

ther on this writer, after fairly stating the circumstances respecting the experts' examination and evidence, very illogically and unjustly adds: "It is only necessary to say that PALMER was a protégé of SIR GEORGE CARTIER's, and that the Government, for some reason, dare not punish him. Why he sent the letter to Mr. YOUNG may yet be explained." The implication in the last clause could hardly be stranger. But it is not every writer on this matter who confines himself to mere implication. The editor of a ministerial weekly makes his assertion point-blank: "The Commission appointed to investigate into the state of affairs in the Montreal Post-Office have discovered that the POPE-MACDONALD letter, about which so much was said some time ago, was opened by a clerk named PALMER, who was chief of the delivery department." A direct and deliberate mis-statement, if ever there was one.

We would not be understood as being desirous of shielding Mr. PALMER from any just suspicion which may attach to him in this matter. It is our desire to be perfectly impartial in a case of such importance, but it would be impossible for us to preserve strict impartiality without raising our voice in protest against the unjust and uncalled-for aspersions that some journals have thought fit to cast upon Mr. PALMER's character—not so much in malice, we are fain to believe as in their blind eagerness to serve their party. If it be wrong to condemn an unconvicted man, then Mr. PALMER has been most wrongfully and most shamefully treated. We trust that those journals who have offended in this matter will see the propriety of making the *amende honorable*, and retrieving their reputation as upright and unbiassed commentators on the events of the day.

THE VETO.

PRESIDENT GRANT has surprised everybody by returning the Financial Bill without his signature. It was almost universally admitted that he would not be able to withstand the pressure put upon him by the West and Southwest, whence he holds his strongest bases of support. He has done so, however, and thereby put a new face on the situation. The reasons assigned by the PRESIDENT for acting as he did are simple and straightforward. He says the fact cannot be concealed that the Bill increases the paper circulation of the country one hundred million dollars. The theory, in his belief, is a departure from the true principles of finance, and its approval would be a departure from every Message sent to Congress by him on the subject. He recommends such legislation as will secure, as speedily as practicable, a return to specie payment, and refers to the pledges of Government to make provision at the earliest practicable moment for the redemption of United States notes in coin. He recommends that the revenue of the country be increased so as to meet current expenditures, as a preparatory measure towards specie resumption. He was disposed at first to give great weight to the argument that there was an unusual distribution of national banking currency, but thought four millions of such currency still remained in the Treasury subject to the demand of the section desiring it.

As was to be expected the Presidential veto has created a stir. The whole New York and Boston press support it in glowing language. The Western papers and the Western Members of Congress are devising all sorts of plans to counteract its influence. The House of Representatives could pass the Bill over the President's head, but in the Senate the two-thirds majority for that purpose is lacking, hence the veto must stand. The only way to defeat it is by strategy. The latest project aiming in that direction is the framing of another Bill such as will combine the feature of redemption proposed in the Senate Bill, with the right to issue additional bank notes on condition of a certain proportion of legal tender notes being withdrawn at the same time. Many are of opinion that if such a Bill shall be reported from the Senate with a provision authorizing free banking, it will pass the Senate and the House, and receive the approval of the President.

Meantime the political results of the veto will likely be of major importance. We are already informed that Senators MORTON, LOGAN, CARPENTER, FERRY, and others will issue an address to the Republican party of the country, replying to the President's veto, charging him with inconsistency, arguing that the Veto Message will depress the industrial interests of the country; that it represents only the President's views as against a majority of the people, and that the Republican party is not responsible for it.

Anything relating to the law of libel is of interest during the present excitement consequent on Judge RANSAY's ruling in the recent *Witness* libel case. The following opinion recently delivered by Judge THURMAN, of New

York, is especially *apropos*. The Judge told Gibson, of the *Sun*, that he could not refuse to answer questions on the ground of a privileged communication. "If it were," he said, "it would be perfectly easy for any malignant person to scatter his libels broadcast over the whole country without any responsibility whatever for his action. If he could, by merely disclosing them to a member of the press, procure their publication everywhere, and the member of the press is entitled to say this is a privileged communication which I will not disclose, then, as I said, any malignant person might with impunity disseminate his libels far and wide over the country. That is not the law. There is no such thing known as a privileged communication, and there is not a court in the country, from the highest to the lowest, in which, if you were called upon to testify in relation to the matters that are now under investigation before this committee, if the court had jurisdiction to inquire of them, that it would not require you to answer the question, and subject you to punishment if you failed to answer."

