



TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

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WHAT TRUTH SAYS.

Reliable information of any kind regarding the great North-West Territory is now of interest to every one. TRUTH readers will be pleased to notice several papers of interest in regard to the Great Lone Land in the present issue. Rev. Thos. Woolsey, for many years a respected Methodist missionary in that country, contributes the first of a series of letters in regard to his experience there thirty years ago. What changes have come since that time? Ex-Alderman John N. Lake, of this city, land commissioner of the Temperance Colonization Company, writes of what he has seen of recent date, and another respected contributor gives reminiscences of his experience in connection with a former Riel expedition. In future issues a number of very valuable papers in regard to that country may be looked for from well-known gentlemen, present or former residents among the people now in rebellion.

Readers of the daily papers must have frequently come across the term "mugwump" applied to different people and apparently always intended as an opprobrious epithet. Those to whom this term has been applied, however, may take consolation in the knowledge that so far from being a shameful epithet, "mugwump" is a highly complimentary and flattering one, being nothing more nor less than an Indian word meaning "lord" or "ruler," according to an authority who knows whereof he speaks.

East Indian jugglers are reported to be wonderfully skilful and so they doubtless are, though not more so than our Occidental "professors" of legerdemain; travellers are too fond of magnifying the wonders that they see abroad and their accounts of the doings of the jugglers of the East have caused people at home to fancy that their tricks are something very extraordinary indeed. They are not so, however, and their methods of performing their seemingly superhuman feats are gradually being revealed. One trick still in vogue is the burying in the earth of a live man for several months, who professes to be supernaturally endowed with the ability to hold his breath for that period. This, till lately, has caused much wonder and surmise, as apparently there was no fraud practised in the matter; but the trick has been exposed and now really does seem remarkably simple and it is a wonder that it was never discovered before. This is the very simple explanation of the whole trick, according to an English journal: "A tunnel is dug from the grave to the neighboring jungle; the grave itself is partly prepared, the subject is then, in sight of the spectators, prepared by having his ears and nostrils filled with earth and his tongue turned back. He is then apparently buried, creeps through the tunnel and gets away. After six months, or any other interval he creeps back again, is dug up apparently lifeless and restored with infinite pains." Doubtless, all the other seemingly inexplicable feats of Oriental jugglery are capable of a similar simple solution.

The French Government did a good stroke of business a week or so ago in breaking up the horde of Fenians in Paris and conducting the ringleaders, amongst whom was the notorious James Stephens, to the Swiss frontier and there setting them adrift with strict injunctions to keep out of Franco hereafter. This mode of procedure may seem a little rough on the poor Swiss, and it would be an excellent plan if they took their turn at the little game, and passed Messrs. Stephens & Co. on to some other country, the passing on to be continued till the bold Fenians brought up on the seashore—and after that.

Balloons have often been talked about for use in time of war, but with the exception of a few experiments during the Franco-Prussian disagreeableness, they have not been much employed till just now, when they are being utilized in the Soudan campaign, the balloon and telegraph corps being a distinct branch of the expeditionary force, having three balloons and all the necessary appliances for observing the positions of the enemy. One wagon containing one ton of stores is sufficient for each ascent and telephone communication will be established between the balloon and the ground. This latter fact shows that only captive ascents will be made, the balloons being tethered by rope or wire. It yet remains to be seen whether balloons will be as useful as many warriors anticipate. One great drawback seems to be the difficulty of attaining a sufficiently great elevation to be out of reach of the bullets of the enemy, bullets and balloons being naturally antagonistic, with the chances very much in favor of the former in case of actual collision.

So it looks as if, after all, we were to have a little taste of war in Canada. Riel, who should have been hanged long ago, has opened the ball and, judging from the guests who have gone from Toronto and elsewhere to participate in it, he may have to dance to a lively tune before long. It would give much satisfaction in most quarters if he were debarred from having anything to dance on and his terpelchorean exercises were to take place in mid-air. It is to be devoutly hoped that when Riel gets cornered this time there will be no secret service money sent to him to save his carcass. The present rebellion should be the last that M. Riel is ever permitted to incite, and it probably will.

At the present writing it seems certain that a dozen loyal citizens have met their death at the hands of Riel's followers, and it is impossible to say what may be the loss of life before the rising in the North-West is put down; the matter is one of great importance and deep concern, and not to be treated, by any means, as people were inclined to treat it when the first rumors of Riel's outbreak reached their ears. There are times when men are justified in taking up arms against constituted authority, for the protection of their individual rights and the like, but Riel can plead no such justifi-

cation for his rebellion in the present instance and for the destruction of human life that has already taken place.

