

Owing to the exigencies of yesterday's public holiday forcing us to go to press early, an account of this week's races must await our next issue; and the name of the winner of the Queen's Plate is at all events already in all our readers' hands.

OTTAWA LETTER.

There is quite as severe a depression in the news market as there is in the coal market, that is to say, a scarcity of the commodity. There has been such a sameness in the tariff discussion that it ceases to be news that our stockings, or our bootblacking or the multitudinous minor necessities that go to improve our general make-up have provided intellectual evening entertainments for our legislators. Clerical errors have followed one another with such amazing rapidity that the Finance Minister must frequently exclaim to himself—Where am I? What am I?

The Grand Trunk Railway has succumbed to the threatened condition of affairs the great coal strike has at last enforced upon them. But what a reflection on the protective features of our National Policy, with great beds of coal lying close to the seaports of Nova Scotia! With a waterway that reaches nearly every point on the Grand Trunk Railway for transportation cheaply. A corporation that consumes 600,000 tons of coal annually has to purchase it from a foreign country; \$3,000,000 expended annually in the mining and transmission of coal from the United States for one corporation alone—these are facts brought forcibly under our notice by the unerring course of events. The Government gets \$360,000 a year out of it; that is the happy thought which satisfies protection. Revenue forced out of the necessities of one of our great industrial institutions, covers a multitude of such object lessons as are forced upon our notice by the irony of fate in the distress of a large section of our industrial workers for even such a short period as one month and one of our great arteries of trade stopped in its working.

Free trade would apply such an economic condition to our mining industry that when once it was the settled policy, the supply of coal from Nova Scotia would be added to the supply of the continent, which protection, in consequence of the tax upon industry, closes out, and leaves us dependent upon foreign sources for our very existence.

The volume of trade under a Free-trade policy would multiply the demand for Grand Trunk Railway traffic, and instead of its being obliged to turn adrift its skilled workers, it would be taking on more hands to maintain the demands put upon it. If the Finance Minister could only get some such economic truths injected beneath his tympanum, he would find that his moments of weakness would disappear.

The Government has been visited by one or two different kinds of deputations during the past week; one was from the residents in the Trent Valley, who came to urge it to take action in regard to the Trent Valley Canal. It was an influential gathering, and the Premier thought it a good opportunity to do a little canvassing for the next general election, and not part with his favours too cheaply; the wisdom of demanding something more than moral and intellectual support may be doubted if that was the tenor of his remarks. Party men

may feel justified out of their private means to support their public men in the expenses necessary to impress the policy they hold, by their representation in Parliament, but never in return for pecuniary public favors either granted to whole districts or individual enterprises, and the individual who approaches a Government with that sinister object in view, or the Government that encourages it are guilty of demoralizing the motive power of Government.

Another deputation came 2,000 miles from the district of Alberta to urge upon the Government the passage of a general irrigation act for the purpose of controlling and encouraging the irrigation of that fertile region, which they claim only requires the distribution of the waters flowing from the Rocky Mountains over its plains, to convert what is now an unproductive region for want of an equable rainfall, into a productive one.

The House of Commons will be likely to adjourn over the Queen's Birthday and not resume business until Monday. The Senate has adjourned for a longer period.

The Senate are in the midst of a debate upon the Dillon divorce case, which has created an unusual amount of interest in that Chamber, as the merits of the divorce do not turn so much upon the legal aspect as upon the turn given to it by Senator Kaulbach, who brought in a minority report of the divorce committee and laid down the proposition that both parties being Roman Catholics, more regard should be paid to that fact, and that parliament should withhold divorce from Dillon on that ground, in which position he was supported by Senator Scott.

The death of Mr. John Hearn creates a vacancy in Quebec. His individuality and personal influence in the city of Quebec being removed, it remains to be seen what political position this old constituency will now assume.

Copious rains have been falling lately which will gladden the hearts of the farmers and gardeners.

VIVANDIER.

Ottawa, May 21st, 1894.

OUR ORIGINALS.—I.

[From the French of Benjamin Sulte, F.R.S.C.]

[These spirited papers by Mr. Sulte appeared in the *Revue Francaise*, 1890, 15th April, and 1st and 15th May, and seem to have been called forth by similar gratuitous insolences on the part of a certain class of travellers as Dr. Canniff has also found it proper to rebuke and check in his "Settlement of Upper Canada." It is strange that the superciliousness of visitors to each province should have led to the same sort of impudent accusation of impure descent, and of low and vicious origin, of those who first settled therein. Dr. Canniff has smartly rapped these malignant gentry over the knuckles, and Mr. Sulte, in these papers and others of a similar intent which appeared in *La Minerve* and other French-Canadian sheets, proceeds to do the same.

Though somewhat lengthy, the whole is so full of interest that to curtail or skip would be to rob our readers of pleasure they would prefer to enjoy. It must not be overlooked that Mr. Sulte is speaking to a French audience. At the same time what he says ought to be known to all Canadians as members of a one and indivisible nationality.

S. A. C.]

Is it generally known at what period and in what manner the peopling of Canada by the French element began? No. On this subject the public contents itself with three or four ready-made phrases that speakers and writers repeat as if they were the words of the Gospel itself—and nobody contradicts. M. Edme Rameau is the great and noble exception in all France when he undertakes to speak of the originals of Canada. He alone, of all Frenchmen, speaks correctly upon this subject. Not a very prominent name you will tell me. My reply is that his fame is in Canada and that is enough. His knowledge is profound and his judgment solid. Other writers who have spoken of Canada always fail in these qualities.

I allude to M. Rameau chiefly in connection with the question of our originals, on this he stands alone. Some others, as M. Xavier Marmier, Academician, are well acquainted with our general history and also the social life of our people. M. Emile Salone, professor of history at Paris, is also well versed in these studies. No one would think of publishing a book at Paris without consulting these authorities. Let us go over that which our books teach upon this subject. The matter in dispute is not difficult to determine.

In 1518 the Baron de Lery attempted to establish a colony in the north of the American continent. His endeavour ended at Sable Island. Everybody knows the story of it. Nobody would be beyond the mark in saying that perhaps a few were saved of this band of unfortunate shipwrecked men, some of whom might have reached the shores of Acadia, or other points upon the coast of the continent, and there formed mixed marriages; of which Frenchmen in the end have received benefit in the shape of settlers or *coureurs de bois*. The enterprise of the Baron de Léry never went beyond the measure of a simple endeavour: it produced not the slightest result upon the question of colonization. Though his troop had been composed of criminals or of destitutes, or of seekers after adventure, it matters naught—the essential point is the certainty that none could have survived the expedition with any chance of penetrating to Canada.

Those anxious to enjoy the malignant pleasure of giving birth to suspicious surmises upon this subjects should at least be at the trouble of bringing forward justifying proofs, or at least some plausible argument. These, however, are wanting all along the line. There exists no trace whatever in America, beyond the little horses of Sable Island, and even that is not proven.

As to Cartier, it would seem that the situation lends itself to conjectures. But there is nothing in them. Read the narrations by the discoverer of the River St. Lawrence, and whatever else will serve to throw light upon his travels. Nowhere will you find the shadow of a fact which opens the door to the suppositions of those who advocate the theory I attack herein. Nothing, absolutely nothing, gives authority to the critic to say that our country has any traces of the men of Cartier or of Roberval (1534-1544), and when writers of the present day make a section of French-Canadians descend from the followers of Cartier they indulge in pure romance.

I should much like to know from what motive arises the persistence of so many writers who depict Cartier, Roberval and the criminals they conducted, as the founders of Canada. Do they know that