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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

THE reason assigned by Mr. Tarte, in an open letter, for having declined to contest his former constituency of Montmorency in the recent bye-election, is one which should cause every honest Canadian to pause and think. Mr. Tarte says in substance that the constituency is so corrupt that he could not afford the expense of running again in it. We shall not stop to consider what this implies with reference to the means by which he must have won his seat on the former occasion, when he sought a place in the House in order that he might enter upon a crusade against dishonesty in the conduct of the public business at Ottawa. But if what he says of Montmorency is true—and he surely should know—the next question which suggests itself is, Is this an isolated case? Is Montmorency worse than other constituencies not only in Quebec, but all over the Dominion? If worse is the difference radical, or only one of degree? Have we not evidence all too abundant that integrity in politics is at a sadly low ebb all over the Dominion? Is there not too much reason to believe that there is scarcely in any of the Provinces a constituency in which the parties are pretty evenly balanced, in which there is not a sufficient number of purchasable voters to make the result of an election a question of money and of readiness to use it freely—a readiness which we fear is too seldom wanting? It is not pleasant even to ask such questions in regard to the country in which one has been born and brought up, and of which he has always been proud. But what means the enormous expense of contesting a doubtful constituency? What mean those bands of electioneering agents—professional vote-hunters we might call them—who have been going from constituency to constituency in advance of each of the recent contests, not to address the people from the public platforms, but to ply voters of a certain class with arguments in the by-ways and in the privacy of their own homes? Why should the arguments of an obscure stranger prove often more powerful than those of known and influential friends and neighbours? This is not a question of party. No candid observer can doubt that the stigma attaches to both parties. We have neither motive nor desire to take a pessimistic view of the state

of political morality in our own country, nor do we suppose that it is worse than that which prevails elsewhere on this continent, but we know it to be a fact that high-minded men of both political parties are to-day almost in despair over what they know of the venality of electors who are to be found by the score in almost every constituency, and who seem to have no scruple in regarding their votes as commodities having pecuniary value, which, if not absolutely for sale to the highest bidder, are yet not to be used until they have been made in some way a source of personal gain to their possessors.

WHAT we have said in the preceding paragraph is, we have reason to think, true not simply of the men of no standing and destitute of moral principle, some of whom are to be found in every community, but of men who are esteemed honest and respectable and who would scorn to defraud a neighbour in a matter of business. Is this not so? We put the question to those who have had opportunities for knowing the facts. If it be so, as we believe, it is evident that the evil has its root not so much in innate and inveterate moral weakness, as in lack of moral training in political matters. These men have never been taught to look upon the franchise in its true light, as a sacred trust to be used conscientiously for the good of their country and their fellow-men. On the contrary the whole tenor of their political education has been such as to leave a very different impression. Who are responsible for this defective and degrading political teaching? The answer is not far to seek. Every electioneering agent, every red-hot partisan, every politician who for any reason whatever debases himself and his neighbour by offering an improper inducement in return for a promised vote. But primarily the guilt lies farther back. It lies at the door of every public man, every member or would-be member of Parliament, above all every Cabinet Minister or Opposition Leader who supplies funds to be used in ways which he either knows to be corrupt, or into which he prefers not to enquire too closely. But not only in the direct purchase of votes is this demoralization of the elector's political conscience carried on. Every appeal to low and unworthy motives has the same degrading effect. For example, the bribery of a whole constituency by the promise to make some expenditure of public money contingent upon the election of a Government supporter, as is too often done, if not by members of Government themselves, by their prominent advocates on the platform and in the press, and many similar expedients, cannot fail to have the worst educative influence. The recent bye-elections afford many examples of this kind of debauching of the political conscience of the people. Take, for instance, what occurred the other day in the constituency of West Northumberland, where the papers and speakers supporting the Government candidate did not hesitate to say that the prospects of large appropriation being made for a certain public work depended entirely upon the election of a Government supporter. It was even asserted in the Opposition newspapers and has not, we believe, been contradicted, that a prominent member of Parliament sat on the platform on one occasion when such an argument was being openly urged, and that this M.P., who has the reputation of being one of the most high-minded supporters of the Administration in Parliament, instead of arising and denouncing the insinuation that the disposal of the public money, of which the members of the Government and of Parliament are trustees, would be influenced by any party consideration, as an insult to the Government and an imputation upon the honour of everyone of its supporters in the House, sat still and uttered no word of protest. We leave it to our readers on both sides of politics to say whether we have rightly stated the facts and the causes of the facts as they exist to-day in Canada. If we have, it is needless to add that we can have no country to be proud of so long as such a state of things continues. How can it be remedied? The law can do something, if leaders of both parties would but honestly put their heads together to devise remedies. But the main work of reform must be done by educational agencies. Is it not time that an organization of good men and true patriots, in Parliament and out, were formed for the education of the people

