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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1874.

It is remarkable that the daily press have passed over the late debate, on the constitution of the Senate, almost without notice. The reason is that these papers are necessarily partisan and favour the retention of a nominative Senate, as a house of refuge for political favourites. In the present agitation of Parliamentary topics, there is no room for the calm discussion of constitutional questions such as Mr. MILLS introduced. Even the new Government have no disposition to interfere with the Senate as they have plainly shown in the cases of Brown, Penny, Scott, and Christie. But let Mr. MILLS persevere. He will certainly prevail in the end. The result of the yearly onslaught on Dual Representation ought to be an encouragement to him. Mr. MILLS will succeed because he is right. The question may be resumed in a nutshell. The Senate must not be nominative, but elective. Theoretically, no one will demur to this proposition. Practically, the further query arises whether the election of Senators shall be made *mediately* by the Local Legislatures, or *immediately* by Electoral Divisions. Mr. MILLS favours the former mode, and he has the high example of the United States in his support. The direct election of Senators by the people would only result in the creation of a second House of Commons, an unnecessary, if not a mischievous, duplication. People of this Province are more interested than any other in the settlement of the question, for the electoral transformation of the Federal Senate would necessarily entail the abolition of the Provincial Legislative Council. Alarmists may affect to see in both a tendency to Democratic levelling, but should our experience of Democracy in this country never be worse than the lopping off of expensive excrescences and old-time absurdities, it would be a boon which we might all regret not having sooner enjoyed.

The financial question in the United States has reached a final stage of settlement, by the passage, in the House of Representatives, of the Senate Bill which limits the circulation of paper at \$400,000,000. This measure bears upon its face the character of inflation, but the actual expansion need not necessarily be the full amount stated in the Bill. The \$400,000,000 are the extreme term beyond which no greenbacks can be issued, and it is confidently urged, that there will be no occasion to use that sum. The limit is a prudential one intended to inspire confidence. The Senate Bill was further restricted by an amendment which balances the expansion with a distribution of banking reserves, the object being to make the inflation gradual and thus comparatively harmless in disturbing the equilibrium of trade. Up to the present writing the PRESIDENT has not signed the Bill, but there seems to be no doubt that he will do so. His reasons are that something must at once be done to relieve the commercial depression and the financial distress in the West and Southwest, and the issue of more redeemable paper is at present the only means to that end. It is said further that the first issue of forty-six millions will be so graduated as not to glut the Eastern banks. In view of these arguments, it is a remarkable circumstance that the first effect of the passage of the Senate Bill has been an advance of from an eighth to a quarter in Government funds, a fall in the price of gold and a check to stock speculation. It would be too much to expect that this effect will be permanent. We may be prepared for a reaction. The revival of the Spring trade will act for a further while as a breakwater, but it seems certain that the early summer will witness financial trouble in the United States. If we could be assured that all this paper will be redeemed within a reasonable period, the inconveniences caused by its periodically forced issues might be endured for the stern lessons which they inculcate, but when we read in so many influential American journals that the end of all is Repudiation, it seems a tremendous fatality to have in-

dividual suffering made the prelude to national disgrace. From a political stand-point, GENERAL GRANT prefers to go with the West which clamors for inflation, than with the East which demands contraction and a swift return to specie payment. The issue of the next elections will turn on that point and, of course, the victory of the Great West is beyond a peradventure.