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (Marquette) has constituted himself the advocate of the dog-in-the-manger policy with regard to the Mennonite land grant. On Mr. SCOTCHERD's motion for correspondence relating to the immigration of this sect he complained of the locking up of the townships for people such as these, who might come and who might not, and expressed his opinion that we might obtain a far better class of immigrants, who would require no special legislation. If this is the kind of welcome that honourable gentleman from the Prairie Province prepare for coming emigrants, it is small wonder that the settlement of the country is a matter of difficulty. In the neighbouring State of Minnesota, the immigrant is always welcome, and in consequence land is being rapidly taken up. Is the Province of Manitoba so thickly populated that there is no room for a few score of Mennonite families; or does the member for Marquette subscribe to the doctrine of Manitoba for the Metis. If the former, enlarge the Provincial boundaries; if the latter, what says Mr. CUNNINGHAM doing in Manitoba.

The Hon. JOHN HILLYARD CAMERON, during the debate on the new Election Bill, strongly expressed his objections to the introduction of the Ballot on the ground that it is an un-English and unmanly institution. The honourable member for Cardwell will pardon us if we suggest that such an objection savours strongly of Podsnappery of the most offensive style. This style of waiving aside unpalatable propositions on the ground of their being contrary to the charter which the guardian angels exclusively bestowed upon the people of Great Britain, is not a little effete and worn out. It is the more surprising that the member for Cardwell, whose critical taste and legal acumen are household words throughout Ontario should have gone to the trouble of dividing the House on a mere question of taste; inasmuch that any objection from him to a measure before the House is usually supported by an ample array of argument and precedent.

A New York paper is good enough to inform the world—on what authority it does not appear—that QUEEN VICTORIA has a decided partiality for the DUKE OF EDINBURGH over the PRINCE OF WALES. With this axiom to start from it launches into a surmise bewildering enough to anybody acquainted with English Constitutional History. "Who knows," it exclaims, "but she keeps the throne in the hope that the younger son may have it? Stranger things than this have happened, and in England, too. Aye, and stranger things have happened, in the United States too, than the nomination by GRANT of BUTLER to the Presidency and GRANT's acceptance of the Chiltern Hundreds.

It appears that Mr. JENKINS, our Agent General in England, has once more distinguished himself. At a recent private interview with the Duke of Richmond, the President of the Council, his conduct is described as having been grossly insolent. In commenting upon this new freak of the author of "Ginx's Baby" the *New York Times* expresses a hope that Canada does not feel proud of her agent. We can assure the *Times* that the pride Canadians take in their Agent-General is much of the sort that the parents of an erratic genius take in the escapades of their eccentric offspring—the parental affection, however, lacking in our case.

The member for North York is not remarkable, notwithstanding his boasted services to BRIGHT and COBDEN, for sagacity or good taste in his observations; but he certainly did manage to hit the right nail on the head when, in alluding to the Quebec election riots in 1872 he expressed his belief that the disturbances were due to the existence of a Government which was afraid to put the law in force.

FROM THE CAPITAL.

VISITORS TO OTTAWA—THE TARIFF—DISCONTENT AND DISCOURAGEMENT—THE DULLNESS OF THE HOUSE—COMMITTEE WORK—RUMOURS.

OTTAWA, April 27, 1874.

Ottawa has been very lively this week. Toronto and Montreal seemed to have poured into the capital. The visitors consisted, for the most part, of members of delegations who had come to consult with the Finance Minister in regard to the new tariff. Mr. Cartwright has learned by this time that his office is no bed of roses. Holding two or three interviews every day with representatives of the different trades and manufactures of the Dominion is rather trying on the nerves and patience of any man, and I rather fancy that for a man in Mr. Cartwright's peculiar position, the ordeal must have proved quite a hardship.

