

keep his majority and increase it. He deserves the confidence of the electors for his integrity and ability, although I do not agree with him in these resolutions.

A FAR better argument for him would have been this:—The case has been tried and decided by the Dominion Parliament—the Prime Minister at the time declined to remove M. Letellier for his dismissal of the De Boucherville Government—and it is inexpedient, and dangerous as a precedent, for Ministers to reverse the judgment of their predecessors in the Cabinet.

BUT what did M. Chapleau mean by asserting that the question was raised as an issue at the last September elections? I cannot remember a single election which was made to turn upon it. The thing was considered dead and buried at the time, and the only issues were Sir John and the N. P. vs. Mr. Mackenzie and the fly on the wheel.

IT may appear to the reason of the *Star* reporter that he is "minding his own business" when he is forcing himself and his queries and advice upon a prisoner under arrest on a charge of murder; but it appears to the minds of some others that such a proceeding is disgraceful to the last degree. The man Flanagan was lodged in jail to await trial; he was under the care of Sergeant Clancy; No. 40 of "Rules and Regulations" for the Police reads: "Members of the Force will on no occasion whatever hold any intercourse with prisoners brought to the different Stations, nor shall they laugh, jeer or joke at or with them; this rule will be strictly enforced;" but, in violation of that rule, a reporter is allowed to have an interview with the prisoner and put a string of questions to him that he may publish what he said to the prisoner, and what the prisoner said in answer. The injustice of the proceeding is so plain that even the *Star* reporter must see it. The man Flanagan is poor, is uneducated, was greatly excited at the time—there was no one by to tell him when to speak or when to be silent, yet a reporter and a policeman fall upon upon him and do their best to extort from him all he may know, and then publish it, that the Coroner's jury or anybody else may read it.

A REPORTER may consider it his "business" to make his paper popular that it may sell; but it is undoubtedly the business of the police to protect their prisoners from all interviewers. Sergeant Clancy is not so much to blame, perhaps, from the fact that the law in this matter has been very loosely administered for a long time past. When Costafioraz was under arrest for murder, a *Star* reporter got admitted to his cell and asked if he had ever committed any other murders, and such like delicate questions, and next day published the whole interview. Other reporters were offered the privilege of a talk with Flanagan; but it is time to put a stop to these illegal and dangerous proceedings. Chief Paradis should require his men—and especially Sergeant Clancy—to read and abide by the Police Regulations.

I am inclined to think that much of what passes for Coroner's inquest *law* is nothing more than *custom*, which would be more honoured in the breach than the observance. I notice that whenever there is a hitch in the administration of justice in any case, nobody is to blame, and the plea of antiquity comes in to save the system from a well-merited condemnation. Notably, have not the inquests in the last two murder cases furnished several illustrations of a laxity against which the public has a right to protest? The inquiry into the Quenneville murder still "drags its slow length along," and like the ghost of Dr. Johnson's mother, nothing seems to come of it. The grim farce of taking the dying man to the police station in charge and permitting him to remain there for some time before conveying him to the hospital, in a sinking condition, and so low as to be unable to answer any questions, is so grave a mistake as to be unpardonable, and the Coroner's inquiry has not served to place the whole case in a much better light. With regard to the more recent case in William street, matters are as bad, if not even worse.

CAN anyone tell why coroner's inquests are held in the evening and continued up to an hour when most well-disposed persons are thinking of going to their beds? I am told that probably it is to

permit workmen to serve on such juries, and I am bound to accept this as a reason, seeing that one of the jurors on the last-named inquest complained of the frequent adjournments, saying that if they went on "he should lose his work on the canal." I am aware that many a workingman can form as good an opinion on such inquiries as the coroner himself, but this brings us to the question, What is the status of a coroner's juror? and one feels nervous in contemplating what a scratch-pack he frequently gets together. How came it that a juror in the case of the boy Crowley, who was drowned last week, was drunk? He could not possibly have obtained the drink after the inquiry had commenced, hence he must have been drunk when he was sworn. I have known instances of newspaper reporters, who were present to report the case, being sworn to serve as jurors when an emergency arose; and *apropos* of the William Street murder the following dialogue comes to me:—

CORONER—Now, let us have a nice, respectable jury.

OFFICER—Well, Mr. Coroner, you must take them according to locality; you know we're not in Beaver Hall.

And so the system jogs on, the coroner being one of the most imperturbable of men; perhaps custom makes these inquests to him "a property of easiness," so that he always takes a nonchalant view of murder in its most horrible forms—

Combining and uniting in an eminent degree
The *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*.

"SIR,—It is a matter of congratulation that we have one paper that fills so efficiently as the SPECTATOR does a great want in our country, viz., the courage to publish anything the public ought to know.

I observe by the Parliamentary reports an award of \$150,000 to Mr. Duncan Macdonald for extra work and damages under his contract for the construction of the M., O. & O. R. R., besides \$59,000 to be paid to Mr. Abbott, his late partner, making with the large receipts he is known to have taken during his control of the road (over \$50,000) the handsome sum of about \$250,000. And all this, notwithstanding his having exceeded the time specified by over a year, used the Government property for his own profit, and left the work unfinished to so great an extent that the Government had to pay \$600,000 to complete it. These are only a few of the facts connected with the history of this affair, begun under the De Boucherville Government, and seemingly, not yet ended under the Joly Administration.

From the fact of both Governments being mixed up in the matter, it will be difficult to draw out a real history of the case in Parliament, and if the Press fail to demand an investigation, it will be smoothed over and soon forgotten among the many transactions which disgrace our country. I sincerely hope, Mr. Editor, that you will lead public opinion to demand a scrutiny of this most outrageous proceeding. I venture to say that the history of this road will astonish the nation.

Yours, &c."

When the above statement was put into my hands I had some enquiries made, and found that it was correct. Yes, a complete history of the M., O. & O. R. R. would certainly astonish the nation. Here it is in brief. When the line was determined upon, and the contract given to Mr. Duncan Macdonald, the De Boucherville Government appointed three commissioners, viz.:—The Hon. George Irvine, advocate; Hon. E. Chinic, Senator, (a hardware merchant, father-in-law to the Hon. Mr. Angers), and the Hon. G. Malhiot, a lawyer at Three Rivers. So that this precious railway commission had not a railway man on it.

MESSRS. IRVINE AND CHINIC were well "posted" in the fact that they were ignorant in railway matters, so they discreetly did nothing at all; for which service they drew a salary of from \$3,000 to \$4,000 each per year. Mr. Malhiot had it all to do, and he blundered with remarkable energy and patience. The terms of the original contract were not much thought of by Mr. Malhiot, and changes were made regardless of expense. When Mr. Joly undertook the Government of the Province, his first step in the railway matter was to dismiss the commission and appoint Mr. Walter Shanly sole Government umpire. Mr. Shanly understood the building and working of railways, and Mr. Joly—being as certain that he himself knew nothing about railway working as was Mr. Irvine when appointed Commissioner—left the whole case of award to Mr. Macdonald in the hands of the umpire. That award may or may not be excessive—only one conversant with the case from beginning to end could decide that; but whatever blame