

THE MONTREAL FIRE MARSHALS.

The Liberals denounced the Fire Marshalships of Montreal as being useless and nothing more nor less than a means of *bestowing sinecures upon political hangers-on*. That they were sincere in their denunciation is sufficiently apparent by their summary dismissal of Messrs. Curran and Pelletier, gentlemen of whose individual, professional or official character there had been no complaint. They, however, immediately filled them by appointing *two well known electioneering campaigners*, Messrs. Barry and Poirier, the latter of whom made himself specially objectionable in connection with the unfortunate Riel agitation, and who, on account of the attitude he then assumed, has been displaced as one of the French translators of the House of Commons. Mr. Stephens, at that time member for Montreal West, and a large landed proprietor in that city, who ought to have known the utility of such an office, strongly denounced firemarshalships, and, time after time, moved for its abolition. The Liberals when in opposition voted and energetically coöperated with him; but when they reached the treasury benches they cast aside all their previous professions, and, *instead of abolishing the offices, conferred them upon two men who had rendered them signal service in carrying elections*.

MR. MERCIER'S ECONOMIES.

Among the economies which Mr. Mercier and his followers prated so much about was the reduction of the number of Cabinet Ministers, and in May, 1882, the then leader of the Opposition, remarking upon the proposal of the Conservative Government to reduce the number of Cabinet Ministers to six, expressed his regret that the number had not been reduced to five, saying that as in Ontario five Ministers were sufficient until a Minister of Education were appointed. It is true that we have only six Ministers at present, their number having been reduced by Mr. Chapleau, but, unless the Government have changed their minds since last session, they propose to increase the Cabinet to seven. By the Act of last year, the Cabinet was constituted as follows: