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IN THE

WILDS OF THE NORTHWEST

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Under the above title, we will begin, in our next issue, the publication of an interesting and graphic description of the Expedition of the Northwest Mounted Police, from Fort Garry to the Rocky Mountains. The letter-press will be illustrated with numerous and characteristic sketches taken along the route by our talented artist H. JULIEN, who accompanied the Force by special invitation.

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, Jan. 30th, 1875.

RECIPROCITY REFUSED.

The most important event of the past week is the death of Reciprocity. The Treaty has been declined by the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate, and that body will acquiesce in the decision without further debate. We announced this result two months ago, and hence we experience no astonishment. Several of our friends discredited the prophecy, and their surprise is great in consequence. In fact, the partisans of the Treaty would not hear of its discomfiture, until it was announced on "high authority," by Mr. W. H. HOWLAND, President of the Dominion Board of Trade, at the recent meeting of that body, in Ottawa. At the same sitting, Mr. PARSONS, President of the Detroit Board of Trade, confirmed the intelligence, expressed his regret thereat, and gave a few summary causes which led to the event. He felt convinced that a Treaty equitable and just in its character could be passed between Canada and the States, and would contribute to the prosperity of both countries. For 20 years

he had had commercial intercourse with Canada, and he regretted that the Treaty should be thrown out. He thought that the great misfortune in connection with the question on the other side was that merchants of the United States could not enter into their debates in the dispassionate manner in which they did in the Dominion of Canada. If they could, the Treaty would no doubt have been carried. It could not have failed on its merits, but from force of circumstances. On account of the great troubles in the United States, no attention had been paid to the Treaty. Another reason was, that several Senators did not wish to offend Congress, who are opposed to it. He held that the lumber interests had mainly set the people against it, for, while a year ago, they could market the three upper qualities at \$45, now they have the same qualities at \$30, and they realize barely the cost of production, which led them to object to the Treaty. While the lumber sold for \$45, our merchants, he said, did not recognize the \$15,000,000 taken out of the country.

In reviewing the failure of the Reciprocity Treaty, we must bear in mind the complexion of the present Congress. It is Republican, and the chief plank in the platform of the Republican party is Protection. It was by means of Protection, championed through the writings of HORACE GREELEY, and advocated by the foremost statesmen in the country, that the United States managed to weather the financial and commercial crisis resultant on the war. Now, that the Union is restored to something like a normal state of prosperity, it was expected that this doctrine, especially in its Prohibitory clauses, would be modified; but the Republicans seem to have been blind to the necessity of any such step. The November elections should have opened their eyes, as the issue was largely a battle between Free Trade and Protection, and the Democrats gained an overwhelming triumph, in their support of the former; but the present Congress, the last before the advent of the Democratic majority, seemed determined to persevere in its false ways. Add to this an almost universal apathy, not to say antipathy, among Americans, with regard to every thing concerning Canada. This fact Canadians should be made aware of. It is patent to every one acquainted with the United States, and it is painfully so to every Canadian journalist who attentively peruses his American exchanges. The Reciprocity Treaty created considerable excitement throughout the Dominion, spite of the warnings of the Ottawa Government, which counseled quiescence. In the United States, it caused hardly a ripple. A few very public men made speeches against it, before specially interested constituencies; a few influential papers, principally in the West, lectured Congress angrily upon it; but the great mass of the people, as represented by the press and the platform, was silent and indifferent. This treatment of a measure so important to ourselves, may perhaps not be construed into hostility, but it certainly marks a lack of friendly, cordial international feeling.

As usual, political capital will be made of the failure. The Ottawa Government will be twitted thereat and roundly blamed. The criticism, to be just, should be moderate. It is true that very liberal concessions were made; that pledges of public improvements were given almost physically impossible of accomplishment; that certain discriminations, unjust to special classes of industry, were introduced, but on the whole, the instrument was a manly, patriotic attempt to obtain a great boon, and the Government deserves credit for having undertaken it. Ministerialists themselves, from a strictly partisan standpoint, will rather rejoice than otherwise, at the declension of the Treaty by the Senate. That step takes a thorn out of Mr. MACKENZIE'S side. He could never have passed it through Parliament by mere force of argument; and if he had resorted to pressure on his large majority, the result would have led to an immediate

or gradual re-action, most disastrous in its consequences. The fact is, that the Treaty was unpopular in the country, and without most important modifications could not have been forced upon it.

We have hopes, however, that the measure may still be revived. Profiting by their experience, our negotiators will revise it, and when properly revised, it may be presented to the XLIV Congress—Democratic and Free Trade—with fair prospect of success. Untrammelled reciprocal relations between the two countries, are a commercial, political and geographical necessity.

LEPINE AND RIEL.

To the person accustomed to read between the lines, it is evident that the Manitoba problem has at length reached the initial stage of its solution. AMBROISE LEPINE was to have been executed on the 20th inst. His sentence has been commuted to two years of imprisonment, and he has been deprived of his political rights for life. Almost simultaneously, the announcement reaches us that LOUIS RIEL has been outlawed. These two events should not be detached, but taken together, for their significance is almost identical. It may seem paradoxical that the disfranchisement of one man, and the outlawry of another, should go to the ultimate pardon and rehabilitation of both; but such, we believe, will be the final issue. It was meet, and perhaps necessary, that an outraged public sentiment should be propitiated by a semblance of punishment, preparatory to its subsequent acquiescence in a measure of general amnesty—if not meet, at least politically necessary.

