

THE SCRAP BOOK.

LORD MELGUND ON THE REBELLION.

ON the whole, the rebellion will do good. It will render necessary a searching inquiry into the system of government of the North-West, the system of Indian agencies, and the means to be employed for the future ruling of the country. Immigration may be checked for a year or two, but in future the immigrant will be safer than he has ever been before. Prince Albert and Battleford have no doubt suffered heavily, but settlers generally will have benefited by the visit of the troops, while the insurrection has united in one common cause all the Provinces of the Dominion; battalions from Manitoba, Ontario, the Maritime Provinces, and Quebec, have served side by side in the field; and while French Canadians may reasonably hope that their blood relations may have a fair trial, they have as loyally condemned the rebellion as the people of Ontario. The military experience gained will be valuable. When the campaign commenced the militia department knew nothing of the capabilities of its officers in the field, now many reputations have been made, and it will know in future what commanders it can rely on. The faults of the militia system have been brought into relief, and every good Canadian soldier must hope that the department which has done so well will seize the opportunity of disallowing, once for all, the unmilitary outside influences, which through custom have so often prevailed in purely military questions. It has been General Middleton's lot to command the first volunteer or civilian soldiers who have been in action. And most gallantly have men and officers done their work. The men of his force were almost universally of the same class as our English volunteers—clerks in offices, mechanics, tradesmen. They were not soldiers by trade. Excellent material, splendid marchers, apt to learn, possessed of much handiness and ingenuity, especially with the axe, but unaccustomed to the work required of them, and with no time allowed them to gain experience, they went straight from their homes into action. The risk of much loss of life in a force so composed is an exceptionally heavy risk for a commander to incur, and no man in General Middleton's column is likely to forget their chief's generous solicitude for the safety of his troops. An unseen enemy is always a trying one, especially for an inexperienced force. The Métis never showed themselves, but though good shots at short ranges, in other points they were contemptible. They never attacked a convoy, they never cut the wire behind us, and though Indians and "Breeds" are born mounted infantry, who can shoot as well from their horses as on foot, they never harassed us on the march. Possibly the want of grass for their horses, owing to the earliness of the season, may account for this, but it would seem as if they intended only to defend their homes against invasion. At Fish Creek they met us on their frontier, at Batoches they fought us on their own doorstep. They were badly armed with a certain number of repeating Winchester rifles, but many old smooth bores, they were short of ammunition, and it is doubtful if the force with Riel ever numbered 700 men, Indians and "Breeds" combined. The prisoners they took they treated well, and they respected the dead.—*Nineteenth Century*.

PROHIBITION AND PARTIES.

MR. G. W. CURTIS, the able and respected editor of *Harper's Weekly*, writes as follows in that journal upon Prohibition in the United States: Among the remarkable political events of last year was the general enforcement of the prohibitory law in Iowa. The popular demand for it was so general and decided that leading politicians were obliged to take it into account. There is a much stronger "temperance element" in that party than in the Democratic, as there was a much stronger antislavery feeling among Whigs than among Democrats. Mr. Neal Dow, who has clung steadily to the Republican Party, abandoned it last spring, being as he announced, convinced that it had made "an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the beer and whiskey interests of the country." The temperance question is one of importance in Ohio, but the Cincinnati *Commercial Gazette* says in a conciliatory strain, to win the support of Republican temperance voters in Ohio: "The fraud St. John is one of the half-dozen cranks and hoodlums, fools and spite-workers and blatherous lunkheads, who feel that they are of importance because their unscrupulous and unseemly combination defeated Blaine. St. John is guided by an instinct that is proper in defending the Copiah murderers. Blood is thicker than water." This tone will perhaps persuade ardent temperance men in Ohio that the Republican Party is their best dependence for the reform which they seek. But, however that may be, it is undoubtedly true that the larger number of strong temperance voters is attached to that party, and they will vote with it until Prohibition seems to them the chief issue, and then they will leave it for the Prohibition ranks, because the Republican Party will never become a Prohibition Party. It may be trusted to support a more stringent regulation of the traffic than the Democratic Party, but nothing more. Its general policy upon the subject seems to be justified by the results of a careful inquiry into the working of the prohibitory law in Iowa. In the cities and larger towns it appears that the liquor traffic is openly or secretly carried on. The whole number of saloons in twenty-eight such cities and towns is reported to be nine hundred and sixteen, as against seven hundred and seventy before the law was in operation; and the increase is most decided in the larger cities. Naturally the authorities of the chief cities in the State think that a license law is preferable in every way to the Prohibition law. The trouble with a prohibitory law is that it is of a kind which can never be enforced against public sentiment, and the sentiment of towns and cities is against Prohibition. Until, therefore, the moral appeal of the temperance movement has matured a sentiment in such communities which will enforce Prohibition, the actual evils of intemper-

ance will be more effectually diminished by stringent regulation which the public sentiment will enforce. Laws which outrun or defy public opinion may be passed, but they cannot be made effective. The Fugitive Slave Law was an Act of Congress, approved by the President. It was declared to be a mere enforcement of a provision of the Constitution. But it was repugnant to the general sentiment of certain parts of the country and there it was a dead letter. Again, if anything was sacred under the Constitution, it was the right of the citizen of one State to have all his rights respected in the other States. But that did not save coloured citizens of Massachusetts from imprisonment and sale as slaves in South Carolina. Of course we are not justifying such crimes and outrages, nor regretting the legal guarantee of such rights, nor deprecating the temperance agitation. We are simply noting a fact, of which wise men and legislators will take heed.