RIEL has been expelled from the House of Commons. The reason was that he is a fugitive from justice. This plea was proven by a two-fold fact—first, that he had escaped from Manitoba, where a warrant was issued against him; and secondly, that having been summoned to appear in his seat, at Ottawa, he failed to do so. Technically, therefore, there was a case against RIEL, and his expulsion, on that ground, was legal. But was it politic, or in other words, was the motive laid down in Mr. BOWELL'S motion, the true cause of his expulsion? We fear there was a deeper feeling of religious and sectional divergence at the bottom of the whole business. A scrutiny of the votes cast seems to justify that view. The whole Catholic vote went one way; the whole Protestant, vote the other. Frenchmen and Irishmen were arrayed against Englishmen and Scotchmen. With regard to RIEL himself, it looks like a mistake that he did not boldly come forward, take his seat, and plead his own cause before his peers. Not only would such action have created sympathy which his absence alienated, but it might have thrown new light upon the subject. The friends who induced him to sign his name on the Parliamentary roll should have persuaded him to follow up the logical results of that first step, and should have pledged themselves to screen him from harm. So far as the Government are concerned, if Mr. BOWELL meant to embarrass them by his motion, he has signally failed. He has relieved them of an awkward perplexity and thrown back the question of amnesty to an indefinite period. The only Ministers who have suffered, are Mr. DORION and his two French colleagues. They have shown their utter want of influence in the settlement of the matter, and many of their own followers charge them with criminal indifference. Altogether, the whole episode was lamentably overdone, and there is reason for congratulation that it is over for the present.

Politics in the pulpit are, to our mind, as much out of place as polemical discussions would be in Parliament. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam* is as applicable to the preacher as to the cobbler; and the clergyman who goes out of the way to drag in political subjects into his sermons is as deserving of the lash of censure or of ridicule as the cobbler who will not stick to his last. In a lecture, the last of a series on preaching, recently delivered in London, Sir Emilius Bayley made an energetic protest against the use of "clap-trap," or the desecration of the occasion to a mere criticism of poets or historians, or to the bare consideration of the topics of the day, or to the discussion of any subject rather adapted to the press than to the pulpit. As the lecture in question will doubtless be published *in extenso* in some of the English religious journals which find their way to Canada, we trust it will be read, marked, and inwardly digested by reverend offenders.

The accident on the Great Western Railway at Komoka, unlike most disasters of the kind, has not been unproductive of good results. The Railway Company, with commendable promptitude, immediately took steps to prevent the occurrence of similar calamities in the future, and within the last week the matter of ensuring the safety of the railway traveller has been twice brought before the notice of the House. Mr. PELLETIER, of Kamouraska, has introduced a bill to amend the Railway Act, so as to secure greater security to life and property on railways; and this has been supplemented by a bill, introduced by Mr. Thompson, of Haldimand, to provide better egress from railway cars in case of fire. So true is it that it never rains but it pours.

"Her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to direct that the State umbrella of the King of Ashantee shall be exhibited in the South Kensington Museum." Thus gravely say the English papers. The enthusiasm manifested at home over the Ashantee Expedition has been sufficiently overdone, one would have thought, but this caps the climax. Doubtless this magnificent specimen of the *spolia optima*, won at the cost of so much noble blood, etc., etc., will, after it has been sufficiently exhibited to the gaping Cookney, be finally consigned to a fitting place among the trophies of the Waterloo campaign and the Red River Expedition.

FROM THE CAPITAL.

THE EXPULSION OF RIEL.—THE THREE DIVISIONS.—RE-ELECTION.—THE BUDGET.—MR. CARTWRIGHT.—DR. TUPPER.—THE PREMIER.—ONTARIO SUPREMACY.

OTTAWA, APRIL 21.—We all bless Providence that the Riel business is over. It was overworked *ad nauseam*. If there had been anything really dramatic about it, it might have been endured for the sensation, but the absence of the culprit and the very ostentatiousness of his numerous disguises stripped it of that element. Had the ex-President of Assiniboia possessed the wit and the nerve, he might have appeared as the hero of grand opera, but, as it is, he is only the figurant of a bouffe. "Tis distance lends enchantment to the view." Riel, at the head of his bronzed and long-haired Metis on the Red River prairie, and Riel at Ottawa, are two wofully different characters.

The debate which led to his expulsion was uninteresting enough. Mr. BOWELL, the chief mover in the matter made a long speech, which, considering his well-known feelings as an Orangeman, was singularly free from acrimony or pettishness. The same compliment cannot be paid to Mr. ROCHESTER who followed on the same side. All the French members who took part in the debate, were strikingly calm, temperate and argumentative. When all the speeches were made, the House found itself in presence of three different propositions, one of which had to be acted on, to the exclusion of the other two.

