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THE TIMES.

I have not yet found a satisfactory answer to the question "what is the matter with the Liberals?" To say that there is great delay among them in bringing forward candidates is to put the matter mildly. The lack of judgment on the part of some of the prominent men among them seems to have paralyzed the whole party in Montreal. The *Herald* goes on day by day grinding out accusations against the Opposition like a mill—the secret of it is that the rank and file are chaffing at the restrictions put upon them by their leaders.

But may it not be that they are not quite sure of their position. The cry of Protection or Free Trade is not at all understood—especially by the Liberals. I quoted from Mr. Mackenzie's speech to the effect that we were to follow England, in the way of Free Trade, but here is a message I have received on a postal card:—"Imagine my surprise to find in your to-day's issue, on the first page, and in the first paragraph, 'the West will be mainly for him, that is to say for Free Trade.' Now, Sir, you ought to know as well as any man that our present Government does not propose free trade, that it has increased the duties, and that the application 'Free Trade' to it is a calumny which a righteous man should not condescend to countenance. Yours, Justice." Now, I believe that "Justice," who writes from Kingston, is a fair specimen of many of the party. They do not understand the profession of their leaders. But why not ask those leaders to come out with clear and definite statements which honest men can see through? If they did that they would tell us that the cry of Protection or Free Trade is only being used for party purposes, and that the question came as a direct issue for a long time. The only source of revenue at present is the tariff—which, I think, should be so adjusted as not to prevent importation and thus diminish revenue, instead of increasing it—and should also afford a fair protection to manufacturers. Neither party can do much more or much less than this—so after all the question is between the ins and the outs. Meantime the Liberal Brass Band will play to the tune of the Pacific Scandal, and Gideon's Band will thunder "Sir John and Protection" at every picnic.

Apropos of that opinion, here is a letter I have received on the matter of Mr. M. P. Ryan, to whom I am supposed to have done some injury by criticising his address. As matters now stand I have no objection to endorsing this letter:—

SIR,—In the election which is about to take place, Montreal must either return three supporters of the Opposition or reduce its representation to one voice in the House. If Messrs. Gault, Coursol, and Devlin should be elected, that will be the case; but I do not apprehend such a result. I only mention it as I have noticed your criticism on Mr. Ryan's address. Let me remind you that when the Hon. T. D. McGee was assassinated at Ottawa, Mr. Devlin, who had been a bitter political opponent and aspirant for his seat in Parliament, did not present himself, and Mr. Ryan was unanimously chosen as Montreal's member. He was also elected by acclamation on another occasion. His course in Parliament was consistent as a supporter of Sir John A. Macdonald. Now, Sir, at the present moment, Montreal is suffering perhaps more than any other part of Canada, from the reckless financial policy of the present Government; besides the tea and sugar trade destroyed, manufactures are paralyzed from the competition of the United States market. Importers are leaving Montreal and going West, and the tendency is for Ontario to be either supplied by way of New York and the Niagara frontier from England, or from American sources. In such an emergency should we prefer a man for our member who has spent his life in Criminal Law Courts, or an active trader in the City of Montreal? Mr. Devlin may call himself an Independent and a Protectionist, but both will be subservient to the wishes of the Mackenzie Government and its existence is a standing menace to the prosperity of our city. I therefore ask you to urge the electors to vote for Gault, Coursol and Ryan, as a means of creating a Government which will prevent Canada being a slaughter-house for the over stock of goods of our friends across the line. Sir John A. Macdonald said that Mr. Devlin was too slippery a fish for his net, and, regardless of his protestations, he is a strict party-man of the Grit-Rouge stamp.

ELECTOR.

A very important movement has commenced among the leather and cloth manufacturers of Montreal to protect themselves from men of bad credit. The Mercantile Agencies, which originally were admirably conducted, appear not to have enjoyed for some years past the confidence of a large number of manufacturers; hence this effort to organise among themselves an association for self-protection. It deserves to succeed.

Within the past week a general impression has prevailed that we have turned the corner and passed the crisis. Trade shows strong symptoms of a general revival, and that, too, on a solid financial basis. Weak men have gone into insolvency, and only strong men will venture to ask for credit. Several of our largest manufactories are working to their fullest extent, with orders waiting on them.

It is difficult to find amusement in these dull days, but I have found a source which I hereby recommend. Read the reports of political meetings and speeches as given by the *Montreal Gazette* and *Herald*, or by the *Toronto Globe* and *Mail*. Take the accounts of the Premier at Richmond, or the speech of Mr. Colby with reference to the Stanstead Scandal. The thing is really entertaining; but what must be the effect upon the reporters?

The ladies of Toronto are going in for politics; not speaking on the public platform, but sending written resolutions proposed and seconded. That is good; we are in need of new blood and new manners. If they can make us a little wiser and a great deal more gentle, they will have done a good and useful work.

The Canadian Methodists have a solid grievance: the elections are to take place within a few days of the meeting for Conference at Montreal. That is just like the liberal party. Most important laymen will be distracted; they will be mixing politics with theology, and we shall have no end of confusion. It is a pity that the two events are so close together. Why not put off the elections? Mr. Mackenzie should choose his time with more judgment.

Chicago is still in doubt whether she will go barefoot next winter or be shod by Chinese. The strike of the thousand shoemakers continues, and the manufacturers have become as stupid a unit as their late hired hands. Having stock for six weeks of trade, they say they can afford to wait if the other side does not wish to labour. The appearance in that city at the time of writing is that Ah Sin will earn the bread at about fifty-five cents a day which the poor but proud Yankee rejects. But a San Francisco press despatch claims that the Chinese Six Companies will not send a man to make shoes in Chicago for even \$30 per month, and that they are making from \$25 to \$40 per month where they are. And then the New York Crispins cry to their Western fellows to stick to their end, and let the Chinese have their lasts if they want them, tendering aid to the idlers and hinting that reciprocity may soon be needed here. Meanwhile some of the Chicago militia leaders promise quiet aid to the proposed riot if the Chinese appear.

The results of the Lambeth Conference are thus summarized by the *London Times*:—

"Such demonstrations as these have their value, but it is not often by the stirring of new thoughts that they are prompted. They stand for the fulfilment rather than for the promise—for the accomplished work rather than for the means by which new work is to be done. The Lambeth Conference is most properly a great demonstration of what the English Church has grown to be. It helps us all to feel that our national form of religion is a vast and widely-spread influence, co-extensive with our race, and dependent upon something better and more enduring than the accident of place or of establishment. If we are to have further results, it is to the by-play and to the after-wave of the great movement that we may look for them with the most assurance."

Secret treaties are evidently Lord Beaconsfield's forte. First, there was a secret treaty which made the Berlin Council possible; then there was a secret treaty with Turkey which made the Berlin Council of no account; then there were rumours of a third secret treaty, mysteriously hinted at and darkly half denied by the Government, which, now it appears probable, was one with France. By this reported treaty, for no official publication has yet taken place, France assumes the protectorate of Tunis, nominally a dependency of Turkey, really an independent State. France has been "protecting" Algeria ever since 1831, and by this treaty adds to her colonial possessions a territory of 42,000 square miles, with a million and a half of inhabitants, a regular army of 5,000 troops and an annual revenue of \$1,300,000.

EDITOR.