

present unparalleled prosperity and happiness, and for the glorious, the magnificent, the incomparably brilliant and prosperous future stretching like a still more lovely and alluring land of promise along the roseate vista of the coming years. This government has fostered and encouraged and developed the industries of this great and glorious Canada of ours in a manner and to an extent unsurpassing even our wildest dreams, by laying forever the gaunt spectre of foreign competition. Huge factories, smoking chimneys, the roar of machinery in motion, fruitful fields, smiling gardens, teeming waters, the blue sky and the gentle zephyr—all attest the wise, paternal and patriotic policy of the government. Good wages, cheap food, work for all, a healthful climate and a beneficent Providence give indisputable evidence of the capacity of the government to bring about both national and individual felicity. The cheek of the labourer is ruddy with health, his pocket jingles with ready cash, and smiles the babe and laughs the happy mother. Monopoly—that hideous vampire which has sapped the life of other nations and left them empty wrecks upon the shore of Desolation—has been strangled at its birth in this Canada of ours, by the iron grasp of Individual Equality, the offspring of our paternal government. The policy of this government has vastly increased our trade with foreign countries, and our snowy sails whiten the expanse of river, lake and ocean, bearing the wealth of all climes to our mast-thronged harbours, bursting warehouses and happy inland homes. It has promoted immigration; and by a judicious policy and expenditure has settled in the country a large and ever-increasing number of honest, industrious persons, many of them possessing considerable wealth. It has given the farmer a ready market for his produce, and encouraged bountiful harvests by a beneficent weather bureau. It has made glad the hearts of our fishermen by bountiful protection and fostering care. It has reduced the expenditure for civil government to a minimum, and cast adrift the army of parasites that fattened on the country under the late iniquitous government. It has practised straight-laced economy in every department. It has spent vast sums on essential public works; and, while furnishing employment to thousands, has increased our facilities for traffic and travel, binding the hitherto heterogeneous provinces into one grand coherent homogeneity with an indissoluble bond of union and brotherhood. It has judiciously increased the public debt and decreased the rate of interest—concomitants that fill with rejoicing the heart of every true Canadian. Our bonds sell like hot cakes, and money-lenders quarrel on the streets of London for the right to purchase them. Our credit stands higher to-day than ever before; and we are to-day the wonder and admiration of a gaping world,—thanks to the prudence, foresight, sublime statesmanship, and immaculate political purity of the present administration.

"GENTLEMEN, this is the government you are now asked to support. I do not fear the result. To support the present government is to support the wisest, purest, most patriotic, economical administration that exists on the face of the earth—I had almost said the universe—to-day."

When the applause had subsided, the chairman introduced Mr. Snike, who was decidedly peppery after the remarks of the last speaker. He indulged in no preliminaries whatever, but went at it, hammer and tongs. The air was full of figures in a moment, and gasping voters inhaled millions at every breath. Mr. Snike was armed to the teeth, and he gave no quarter. He reviewed his opponent's speech point by point, contradicted it, ridiculed it, fumed over it, laughed at it, sneered at it, tore it to shreds, and buried the sorry remnants under a mountain of scorn.

"GENTLEMEN," said Mr. Snike in conclusion, "I have, I think, made it clear to you that this country is on the high way to destruction; that it is almost there; that if I had a little more time and a few more figures it would be there now. I have shown you that the present deplorably wretched condition of affairs is wholly and solely due to the criminal mismanagement, gross extravagance, and utter disregard of people's rights, as evinced by the present execrable and iniquitous ad-

ministration. This government is rotten to the core. Bribery, corruption, nepotism, suppression of facts, false returns, and all the long list of unrighteous acts that mark a career of public plunder and a time of national disgrace, are characteristic of this unholy compact. The English language contains no words sufficiently emphatic and unequivocal to fitly denounce and hold up in its true colours to the public gaze this, the most corrupt and unprincipled and criminal administration that ever disgraced any portion of the British empire. But it is a source of satisfaction that despite its unrivalled electioneering skill, its almost superhuman unscrupulousness, despite the power of bribery and indiscriminate corruption, it is fast hastening to its downfall; that the cry has at last gone forth to "turn the rascals out;" that the handwriting on the wall has at last appeared; that the long list of crimes perpetrated upon a long-suffering and despairing public is at length to be brought home to the ruthless betrayers of a nation's trust; and that they are at last to feel the swift vengeance of an aroused and outraged public sentiment. What has this government done? It has destroyed our industries by a ruinous and senseless fiscal policy. Smokeless chimneys in every town and hamlet from Sydney to Vancouver declaim with mute but thrilling eloquence against the horrible system inaugurated by this detestable horde of policy-mongers. Scarcity of work, nominal wages, and dear food appal the toilers of the land; and the idle hands and empty pockets of the labourer, and the wretched condition of his family give indisputable evidence of the widespread destitution. Pallid poverty, with hungry, haunting eyes, looks out imploringly from half a million wretched homes, and calls upon every lover of his country, every sympathizer with suffering humanity, every man who loves liberty and hates oppression to rise up and smite the hydra-headed monster that deals out woe and misery on every hand. We hear of failing crops, of languishing industries, of shipwreck and disaster at sea, of deadly storms and killing frosts, of railway accidents and fearful epidemics; but, thank Heaven, we hear, too, the rising thunder of popular discontent, the premonition of that remedial storm which shall ere long sweep like a besom of destruction through the Augean stables at Ottawa, clearing the political atmosphere and preparing for the nurture of healthy and honourable statesman-ship. What has this government done? It has placed the fair white neck of honest competition beneath the iron heel of a soulless and grinding Monopoly. It has destroyed our foreign trade, and our ship-building industry; and soon the flag of Canadian commerce will be as little known on the Atlantic as Phœnician argosies on eastern seas. It has squandered millions on a reckless immigration policy and filled the streets of our towns with foreign paupers, brought over at the expense of the people who now have to support them. It has deprived the farmer of a market for his produce, and blighted at once his crops and his hopes. Where once the golden harvest waved in the bright autumnal sunshine, the gaunt grasshopper seeks in vain for nourishment and shelter from the howling storm. It has rendered our fisheries unproductive, and the fish and fishermen are alike starving. It has enormously increased the expenditure for civil government, and pursued a course of wasteful extravagance, lining its own pockets with unlawful gains and feeding its pampered favourites at the public crib. It has squandered millions upon millions of the people's money on unnecessary and unproductive public works, buying political support by means of fat contracts given to friends, and creating offices for the benefit of its hireling crew. It has set province against province, class against class, race against race, religion against religion, and has strained almost to the point of bursting asunder the bonds that should unite these scattered provinces into one grand and glorious nationality. It has burdened the country with an enormous debt, unprecedented in the history of national finance, and made us the laughing-stock of the whole world. Thus far it has triumphed by a system of wholesale bribery and corruption, and by the practice of all the infernal arts known to an unpatriotic, self-seeking and wholly unscrupulous clique of political bums.

