

That it contains truth is undoubted, but it does not contain all the truth,—and what truth there is, is sometimes so presented as to make the impression of error. Doubtless there are defects in Miss Macpherson's administration, and it would be marvellous in placing 2,000 children out, if instances of bad treatment and bad conduct were not met with. But, taken on the whole, the enterprise has been a signally useful one to Canada, and we hope this excellent lady and her coadjutors may continue their labors for many long years to come.

The trial known as "The Canadian Oil Wells Case" must be regarded by Canadians with satisfaction, inasmuch as the evidence fails utterly in justifying any reflections upon the honor of any single person or institution for whose actions or neglect the country is responsible. The history of the affair can be told in a breath. One Longbottom held jointly with one Prince some lots in Petrolia. Longbottom, we think, is not Canadian—Prince is. The former sought to sell them at a fabulous price first to Mr. Albert Grant, as promoter of a company for their ultimate purchase; but even *his* seared conscience shrank from so glaring a swindle. The Credit Foncier was then tried, whose Chairman found out the vendor to be a rogue, and told him so. Then a Board of Directors, composed of gentlemen of title and high social rank, was got to take up the affair, who, though warned by those who had rejected the scheme as a fraud, warned also by the Press in the States and Canada, warned also by private friends, were silly enough to organize a company for the purchase of a property for \$2,500,000, which was not worth \$50,000. There are two points in this case bearing upon all commercial dealings and non-commercial also, at times, which are worthy of some attention. It appears that in order to test the value of the wells a son of one of the buyers was sent out to inspect them, and with him one of the directors. The young gentleman sent on this mission was seen and conversed with by the writer of this article, and he formed the opinion then, as did others, that the selection of this young man for any such

mission was a practical joke. The director and his co-inspector saw this wonderful property and telegraphed home that all was right, a fact which the director explains by admitting that "he was made a fool of by the vendor," which is not true, as that manufacture was already quite complete before he left England. This visit of inspection is the key to the whole mystery of the case, and with it we are enabled to see the working of the plot which ended in the success of roguery. We note, then, that false economy, combined with nepotism and excess of fancied cunning, prevented that visit of inspection, preventing such a fraud being perpetrated—false economy in selecting a raw young man as engineering inspector, instead of one of tried and good professional standing; nepotism in selecting a son of a director instead of an independent adviser, and excess of cunning in concealing their business from persons well able and most willing to give invaluable advice on the spot, but who were not asked lest they should be anxious to share in the expected treasure.

To false economy even States may justly attribute great disasters. At this moment in Canada, a conflict exists, soluble only by the highest engineering skill which money can command, and it would be the highest wisdom, the cheapest in the long run, to submit the Canal system of this country to such authority before going on as now into expenditures which a few years may show to be waste. To excess of cunning small minds are prone, but their rewards are also small. Frankness in dealing begets confidence, inspires respect, challenges honorable response, and elicits help. The directors of the Canadian Oil Wells would have saved their reputation and their purse and their peace of mind, had they not been so very cunning in concealing from Canadians the object of sending their deputation to Petrolia. That the jury could not agree is, we believe, to be accounted for chiefly from the glamor of the social position of the defendants; and, after all, it is perhaps better to be so. Better to keep up some faith in the honor of the "gentleman," fool though he has been, than do anything to lower the stand-