LORD SPENCER.

It is intelligible enough why men whose trade is sedition, and whose livelihood is derived from agitation, should make these monstrous charges against Lord Spencer. But what do the mass of the Irish population think of Lord Spencer? Do they sympathize with his unscrupulous detractors? To believe so would, indeed, be to believe that the Irish character has undergone a radical change, that the Irish have lost that "love" of "equal and indifferent justice, although it be against themselves," to which friend and foe have till lately borne such ungrudging witness. For what is the meaning of the charge against Lord Spencer that he set up the gallows in Ireland? On whose behalf did he set up the gallows? Except the Phoenix Park murderers, no man suffered death during Lord Spencer's administration for murdering any official of the English or Irish Government. The victims whose murders have been avenged on the gallows were Irish tenants and Irish peasants. Even if Lord Spencer were capable of feeling the vindictive feelings attributed to him by the Irish Nationalists, what motive for vindictiveness can even perverted ingenuity discover in the enforcement of the law against the brutal murderers of Irish peasants? The accusation is as stupid as it is malicious. Grant—for the sake of argument, and only for the sake of argument—that there has been in one or two cases a miscarriage of justice, even Mr. O'Brien can hardly imagine, in his lucid moments, that Lord Spencer has had any other motive than the protection of the innocent against criminals whom even *United Ireland* once had the decency to denounce. And, after all, the criminals were tried, and found guilty, and sentenced to death by Irish juries and Irish judges. The utmost that can be said with truth against Lord Spencer is that he did not arbitrarily cancel, without convincing additional evidence, the verdicts of Irish juries—in other words, that he did not set himself up like a despot above the law of the land. And how has Lord Spencer demeaned himself through all this storm of irrational abuse? He has borne it all like a true hero. Without a spark of impatience or anger, even without *hauteur*, but with a noble and dutiful patrician indifference to unmerited obloquy; and carrying his life in his hand, he has gone calmly forward with his beneficent work in Ireland, "without fear and without reproach." Lord Spencer will not have to wait for history to do him justice. His contemporaries—all except those whose minds are blinded by passion, or whose patriotism is subservient to the most sordid ambition—have already sealed with their cordial approbation Mr. Gladstone's just eulogy on Lord Spencer's viceroyalty "as perhaps the most even-handed and intelligent administration of the powers of government that we have ever known." In the consciousness that this tribute to his character and statesmanship expresses the conviction of all whose opinions are worth having, Lord Spencer can well afford to treat with silent disdain the bitter calumnies of Irish Nationalists and the despicable surrender of a Tory Cabinet to the leaders of disaffection and disorder in Ireland.—*Spectator*.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE governed England from Westminster like a sovereign for an entire generation. Personally incorrupt, though the fountain of promiscuous corruption, he was for more than twenty years Prime Minister. A Prime Minister was remunerated more generously under the early Georges than now. Without the expenditure of a shilling which was not honestly his own, Sir Robert was able to lay out £200,000 on buildings and purchases of land at Houghton, and £40,000 on pictures. Every summer he gathered a vast party of guests at his Norfolk home to consult upon party interests in the intervals of wassail, which cost £3,000 a year. When his followers, saturated with bribes or disgusted with his jealousy of every partner in power, deserted him, he retired to Houghton, and did not murmur at the termination of his despotism. Houghton Hall has been shorn of much of its magnificence. The Hall itself, stripped and curtailed, remains inalienably connected with a national epoch. Englishmen may not be very proud of the period to which it belongs. The State was regarded as a carcass upon which all who had the effrontery to push themselves into place were free to feed. Walpole encouraged the temper in order to leave the wider scope for his own insatiable but public-spirited ambition. At a Houghton meeting doubtless as rapacious and sordid a body of politicians was annually assembled as has in the most profligate age and country disgraced professional statesmanship. The host's personal tastes were as coarse as his judgment of the virtue of others was contemptuous. Houghton festivities were a round of orgies which shocked the delicacy even of eighteenth century squires. Yet he was the most successful administrator England has ever known. No British statesman did so much as he in laying solidly and soundly the foundations of national prosperity and financial progress. In the twenty years of his autocratic rule the country stored up resources without which it could not have survived its struggles against Royal, Republican and Napoleonic France, or