"Yes, GENTLEMEN, this is the government you are asked to support. And I, too, do not fear the result. I, too, believe that you are sensible men. And I say that you have only to exercise your judgment to become fully aware that to support this government is to support the vilest, rottenest, most extravagant and infamous administration that has ever encumbered the earth!"

Mr. Snike sat down amid great applause and loud countercheers. Then the chairman arose, and it was supposed that he was about to introduce Mr. Spike again, that gentle-

man having indulged in several paroxysms of excitement which seemed likely at any moment to end in apoplexy. But Mr. Smiler, who seemed to have been struck by a sudden inspiration, spoke as follows:

"GENTLEMEN, you have listened with commendable patience to the able speeches of both candidates. They have spoken well, and each has backed his arguments by a formidable array of figures. But, gentlemen, both cannot possibly be right. The country cannot be at once bankrupt and prosperous. The government cannot be at once extravagant and economical, at once immaculate and infamous. Yet such are the statements. Now your own good sense tells you that both gentlemen have been exaggerating. And you don't want as a representative an extremist in politics. You want a man of moderate views, a man who will not be the mouthpiece of any party, a man who will not be at the beck and nod of any party leader, but who will take an intelligent, a manly, and an independent position as your representative in the House of Commons. Gentlemen, I am such a man. And as such I take this opportunity of remarking that in such capacity I will be a candidate for your suffrage in the now pending election. Gentlemen, I assure you —"

Curiosity followed by amazement had thus far held everybody silent, but when Mr. Smiler reached the climax of his remarks the dogs were let loose. Men shouted, and cheered, and laughed, and whistled, thumped the floor with canes and boot heels, and altogether gave Mr. Smiler such an ovation as he had never received before, and in all probability would never receive again. The effect on the candidates was fearful to behold. Both leaped to their feet, both brandished their arms, both rushed to the edge of the platform, neither paid the slightest attention to the other, and both ignored the chairman.

"Gentlemen," yelled Snike, "this is outrageous!"

"Gentlemen," yelled Spike, "this is atrocious and unpardonable!"

"Rah for Smiler!" yelled a voice from the rear of the room.

And hurrah it was; with a "hip, hip, hip, hurrah!"

"Gentlemen," screamed Spike, "I claim the floor."

"Sit down on it then," said Smiler, blandly. "I beg to inform you that I have the floor."

"Sit down yourself, sir!" vociferated Spike. "I'll kick you, sir!"

"Rah for Smiler," called out another voice; and another burst of cheers marked the popular appreciation of this brilliant *coup de main*.

The candidates gesticulated, and screamed, and danced with rage, shook their fists at Smiler, and glared at one another, while to swell the general uproar and render the scene supremely ridiculous a dog upon the platform lifted up his voice in a series of most lugubrious howls.

He was a dog with a mania for politics, and like many bipeds similarly afflicted was anxious to be heard of men.

It was useless to attempt to restore order in that assembly. Perceiving this, the candidates and their friends upon the platform took their hats and went down among the audience, leaving Mr. Smiler in triumphant possession of the rostrum, from which vantage ground he vainly sought to gain a further hearing from anybody except a small boy, and two men who were not voters. He assured these that he was a man of independent and honourable political views, and did not approve of such a disgraceful affair as a campaign of abuse, recrimination and slander. Men, he said, should speak mildly, and express their views in a gentlemanly and statesmanlike manner. Then he went on to remark that both the political parties in Canada were utterly rotten and disreputable; that they had not had a conscientious scruple, and had not advocated a progressive principle for 10, these many years; and that the time was now ripe for the honest, unbought element in this Canada of ours to rise up and deflogistically squelch and utterly smash both the Grits and the Tories—the heelers the squealers, the boodlers, the grabbers, and everything that stood between the people and good government. He further remarked that the hour was at hand—yea—that the hour would strike almost immediately; and that then the overlaid, long suffering, and utterly nauseated public stomach would reject any further buncombe, and spew out the sickening mess of Grit and Tory politics. With a few more assurances of the moderate character of his political views, and a casual reference to maggots in a festering and putrefying body politic, Mr. Smiler got down, shook hands with the two non-voters, patted the small boy on the head and gave him a peppermint, and undertook the modest contract of shaking hands with every man in the room. Strong personal canvassing was being carried on by