The first was the substantive motion of Mr. BOWELL: "That Louis Riel, a member of this House for the Electoral District of Provencher, in the Province of Manitoba, having been charged with murder, and a bill of indictment for said offence having been found against him, and warrants issued for his apprehension; and the said Louis Riel having fled from justice, and having failed to obey an order of this House that he should attend in his place on Thursday, the 9th day of April, 1874, be expelled from this House."

The second was an amendment of Mr. HOLTON, intended to gain time and to conciliate discordant feelings:

"That inasmuch as the crime of which Louis Riel is accused was connected with and arose out of the civil commotion which existed in the North-West in the autumn of 1869 and in the early spring of 1870, and as a Select Committee of this House has been appointed to enquire into the cause of these troubles, and the promise of an amnesty, it is expedient to postpone this motion until that Committee shall have reported."

The third was an amendment of Mr. MOUSSEAU, travelling clear-out of the record, opening up the larger and more knotty question of amnesty, and manifestly draughted to set a snare for the Government:

"1st. That the interests of the Dominion of Canada require that there should be tranquillity and content in the various Provinces of this Confederation. 2nd. That in consequence of the disturbance which had occurred in the Province of Manitoba before its reception into the Dominion, and the actual violence committed, there exists in that Province a sense of uneasiness and inquiet that would be dissipated and give place to a general feeling of satisfaction if Her Most Gracious Majesty would exercise her Royal prerogative, and grant a full and complete pardon or amnesty for all acts, crimes and offences that may have been committed in the Province of Manitoba during such disturbance. 3rd. That an humble address be presented to Her Most Gracious Majesty, praying Her Majesty to exercise Her Royal prerogative and grant such pardon or amnesty."

Mr. MOUSSEAU'S amendment came up first and was overwhelmingly voted down by 164 to 27.

Mr. HOLTON'S amendment followed and was negatived by 117 to 76.

Mr. BOWELL'S motion was then carried by the large vote of 124 to 68.

On the principle of striking the iron while it is hot, Dr. SCHULTZ arose immediately and moved that Mr. Speaker issue his warrant for the election of a member for the Electoral District of Provencher, in place of Louis Riel, expelled from this House. And the motion was carried.

It goes without saying, that the infatuated people of Provencher will set to work and reelect Riel. And furthermore, if that amiable personage, Attorney General CLARKE, should try to oppose him, as formerly, those same electors will take his scalp, and make a special immolation of his glorious flowing beard.

The debate on the Budget calls for scant reference. It was not marked by any notable incidents, either on the side of the Government or the Opposition. Mr. CARTWRIGHT spoke out his mind and no mistake. To that extent he deserves credit, but I am dubious whether a desire of self-justification warrant so lugubrious a picture of this country's commercial and financial future as he was pleased to trace. A Minister of Finance should have a severe, judicial mind, and not allow his imagination to run away with him. Mr. CARTWRIGHT represented the country as being committed to obligations which, if strictly carried out, would compel us to borrow thirty millions of dollars every year for seven years, at the end of which time we should be burthened with a debt one-third greater, in proportion to our population, than that of the United States at the end of the civil war. He declared that the undertaking to build the Pacific Railway in seven years cannot be literally carried out. To borrow thirty millions a year, for ten years, would be simply impossible. A very much less amount would greatly reduce the price of our securities, and an announcement that it was intended to float the whole of that sum, in so short a time, would go far to make them unsaleable.

Dr. TUPPER'S reply to the Finance Minister was thoroughly characteristic. He bore down on the Treasury Benches like a cuirassier. But his blows were as innocuous as the lance-thrusts of old Priam. Dr. TUPPER is nothing if not a politician. He lugs in all kinds of irrelevant partisan matter into his speeches. He was far too violent on the present occasion, and Mr. MACKENZIE touched him up neatly for it.

Of our leader himself, after a three weeks' experience of him, I must say that he is not a model of suavity. He is sharp and incisive in his replies and does not take kindly to criticism. Still Mr. MACKENZIE ought to know enough of men to understand that politeness is a cheap commodity and never does any harm.

I said above that the French members bore themselves well throughout the Riel business. They have one interpretation, however, of the vote in the BOWELL motion, which may be worth putting into print. They see in it the overwhelming