

The Huron Signal

DEVOTED TO COUNTY NEWS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

GODERICH, ONT., FRIDAY, JAN. 29, 1886. THIRTY-NINTH YEAR. WHOLE NUMBER 3027. MCGILLICUDDY BROS. PUBLISHERS. \$1.50 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

THE HURON SIGNAL

Published every Friday Morning, by Mc GILLICUDDY BROS., at their Office, North-st. GODERICH, ONTARIO. Ad is dispatched to all parts of the surrounding country by the earliest mails and trains. Terms.—\$1.50 in advance, postage pre-paid by publishers; \$1.75, if paid before six months; \$2.00 if not so paid. This rule will be strictly enforced. RATES OF ADVERTISING.—Eight cents per line for first insertion; three cents per line for each subsequent insertion. Yearly, half-yearly and quarterly contracts at reduced rates. JOB PRINTING.—We have also a first-class jobbing department in connection, and possess for the most complete outfit and best facilities for turning out work in Goderich, are prepared to do business in that line at prices that cannot be beaten, and of a quality that cannot be surpassed.—Terms Cash.

FRIDAY, JAN. 29th, 1886.

M. C. CAMERON'S Wingham speech is a sort of "Political Rogue's Gallery." Every one of the "subjects" is numbered—and so are the days of most of them.

The Dominion Parliament will meet on Thursday, 29th of February. The premier has put off the date to as late a period as possible, but he will blame the Grits for the late session, as usual.

MR. BLAKE'S demand that the half breeds now in prison for revolt should be pardoned early and fully is likely to be granted. The Government has already had enough vengeance on the Metis.

The National Policy boom has struck the Tory stronghold of Goderich township. At the last meeting of the township council, a report of which has been handed up by the clerk, attention was publicly called to the increase in pauperism.

HON. EDWARD BLAKE'S speech has struck the Tories with chilling effect. In fact the London Free Press acknowledges that it was a "Cold Wave." Yes, there is a decidedly cold wave sweeping over Torydom. We expect to find the Tories completely snowed under when the Government goes to the country.

The Wingham Times put the case correctly in the following:—"Somebody once said that when you throw a stone amongst a pack of dogs you can tell where it does effective work by the howl that is raised. So it is with the speeches of M. C. Cameron, M.P. He has been hurling missiles with telling effect into the Conservative camp, and as a consequence the attacks the Conservative press are making upon Mr. Cameron are only to be expected."

OVER in England they are a little more definite on the question of what constitutes "beer." The legal definition of beer there extends to "any liquor which is made or sold as a description of beer, or as a substitute for beer, and which, on analysis of a sample thereof, shall be found to contain more than two per centum of proof spirits." According to this law, the Canadian "Blue Ribbon Beer" would not have the ghost of a chance as a temperance drink. The Canadian law should be more precise on the question than it now is.

M. C. CAMERON, M.P., will speak at St. Thomas on February 11th, and reply to the speech recently delivered by Hon. T. White in that city. We understand that Mr. Cameron will bring Government records with him which will convict Mr. White of absolute falsehood. When the member for West Huron gets through with the Minister of the Interior he will have proved that White is black—in a political sense—and the feat will not be a difficult one with the proofs that Mr. Cameron has so industriously hunted up. There is a keel hauling in store for "Doubting Thomas."

The London Free Press, in a fit of envy, says:—"The Huron Signal is gross enough to believe that the London Advertiser made a name for itself by the splendid account it gave of Blake's banquet. To the provincial newspaper man the setting-up of a speech from the author's manuscript, don't count for much from a reportorial point of view."

The Free Press should not be so inordinately jealous. The Advertiser gave about 20 columns of a report of the banquet, only 9 of which were taken up with Mr. Blake's celebrated speech. The work, independent of any report of the speech of the Liberal leader, was a most commendable piece of journalism. We happen to know just what the Advertiser did, and have no hesitation in saying that such a report in its entirety would tax the resources of any daily. It is the Free Press that is green-of envy. By the way, that paper gave a pretty full report, which would have been more creditable if the entire notes of its reporters had been put into type.

THE RIEL QUESTION.

A Review of this Celebrated Case.

The Objectors of the "Star" Fully Met.—Interesting Extracts from Public Documents.