in political morality? An ethical society is doing much in this direction on the other side of the boundary. Who will lead in the formation of a similar organization in Canada?

AT the present moment the strike of the conductors and brakemen on the Canadian Pacific Railway threatens to assume unexpectedly large proportions. The contradictory statements which are made in regard to one important point make it difficult to determine which of the two parties should be held by the public chiefly responsible for the great inconvenience and loss to the country, as well as to both the contestants, which must inevitably ensue. If it be true, as is alleged on behalf of the strikers, that a deliberate attempt was made by the officers of the Company to compel the men to renounce their connection with their labour organizations, the verdict of the public will undoubtedly be that the Company was guilty of an attempt at intolerable tyranny, and sympathy will be heartily on the side of the employees in their struggle for manly freedom. The officers of the Company, however, give this statement at least a qualified denial, and claim that what was demanded from the men, on pain of dismissal, was simply a promise of loyalty and faithful service. It is hard to believe that the company would, at this day, attempt to use a degree of arbitrary power which almost all employers have ceased to regard as either possible or just. The right of organization is now so generally conceded to all classes of employees that it would be folly for even so powerful a corporation as the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to attempt to deny it to those in its employ. Not only so, but the beneficial character of these organizations is now so generally recognized even by employers, that the company which should take an antagonistic position would show itself to be behind the times in its ideas and methods, a thing of which the Company in question would certainly be one of the last to be suspected. And yet it appears from the statements of some of the officers of the Company, if these are correctly reported, that it was sought to exact from the men a promise which was not materially different from a renunciation of their allegiance to their unions. Without, however, venturing at present to pronounce an opinion upon the merits of the case, we can but express our hope that peaceful counsels may speedily prevail and all difficulties be settled on a basis of justice and mutual good-will. It has of late been prophesied that the day of strikes was about over, these having given place to better methods of settling labour disputes, but recent events seem to indicate that the prediction was, to say the least, premature, except, perhaps, in regard to certain of the more advanced classes of skilled workmen.

THE papers brought down in the Commons concerning the conference at Washington contain valuable information on every point except the one about which the people were specially anxious to hear. It suggests the old story of the play of Hamlet with the Prince of Denmark left out. The arrangements made to bring about a better state of things in regard to towing and salvage, for the determining of the Alaskan boundary, and for the better protection of some of the international fisheries from the destructive rapacity of American fishermen are all good and so far satisfactory, but this information was in possession of the public before. But of reciprocity negotiations, successful or abortive, the papers brought down have not a word. The inference is, of course, either that that question was not touched upon at all—though the House was dissolved specially on the ground that it was to be the subject of conference and the Government wished to have their hands strengthened that weight might be added to their proposals—or the discussion was so completely fruitless that there is nothing to report. That the latter is the fact was long since pretty well understood. What the people will be curious to know, and have a right to know, is whether the absolute failure to secure even a starting point for further conference was the result of the lack of authority on the part of the Canadian Commissioners, or of a complete dead-lock at the outset on the point of discrimination against the Mother Country. Both causes have been assigned by rumour. Probably the