

It is not necessary here to relate how Sir John's Government came to Parliament with a large majority which crumbled away, causing it to fall in 1873. For the purpose of this narrative, it is sufficient to say, a Government was formed under the Premiership of Mr. Alex. Mackenzie, and which on the very earnest advice of Mr. George Brown, again appealed to the country, although the elections had been so recent. The result politically, justified the sagacity which moved the advice. Mr. Mackenzie's Government was returned with a very large majority, and it was very confidently said, even openly in Parliament, that the star of Sir John Macdonald and his party had forever gone down.

Later, Mr. Blake joined Mr. Mackenzie's Government, serving under him. But how did he serve? and how did he support,—especially in those later years, when he had ceased to be a Minister, and when Mr. Mackenzie came to have troubles and difficulties? He scarcely concealed his want of respect for his leader, and very often when Mr. Mackenzie was making important ministerial expositions, this man of the white flower of honour, affected to yawn and go to sleep.

It came later, after death had deprived the party of the counsels and services of Mr. George Brown and Mr. L. H. Holton, and after the fortunes of the elections in 1878 had swept by a crushing majority, that Government away, that a caucus was held, of what may be called, the "rump" of a once great party; which alone survived in that parliament. Perhaps it might be unjust to say, and at any rate we cannot say, that that caucus was moved by Mr. Blake, for the purpose of deposing Mr. Mackenzie from the leadership to put Mr. Blake in his stead; but at least it must be said that Mr. Blake benefitted by it, and that a receiver is as bad as a thief, if indeed he is not a meaner and less courageous person. And it is further to be said that neither that caucus, nor its act, would ever have been, if either Mr. George Brown or Mr. L. H. Holton had lived.

The circumstances attending the calling of that caucus are known to have been characterised by detestable cruelty and meanness. A circular was simply sent to Mr. Mackenzie, a man who in uprightness of character as well as in political sagacity, was head and shoulders above them all, asking him to attend a caucus to choose a leader. He did not go, but the caucus met and elected Mr. Edward Blake as leader. These proceedings very nearly sent Mr. Mackenzie to his grave, and he is to this day an utterly broken down man; but yet he might use the phrase of the French king after the field of Pavia, "*Tout est perdu fors l'honneur.*"

It may be here asked whether there is anything in the political character of Sir John Macdonald, or Sir Charles Tupper, which will bear any comparison with these proceedings as affecting and discrediting and staining the character of the chief actor. It is true Mr. Blake did affect modesty and say he did not want the honour, did not want to be the leader. But are phrases of this kind of a nature to impose upon the intelligence of any man of common sense, or can they be regarded as other than a very thin veil of hypocrisy? It must be said that no luck has followed these proceedings. On the contrary a Nemesis has seemed to follow them and the party has ever since been broken and discredited. "Had Zimri peace who slew his master?"

If we examine Mr. Blake's life by the light of his publicly declared principles, we find a shifting position which is not compatible