On Dec. 4th, 1885, THE SIGNAL published an article on the Riel question. The Star had asked for information on the subject, and we gave the desired information. Our contentions on the occasion may be summed up briefly as follows:—

- (1) That Riel deserved death fifteen years ago for the murder of Scott.
- (2) That Sir John Macdonald at that time was an accessory to Riel after the fact, and paid Riel money to escape.
- (3) That Macdonald, after helping Riel to escape, at Peterborough "wished to God he could catch him."
- (4) That Sir John got Riel to resign for Provencher in 1872, in the interest of Sir George Cartier.
- (5) That the amnesty to Riel and his accomplices was based upon an arrangement made by Sir John in 1871.
- (6) That the recent insurrection in the Northwest was caused by the maladministration of the Government.
- (7) That half breed petitions had been systematically pigeon-holed without being attended to, until the rebellion broke out.
- (8) That immediately after the outbreak 2,000 of the claims were settled by commission.
- (9) That the half breeds took up arms to make an incompetent department grant them their rights, and not as rebels against the "crown and dignity of the Queen."
- (10) That Riel was insane.
- (11) That he was tried for treason-felony and convicted for murder.
- (12) That his trial was by a picked jury of six instead of the usual twelve "good men and true."
- (13) That Hon. Wm. Macdougall, Hon. Peter Mitchell, and Mr. D. Macmaster, Tory members for Glenora, believed the trial was illegal.
- (14) That the hanging of Riel finally became with Sir John a question of votes, and that he only decided to hang the condemned man when he became convinced that in no other way would he be able to hold his Orange Tory supporters.

These statements were made by THE SIGNAL seven weeks ago and remained unanswered until Jan. 15th, when our drowsy contemporary awoke from its long sleep, and proceeded to reply. Like Rip Van Winkle of old, the Star during its snooze had lost track of the progress of events, and in its vain effort to unsettle our premises exposes its want of knowledge of current events and an ignorance of facts which are lamentable even in the columns of a poorly edited Tory journal. The article in the Star evidently has not been penned by the editor—he is by no means anything like as ignorant of the past and present political history as the writer of the article in question. The article has been written by the "hired man," who is known to be an adept at clerical errors. The "hired man" evidently lives quite a distance from the post office, has never heard of HERRICK, and has no knowledge of public matters outside of what transpires in the ledgerroom on his concession. He admits some of our contentions, jumps over others, and takes exception to a few. In the interest of the society for spreading intelligence amongst benighted Tories, we will deal with the two column article in question.

Clause No. 1 is admitted, and THE SIGNAL is allowed to score one.

Clause 2 to 6 are taken exception to by our contemporary, but its argument reads as incoherently as the wanderings of a willful, and we will therefore prove the charges:—

Clause 2—Sir John Macdonald corresponded with Archbishop Tache to get Riel, then charged with the murder of Thomas Scott—to leave the country, and finally sent \$1,000 to buy the rebel off. A further sum of \$500 (\$3,000) was afterwards paid Riel and Lepine, at the request of Lieut-Gov. Archibald. That constitutes Sir John Macdonald an accessory after the fact. Here is Sir John's letter to Archbishop Tache:—

Ottawa, 27th Dec., 1871. "MY DEAR LORD ARCHBISHOP—I have been able to make the arrangement for the individual that we have talked about. I now send you a sight draft on the Bank of Montreal for \$1,000. I need not press upon your Grace the importance of the money being paid to him periodically—say monthly or quarterly—and not in a lump, otherwise the money would be wasted, and our embarrassment begin again. The payment should spread over a year. Believe me, Your Grace's very obedient servant,

J. A. MACDONALD. "His Grace, the Archbishop of St. Boniface, Montreal."

Clause 3—The Star admits this clause.

Clause 4—As our contemporary seems to know nothing about this portion of our Canadian history we will proceed to enlighten it. 1872 is the year famous in Canadian history as being that of the Pacific Scandal, general election. Notwithstanding a lavish expenditure of Sir Hugh Allan's thousands in Montreal West, Sir George Cartier failed of reelection in that constituency. Louis Riel—a felon bribed to leave the country by Sir John—was nominated Tory candidate for Provencher, Man. Riel was approached by Archbishop Tache and Lieut-Gov. Archibald, at the instance of Sir John Macdonald, and asked to retire in favor of Sir George Cartier. He agreed to do so on the following conditions:—

- (1) That the settlers shall be continued in the exercise of all the rights they have been accustomed to, being in respect of the lands in the rear of their lots, and no sales or entries shall be permitted till the question of their rights shall be settled and adjusted, under the agreements with the delegates.
- (2) That no person shall be allowed to enter in the townships laid aside for the halfbreeds, from the date of the selection, and any person entering after that date to be removed by the government.

These conditions were telegraphed to Sir John on the 10th of September, 1872, and the following answer was obtained:—"Ottawa, Sept. 12, 1872. "Lieut. Gov. Archibald— "Sir George will do all he can to meet the wishes of the parties; this statement should be satisfactory."

The result was that Riel retired, and Sir George Cartier was elected. After the election the following telegram was sent to Sir George Cartier, Montreal:—"Winnipeg, 14th Sept, 1872. "Your election in our country is by acclamation and have reason to hope in the success of the cause entrusted to your hands."