The situation in Manitoba has been a standing crisis; no peaceable government was possible there, so long as the troubles arising out of the insurrection of 1869-70 were not definitively settled. One thing has been throughout as clear as noonday. No Canadian administration could settle these difficulties. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD shrank from the task, and was abused by the Liberals in consequence. Mr. MACKENZIE has been helpless in the matter, and the Conservatives have berated him therefor. There were inter-provincial, if not national, issues at stake on the result. The granting of amnesty would inevitably array the whole of Ontario in open hostility. The refusal of amnesty would as surely disaffect the entire French portion of Quebec; while, even the delay of it, has kept that Province in a chronic state of effervescence. There was only one way out of this quandary. It was to throw the matter into the hands of the Imperial authorities. This LORD DUFFERIN has undertaken to do. He has already apprised LEPINE of his own responsibility, without asking the advice of his Ministers. We have good authority for stating, that this first step will be soon followed by a declaration of general amnesty, proclaimed through the Colonial Office. The precise date of this measure we are not in a position to give. Probably, it will be timed so as to embarrass our own Government as little as possible. The grace of LEPINE followed the Ontario elections, to the manifest relief of Mr. MOWAT. The general amnesty will probably be made public only after the next Session of Parliament, much to the satisfaction of Mr. MACKENZIE, who will thus be saved the disagreeable necessity of answering perplexing questions.

Naturally, this mode of extrication from a vexed and perilous situation, is not to the taste of the Opposition. They knew the trouble which the Metis business has given the administration, and they fondly anticipated still further trouble therefrom. They are therefore disgusted at seeing LORD DUFFERIN and the Imperial officers stepping forward to Mr. MACKENZIE'S assistance. Their disappointment is natural, as we have said, but it is hardly creditable. They ought to remember that this difficulty is of their own creating. Viewed in the light of subse-

quent events, there is no doubt that Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD and Sir GEORGE E. CARTIER blundered egregiously in the management of North West affairs. And the result of their blundering they left as a sad legacy to their successors. On the other hand, the Liberals deserve scant sympathy. They agitated the question beyond natural limits, helped to stir up a morbid feeling in regard to it throughout the country, and largely employed it as a lever to hoist themselves into power. There is no doubt, whatever, that both sides made an unscrupulous and scandalous use of this matter to further their respective interests; and it is because they are still both disposed to do so for the same purposes, that it is right for the Imperial Government to intervene. Anything that may put an end to at least one of our miserable party squabbles, ought to be acclaimed with satisfaction, and, in that sense, the action of the British authorities will be a substantial benefaction.

Some fault has been found with the Governor-General for disfranchising LEPINE. Of course, the objection will fall to the ground of itself, when the amnesty will have been proclaimed, and the prisoner restored to all his rights. But even theoretically, the decision of LORD DUFFERIN may be justified as less severe than would appear *prima facie*. Every man under the stroke of a capital sentence is *ipso facto* stripped of his prerogatives of citizenship. In relieving LEPINE from one part of his sentence, LORD DUFFERIN only maintained the effect of the second part. In other words, disfranchisement was not imposed by the Governor-General, but simply re-affirmed.

Of course, there will be much sharp practice on the part of political leaders and managers, in this whole affair. These gentlemen are very ingenious, if they imagine that their manoeuvres are not apparent. As the withholding of LEPINE'S reprieve till after the elections in Ontario, undeniably helped Mr. MOWAT'S administration, so the proclamation of amnesty will be used to influence the approaching Quebec elections in favor of the Liberals. It will not do to tell us that the coincidence in the former case was merely fortuitous. From a circumstantial knowledge, we are convinced that LEPINE was aware of the change in his fate as early as the 11th January, the very day of the Ontario nominations. We do not precisely object to all these tactics; but, at least, let us be candid and admit that, in the business of mere wangling, one party is really no better than the other.

INDEPENDENCE IN POLITICS.

In the speech which Mr. MACKENZIE delivered at the late JURY banquet, in this city, he made a rather deprecating allusion to the young National or Canada First party, and insisted upon the necessity of strict party lines in a country like ours. That public opinion always and naturally divides itself into two currents, one adverse, and the other hostile to the administration in power, is a fact of common experience, and from this point of view, Mr. MACKENZIE'S proposition is correct. But it by no means follows that there may not be an important fraction of the people, as represented by the press and by public men, which stands aloof from either organization, with a well-defined programme of independent action. Were the two existing parties in the State divided by principles, there would be some reason for adhering more strictly to them. But our Canadian parties are almost entirely personal, and, as such, really have no authority to impose conditions of fealty upon their followers. Independent members may be an anomaly and an obstruction in such old countries as Britain, but in Canada their *raison d'être* is clear and the wonder is that the number is not greater.

It is fashionable to mock at independence in politics. In Canada, it must be