Though Louis Riel did not in his former rebellion evince any great capability as a military commander, the fact is now patent to all that he has it in his power to give an immense amount of trouble, as he has at his back some thousands of half-breeds, Indians, and, possibly, Fenians to do his fighting whilst he stirs up the feeling of discontent against the Government so prevalent amongst the Metis and incites them to further rebellion and disorder, a work for which he is admirably fitted, being a fluent, eloquent speaker and a capital organizer. Riel is now between 40 and 42 years of age, of middle height, stout and dark; his head is well-shaped, his forehead being massive and high; and his eyes are bright, dark and restless. He is not the first trouble maker of his family, as his father was a revolutionist before him, and on the 17th of May, 1849, when his compatriots, Sayre, Laronde, Guillette, and McGinness, were being tried before Judge Thom, an officer of the Hudson Bay Company, for infringing on that company's exclusive prerogative of trading with the Indians for furs, Louis Riel's father headed a sufficient force of half-breeds to overawe the court and restore the offenders to liberty. When this had been done the half-breeds fired three volleys, shook hands promiscuously and effusively, and shouted "Vive la liberte!" and "Trade is free!" After that, according to the half-breeds' version of the story, the elder Riel was a man whom the Hudson Bay Company's officers feared to offend, and it is even hinted that it is partially to the generosity of that wealthy corporation toward the elder Riel that the present insurgent leader owes the educational and other advantages he enjoyed in his youth.

Louis was born in the Red River settlement and was sent, when a lad, to one of the Catholic Colleges in Montreal, under the patronage of Archbishop Tache, of St. Boniface. There he completed his education, exhibiting during his studentship a marked ability in the oratorical line, his powers as a public speaker, being favorably noted and commented on during that period. It was not until the autumn of 1869 that Riel came prominently before the public. Trouble then arose out of the transfer by the Hudson Bay company to the Dominion of Canada of the northwest territories. At this time there were settled in Assiniboia 6,000 French half-breeds and 4,000 Scotch and English ones. The French-Canadians and the half-breeds were persuaded that the transfer was inimical to their interests, and the sight of surveyors at work gave them the idea that their ownership of the land was in peril. Riel organized what he called a "provisional government," compelled the lieutenant-governor to seek refuge in the United States, and raised an armed force of 600 men. Colonel Garnet Wolseley, now Lord Wolseley, was sent to quell the insurrection, but Riel had fled on his arrival,

aided in doing so by a gift of \$1,000 from the Leader of the Dominion Government at that period, though rewards were offered for his capture at the same time! An amnesty was subsequently granted to him, and for the last two years Riel has been in the vicinity of the South Saskatchewan.

An exchange tells us, and it is really a matter of great gratification to every right-minded person, that "The first practical step towards establishing direct steam navigation between Cologne and London has been taken by the Badische Schraubendampfschiffahrts Gesellschaft Mannheim." It sounds very terrible but probably it isn't loaded after all.

A certain Mr. Ignatius Donnelly insists that he has discovered positive proofs which show that Shakespeare never wrote the plays credited to him and, in fact, that the divine William was a very ordinary and commonplace individual indeed. Mr. Donnelly is firm in his belief, and declares that he can prove his assertion that Lord Bacon is the author of all the magnificent poetry that we have all along attributed to the Swan of Avon. This is a world of ruthless awakenings from pleasant dreams and one by one the cherished beliefs to which we cling so fondly are torn from us, but it will really be too bad altogether if Shakespeare is proved to be a fraud. Let us hope that Mr. Donnelly may be mistaken.

Edward Hanlan, the man who has done more to advertise, in a certain way, Canada in general and Toronto in particular than anyone living, seems to have met his match at last and has to resign the sculling championship of the world, to an Englishman, who has twice beaten him, it is presumed fairly. When Hanlan was at the zenith of his fame the American press delighted in speaking of him as "our great American oarsman;" since to-day two weeks ago he is, with them, "Hanlan, the Canadian." 'Twas ever thus.

The alacrity displayed by our volunteers in response to the call to arms speaks well for them and is a sure sign that, if an actual conflict takes place, there will be no such thing as flinching on their part. That the feeling exhibited was genuine and that a real desire to smell powder existed is fully demonstrated by one little fact, which is that several men belonging to the Queen's Own and Grenadiers of this city, who had not been selected to make up the chosen five hundred, managed to secure their arms and accoutrements and smuggle themselves on board the train which was to bear away their comrades and away they went and are now numbered amongst the gallant fellows composing the expedition. This is genuine enthusiasm and such volunteers are indeed worth five times their number of pressed men. As things look at present Canadian will not require much pressing to go to the front, for doubtless the men comprising the other battalions throughout the country are composed of just such stuff as Toronto's citizen-soldiers.