Since that time Louis Riel has been hanged, Joseph Royal has become M.P., for Provencher, A. Lepine is an exile, and Dubuc has been made a judge of the supreme court of Manitoba. Rather an unequal division of favors, truly.

The answer to clause 4 will, we think, be considered satisfactory even by the Star.

Clause 5—That an amnesty to Riel and his associates was arranged for by Sir John and his colleagues is not denied by the Star, but so as to place the matter beyond question we produce the following witnesses:—

Sir Hector Langevin, said:—"At the commencement of the meeting of Parliament in Oct. last (1873), I had two interviews with a large number of the Privy Council of the Government from the Province of Quebec, about the amnesty in connection with the troubles in the Northwest territory. After exchanging our views and discussing the matter, I said to the gentlemen present that if the amnesty was not granted within a reasonable time after the session of Parliament, I would resign my seat as a member of the Government, and that my colleague, Hon. Mr. Robitaille, was ready to do, and would do the same."

Archbishop Tache, and before the Royal Commission—"Another conversation I had with Sir John Macdonald, who again impressed me with the necessity of informing the people of the good intentions of the Government towards them. I said to him then, 'This is all very well, but there have been acts committed which are blameworthy, and there may be some others before I arrive there. May I promise them an amnesty?' He answered me, 'Yes, you may promise it to them.' All of which proves that our 5th clause was correct.

Clause 6 is borne out by the fact that the Toronto Mail, the leading organ of the Government was forced to make the following confession on July 8th, 1885:—"It has never been denied by the Mail that the Metis had good grounds for grievances. By the passage of the Manitoba Act of 1870 Canada had formally and frankly recognized the rights of the Halfbreeds of that Province to share in the Indian title, and it follows as a matter of course that if they had rights in the soil of Manitoba, those of them dwelling in the regions beyond had rights in the soil there."

This admitted of no dispute. It must have been quite well understood by Parliament in 1870; at all events the records show that the Government of the day recognized the point, though a settlement was not then made for.

In spite of this recognition, however, and of the manifest and undeniable logic of the Halfbreeds' case, the Department for years and years steadily refused to move in the matter. It was a tangled question; it would involve far distant dependencies without political influence; it was a claim that would be made the worse for time—standing in the pigeon-hole.

This was the way in which the officials treated the just demand of the Metis, and we agree with Mr. Blake, that their negligence was gross and inexcusable, and contributed to bring about the insurrection.

Had they had votes like white men, or if, like the Indians, they had been numerous enough to command respect and overawe red tape, without doubt the wheels of the office would have revolved for them; but being only Halfbreeds, they were put off with an eternal promise, until patience ceased to be a virtue.

We repeat again that the departmental system under which such cases are neglected of the rights of a portion of the community was wrong, and should be abandoned. As against the above quotation the Star places a verbal opinion by Hon. Tom White, the now Minister of the Interior, but a gentleman, unfortunately, who laid down as his creed, when editor of a Montreal paper, "That journalists were sometimes compelled by political exigencies to write in disregard of those considerations by which, under ordinary circumstances, they would be guided."

In other words, Hon. Tom White believes in lying when it suits the interest of the party, and so does the editor of the Star, and for that reason he quotes Hon. Tom White's later statements against a former condemnation of his predecessor. We therefore prove our 6th and 7th clauses by the Mail—a witness for the party on trial.

The 8th clause is admitted by the Star, and the 9th is not gained.

Clause 10—That Riel was insane, is disputed by the Star which closes its contention by declaring that "the man who now argues that Riel was insane leaves himself open to the suspicion that he is either a knave or a fool."

Unfortunately for the Star, that polite reference to those who differ from it does not settle the case, and we will print the opinions of the four doctors who were called in the Regina witness box—two for the defence and two for the prosecution:—

Dr. Jules, swore that he was not an expert on insanity. He is the Government registrar at Regina. He did not think Riel was insane.

Dr. Wallace, superintendent of the Insane Asylum at Hamilton, said he had heard the evidence, and he soon the prisoner outside for half an hour. He did not think there was any evidence of insanity about him so far as he could see.

Certainly not sufficiently strong evidence to guarantee a man's sanity. Dr. Roy, for fifteen years superintendent of Beausport asylum, had opportunity of examining Riel carefully when he was treated in Beausport asylum in 1875-6. Riel was then suffering from the mania of ambition, called by eminent authors, "megalomania." The symptoms of the disease are sometimes found in ordinary maniacs. The following are Dr. Roy's words:—"The victims are very egotistic and forget their best friends. They become violent and irascible, and the difficulty is to make them believe they will have no success in their schemes. Very rare that they were cured. There might be intermissions. There is more or less difference in each case. I recognize the prisoner as the man who was in my asylum. Heard the witnesses in the court describe the conduct of the prisoner during the agitation and rebellion. I am perfectly positive prisoner was not of sound mind when he was under my care, and I believe the actions described by the witnesses were done when he was laboring under the disease. Don't believe prisoner had control of his actions at these times. The symptoms of this mania disclosed by prisoner in court yesterday are the same as he suffered from when under my care."

