk-producing stuff was barred out. Then an admirable body of executive officers, known as mounted police, were equipped to see that the law was duly observed. Then, that all these wise provisions might effectively be brought to nought, power was vested in the Lieut.-Governor to grant "permits" to individuals for the importation of liquor for their private use, and to hotel keepers for the sale of "4 per cent. beer." This has worked most admirably in the direction indicated. The law is a howling farce, and the present Lt.-Governor Royal, altogether out-Dewdneys Dewdney in the permit granting line. His conduct is a scandal and disgrace, and is rapidly bringing the Territories down to the level of the worst license districts. The sooner he is brought to his senses the better it will be for his bosses at Ottawa.



GRIP is just as well pleased to note that the Democratic party have had some important victories in the State elections just held across the border, but he is not going to throw up his hat and whoop over it as a Free Trade triumph, or the inevitable precursor of one. It may, perhaps, be a small step in that direction, and then again it may not, you know.

There are all sorts of issues involved in State elections apart from national questions; and even if this were not so, the Democratic party is by no means a Free Trade party—though there are Democrats who are Free Traders. For Canadians who believe in abolishing all tariff restrictions to exult over every Democratic victory as an indication that the U.S. is getting ready to abandon Protection, is to imitate the stupidity of their Restrictionist opponents who shout over the election of an occasional "Fair Trader" in England as betokening the possibility of a re-enactment of the corn laws.

SOME natives of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific murdered an Englishman and three other natives, and devoured the bodies. Whereupon the captain of the English cruiser "Royalist" murdered a number of natives, many of whom presumably had nothing to do with the first murders, by "shelling the village." The superiority