

THE PARNELL LETTER.

A critical examination of the letter attributed to Mr. Parnell by its internal evidence alone is not favourable to its authenticity. The writer of the body of the letter, evidently a clerk, had undoubtedly, from the crowding of the lines and words at the bottom of the page, set himself the task of filling the first sheet of his paper so as to leave no room for the signature. No well-conditioned secretary or copyist would ever do this in the ordinary course of work, and it was evidently done with an object. The comments of the *Times* on this and other points, did not clear up the suspicion. So far from its being "an obvious precaution to sign upon the back instead of the second page, so that the half-sheet might, if necessary, be torn off and the letter disclaimed," any such device would have been of no value whatever. If the writer wished to suppress the letter he had only to burn it; and to tear it in half so that it might be joined again would be folly, as neither half would be of any value without the other. Again, the erasure in the manuscript is claimed "as undesigned evidence of authenticity," when it has rather the suspicious look of a design to make the letter look genuine or suggests that the writer was writing on paper already signed so that he could not begin over again. The document, in fact, looked very much as if the body of it had been prefixed to a signature given as an autograph or otherwise. Mr. Parnell, however, pronounces the document a forgery—every letter of it—and, by so framing his denial, removes the suspicions suggested by the letter on its face. If the document was forged altogether, there was no object in putting the signature in so unusual a place, so that the matter now turns on a comparison of signatures and any external evidence there may be. The effect of the publication of the letter will only be removed by Mr. Parnell taking proceedings with a view to a judicial inquiry. The most obvious course would be a prosecution for libel. According to the present practice in the Queen's Bench, a criminal information would not be granted, as Mr. Parnell is not an official person, and it was refused in the case of Mr. Plimsoll when a member of Parliament was accused

of sending ships to sea to sink. The Director of Public Prosecutions would, however, at once give his fiat for an indictment. If Mr. Parnell distrusts an English jury, the *Times* is published in Ireland, and an indictment, with the permission of the Attorney-General, will lie. Whether or not the British public would in its turn trust an Irish jury, there would at least be a judicial investigation upon which all the world could form its own opinion. Almost the same result would follow an application to the House of Commons for a Committee of Privilege to hear evidence, with managers for and against. For a newspaper to publish a letter showing that a member of Parliament secretly approved what he publicly denied in his place is a breach of privilege; and, although the Parliament sitting in 1882 no longer exists, there are precedents for a succeeding Parliament punishing contempts of a predecessor.—*Law Journal* (London).

INSOLVENT NOTICES, ETC.

Quebec Official Gazette, May 14.

Judicial Abandonments.

Télesphore Delage dit Lavigueur, Coteau Station, May 10.

Curators appointed.

Re Albert P. Benoit.—J. J. Griffith, Sherbrooke, curator, May 6.

Re Louis Odilon Paradis, Sorel.—Kent & Turcotte, Montreal, curator, May 6.

M. R. Spinelli, Montreal.—Kent & Turcotte, Montreal, curator, May 7.

Dividends.

Re Chas. Cadotte.—First and final dividend. A. M. Casils, Montreal, curator.

Re Henriette Dubeau, milliner and trader.—Dividend. Seath & Daveluy, Montreal, curator.

Re Dame J. E. Vaine, milliner.—Dividend. Seath & Daveluy, Montreal, curator.

Re Narcisse Pilotte, Wotton.—Dividend, payable May 31. Kent & Turcotte, Montreal, curator.

Separation as to property.

Cécile Dufour dite Latour vs. Tertulien Dagenais, cooper, Montreal, April 28.

Jubilee of the Queen.

June 21, proclaimed as a day of public thanksgiving.