Dr. Roy swore positively that Riel was insane, and swore with an intimate knowledge of the subject and the patient. Dr. Clark, superintendent of Toronto asylum, had examined the witness and heard the evidence, and believed Riel was insane. He had no hesitation in regard to the matter. Above we have given the opinions of the four medical men. Two of the most prominent specialists on insanity on the continent swear that Riel was insane. We don't think under the circumstances that the Star will reiterate its silly statement of last week, that "The man who now argues that Riel was insane leaves himself open to the suspicion that he is either a knave or a fool."

COL. ROSS AND THE TORIES.

The editor of the St. Mary's Journal read the Mail's insinuations on the "disloyalty" of Col. Ross, of the 33rd Huron Battalion, and as a result he dipped his grey goose quill into gall and wormwood, and went for the gallant Colonel like the proverbial hired man. The Journal wants the Colonel "dismissed," "booted out," and otherwise humiliated because he dared to say at London that "man for man the halfbreeds were equal to our volunteers at prairie fighting." Well, if the Colonel did say that will the Journal dare say it isn't true? We don't think it will. It was all very well to go into ecstasies over the volunteers in the Northwest when the boys came home—and the changes were rung on the HERO business by the Toronto papers after a fashion that had a tendency to produce nausea—but now that we have cooled off, and look at the case as it really stands, what are the facts? Simply this, that 4,000 or 5,000 well-armed and well-equipped men, selected from several crack volunteer battalions, backed by 4,000,000 of people, and a country full of resources, after several months succeeded in quelling an insurrection participated in by a few hundred halfbreeds and Indians, without funds or resources, and short of arms and ammunition. If the number of volunteers had only been equal to the halfbreeds and Indians actually engaged in the so-called rebellion, Gen. Middleton would have taken far longer to finish the tedious "campaign" than he did—and we doubt if he would have finished it at all. We give all credit to the volunteers who left comfortable homes and submitted to the vicissitudes, privations, and discipline of military life when their country called them, but this does not close our eyes to the fact that the vanquished foe—a few hundreds in all—showed bravery and pluck in fighting for their hearths and their homes against the incroachments of grasping monopolists backed by an incompetent Department of the Interior.

We might also say that amongst the first of the officers of the volunteers to offer his services and the services of his battalion in the interest of the country, was Hon. A. M. Ross, Colonel of the 33rd, and had his services been accepted, no braver or better man would have been in the field. It's all very well for the Tory editor of the Journal to howl in his sanctum and through his paper against Col. Ross, but the people of Huron, who know him best, have no fears for his "dismissal" or being "booted out" of the volunteer force for telling the truth about a defeated but brave little band of men, who were driven to desperation by the maladministration of an incompetent Government.

Goderich Town Council Committee.

The following are the committees appointed by the new council. Cemetery—Johnston, Bingham, Thompson and Murney. Court of Revision—Mayor, Johnston, Cameron, Jordan and Butler. Finance—Colborne, Acheson, Reid, Humber and Dunlop. Fire—Butler, Humber, Thompson, Murney and Lee. Harbor—Lee, Murney, Acheson, Dunlop and McEwan. Market—Cameron, Dunlop, McEwan, Bingham and Reid. Public Works—Bingham, Lee, Butler, Jordan, Colborne, McEwan, Humber, Murney and Cameron. Relief—Mayor, Acheson, Dunlop, Ried and Humber. Special—Mayor, Johnston, Cameron, Butler, Colborne, Jordan, Lee, Humber, McEwan and Murney. Board of Health—Mayor, Town clerk, Colborne, Jordan and M. Nicholson.

On proposed public improvements, the Mayor, Reeve, Deputy Reeve, councilors Butler, Jordan, Bingham, McEwan, Humber, and Messrs. Joseph Williams, J. T. Garrow, C. C., E. Campion and Dr. Taylor.

A GRIBBY GRAB.—The Hamilton police were called on Thursday night to quell a young lady who threatened to poison herself because her parents would not allow her to go to the roller rink. This is a very sad case, but if the young lady insists upon one or the other, her parents would do well to declare in favor of poison. It is expeditious and effective, while the roller rink method of winding up a life is tortuous and painful.—Toronto News.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY'S PARLIAMENTS.—At the several annual meetings the following were elected: John Mason was elected president of the Hullett Society; John Cumming of the Morris society; Geo. Castles of the Stanley society; Geo. E. Oreswell of the South Huron society; John Hunter of the Stephen and Uxbridge society; A. MacAllan of the West Riding society; Chas. Henderson of the Turnberry society; John Robertson of E. Wawanosh society.

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