We are all at sea here respecting the issue of these conferences, and, in fact, respecting the ultimate fate of the tariff. There is no doubt whatever that the present season, when trade is reviving on the opening of navigation, is in the highest degree unfavourable for a disturbance of the tariff. Politics have nothing to do with the discontent, and, in some cases, the discouragement which Mr. Cartwright's changes have induced. The only remaining hope is that whatever is to be done will be done speedily, and that the present interregnum will cease as soon as possible.

Inside of Parliament, public interest has visibly flagged. The militia bill has been discussed in its preliminary stages; the election bill has been canvassed pretty thoroughly in all its stages; several private bills of great importance have been brought up, and still the proceedings have had a languid air of formalism very difficult to account for. Even the members are by no means regular in their attendance. On some evenings there were not more than fifty members present, out of a House of two hundred.

A great deal of useful committee work is being done. I may refer particularly to that on mercantile agencies and to the remarkable testimony of Mr. Middlemiss, so well known in your city. That gentleman emphatically declared that his firm have never been influenced by improper motives in the conduct of this business. He also denied that the members of his firm or any of his employees ever received any consideration whatever for the performance of their duties in connection with the office, excepting, of course, the legitimate remuneration which was paid to the hands.

The North-west committee is still sitting, and I might regale you with many stories respecting the testimony given therein. But inasmuch as the investigation is carried on with closed doors, I believe I am safe in saying that really nothing is known of what has transpired. Archbishop Taché is looking well and goes freely into society.

There was a very ridiculous scene at the Hull Presbyterian Bazaar, where a chair was set up for the candidate who would poll the largest number of votes. The young ladies who were the promoters of the movement hit upon Sir John A. Macdonald and Mr. Mackenzie as rival candidates, and enlisted the services of the respective votaries of these gentlemen to push the matter through. A sly way of doing business. The chair was worth about \$100, and it realized \$600. The friends of Sir John won it by a great majority, and they took the trouble to carry the victor from the House to have a seat in it.

"All right," said a disgusted Ministerialist, "the Tories have fooled us this time, but next year we will put up a sword of honour (!) and if it costs us \$10,000, Mackenzie shall have it." As a test of popularity, the incident has no significance at all. Sir John is universally loved in Ottawa, where his personal qualities are thoroughly appreciated and where he has resided so long. Mr. Mackenzie is not so well known, but in society he is much more amiable than he is in the House. CHAUDIERE.

NEW BOOKS AND NEW EDITIONS.

Messrs. Harper & Bros. have issued another volume* of their Illustrated Library Edition of Wilkie Collins's works. We know of no better edition of this popular novelist than this.

Frederick Talbot's novelette, "Through Fire and Water,"† which appeared in "Belgravia" last year, has been added to Harper's Library of Select Novels. It is true that as a work of fiction it possesses no marked merit of its own; nevertheless it is not without interest, and will serve to while away pleasantly an idle hour.

Messrs. Appleton & Co. are issuing a series of handy little Science Primers for the use of schools and of beginners, which, judging from the specimen before us, are admirably calculated to serve the purpose for which they are intended. In the last volume issued,‡ the fifth of the series, Dr. Geikie, Director of the Geological Survey of Scotland, and Murchison Professor of Geology and Mineralogy, gives a number of easy lessons in the elements of geology, illustrated with cuts of the various specimens introduced. The instruction is given in a plain and familiar style, to which the author succeeds admirably in imparting a considerable degree of interest.

* Armadale. A Novel. By Wilkie Collins. 12mo. Cloth. Illustrated. Pp. 57. \$1.50. New York: Harper & Bros. Montreal: Dawson Bros.
† Through Fire and Water. A Tale of City Life. By Frederick Talbot. Paper. Illustrated. Pp. 64. 25 Cents. New York: Harper & Bros. Montreal: Dawson Bros.
‡ Science Primers. V. Geology. By Archibald Geikie, LL.D., F.R.S. 18mo. Cloth. Limp. Illustrated. New York: Appleton & Co. Montreal: Dawson Bros.