

The Free Press, LONDON, ONT.

Saturday, January 2, 1886.

THE FRANCHISE BILL ENDORSED.

Our local contemporary in announcing that steps have been taken in North Middlesex to "look after the voters' list," tells us that "a very great deal requires to be done in order that a full and complete voters' list may be had." The advice and the admission which goes with it are noteworthy. That there should be fair and steady efforts made by those interested to secure a full and complete list, all must be agreed upon. That the list has not been as full and complete as desirable in times past, our contemporary indirectly asserts. But why does not the *Advertiser* have the honesty and manliness to acknowledge the advanced merits of the Franchise Act, under which this is possible? Instead of blessing the Act which is designed to give voters every privilege to which they can claim to be entitled, to make, in short, a full and complete list, that nobody can find fault with, our contemporary has been cursing it all together. The *Advertiser* goes on to say—

"What we desire to see is a full and fair expression of the opinion of the country at the election, and this can only be had by making a complete voters' list."

That is what every one desires to see, and what they will see when the time arrives. But has not our local Grit contemporary been saying all along that "a full and fair expression of the opinion of the country" is not to be looked for as the fruit of the Franchise Act, that that measure was in short designed to prevent such expression? We now see how hollow a hypocritical has been the contention of Mr. Mills and his paper against the Act in question. That which he and it at first denounced as nothing less than an outrage upon the country, is now admitted to be a just measure, one calculated, with proper efforts made, not only to secure "a full and complete voters' list," but "a full and fair expression of the opinion of the country." If the Franchise Act is payable to this end, why was it so bound and abused by Mr. Mills in Parliament, and so roundly vilified in the columns of his paper as a "Tory measure?" One would think that a statesman would have hailed as a public boon from any political quarter a measure under which "a full and fair expression" of public opinion would be necessary and possible, according to its provisions. But Mr. Mills and a little coterie of Grits sat up nights for nearly three months in Parliament in the effort to obstruct and defeat the measure which he now admits to be so comprehensive and efficient. Those three months of obstruction over the Franchise Bill cost Canada \$150,000, a sum which might have been saved to the treasury had Mr. Mills and his party taken at that time the very reasonable and amiable view of the Act which he now appears to do. Was it not an outrageous misuse of Parliamentary privilege to maintain at so much cost a factional and irrational opposition to an Act so liberal and impartial as the Franchise Act is now admitted by Mr. Mills and the *Advertiser* to be?

THE TURN OF THE TIDE.

One of the leading commercial agencies reports for the year just closed a large decrease in the number of business failures in Canada as compared with 1884. The result may be given in tabular form as follows—

| Date. | No. of Failures. | Liabilities. |
|-------|------------------|--------------|
| 1883. | 1,287. | \$1,001,074. |
| 1884. | 1,357. | \$1,001,074. |
| 1885. | 1,287. | \$1,001,074. |
| 1886. | 1,287. | \$1,001,074. |

The amount of liabilities was \$1,001,074 in 1885 than in 1884. The average amount of liabilities for each failure, which in 1884 was \$14,462, in 1885 is but a little over \$7,000. One trader in 56 failed in 1885, as compared with one trader in 50 in 1884. In 1878 one trader, in every 33 failed, showing a distinct gain last year in every direction, judged from the standpoint of the failure list.

The revenue returns of the Dominion are also on the increase. In Toronto the amount of duties collected for December showed an increase of \$17,747 over the same month last year, and the total inland revenue was \$1,153,284, as compared with \$945,300 for 1884.

There is evidently a decided turn in the tide in all departments of trade and industry, not in Canada alone but in the States. The New York *Sun* declares that during the three months, from August until November last, there was, for the first time since 1881, a distinct though very moderate improvement in business throughout the country. The advance has come; business has improved; prices in some lines are higher, and in general wholesale lines there is a renewed confidence that the movement of merchandise will show a steady though possibly moderate improvement early within the new year. This suggests an inquiry into the extent of the late improvement, not to mention some considerations bearing on the trade outlook.

There are fifteen staple articles which, so far as price fluctuation is concerned, may be said to reflect the general trend of quotations during the year. Of these it will be found that seven are higher than on Jan. 1, 1885, six are lower, and two are quoted at nearly the same figure. Wheat is 4¢ higher per bushel; sugar, 1 1/16¢ per pound; tobacco 1/2¢, and wool, 1/2¢ per pound; oats, 25¢ per bag; rails, 6¢ per ton, and lead about 1 1/10¢ per pound. Indian corn is 6¢ lower per bushel; coffee has declined 1/2¢ per pound; pork, \$3 25 per barrel; cheese, 2¢ per pound; cotton, 1 1/8¢ per pound; and print cloths are off. Butter is quoted about the same now

as then, as is lake copper. Of articles specified as having advanced, both wheat and sugar tend to lower figures.

But there is a favorable side to the picture, found in the recently published statistics of east and west bound shipments by the trunk line railways. For eleven months, those coming east from Chicago amounted to about 8,888,000 tons in 1885, against 8,104,000 tons in eleven months of 1884, 9,320,000 tons in 1883, and 8,863,000 tons in 1882. The west-bound tonnage for a like period from the four larger Atlantic cities is given at 1,900,000 tons, against 2,137,000 tons in 1882, being the heaviest since that year, 6 per cent. heavier than in 1884, and 8 per cent. larger than in 1883. The bulk of the increase was during the three months between August and November last, which may be called significant, inasmuch as transportation rates had been advanced. The *Billboard Gazette* truly says that this "is the most favorable feature of the business situation" and "the best evidence of a decided revival of trade."

It remains to be added that many of the leading industries have found a better inquiry, and a moderately increased output is the result. This is most notable in the case of the pig-iron furnaces, and to a considerable extent, in the steel rail mills. Pig-iron at the West and South, mainly for export, is one dollar higher per ton, and the East a like advance has come for lower grades.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.

Several important events marked the year 1885 with special significance from a political point of view. For the purposes of brevity, two chief divisions may be made:—The Franchise Bill and the North-west troubles. The facts connected with each of these matters are yet fresh in the minds of our readers.

The spectacle of a party claiming public approval and support, endeavoring to wear out a government through sheer physical exhaustion, is one that will not easily be forgotten. Nor will it be forgotten how ignominiously that senseless opposition ended; though not until three months of valuable time had been consumed and the country put to a cost of nearly half a million dollars! That opposition was against a liberal and statesmanlike measure, and few will now be found who can give a single plausible reason why the opposition should ever have been begun. With some pretence of consistency, however, a few of the hopelessly bigoted Grit journals harp back on the Franchise Bill as one of the crowning injustices of Sir John A. Macdonald's career. In this class is the *Advertiser*, which boasts that if Riel and not Sir John on account of the Franchise Bill, Sir John on account of the Franchise Bill, in this connection a little bill of particulars would be interesting, as showing the points of objection to this measure. The fact is, this talk against the Franchise Bill is the veriest rubbish, for while these journals are condemning it in one column, they are vigorously commending Mowat's act in another, which differs from it in not a single important item.

It will also be remembered how the poetic Edgar started a fund at the *Globe* office, to be applied in combating the evils which that scheme met with is shown by the fact that beyond Edgar's own contribution not another ever arrived at the *Globe* office.

The events connected with the troubles in the North-west are no less fresh in the memories of our readers than the political controversy that has arisen over them. The rebellion of the Metis, at the criminal prompting of Riel, has been grossly enlarged upon and misrepresented by the Grit press, with the object in view of justifying the uprising. To gain that end the claims of the half-breeds have been magnified beyond all reason. In general terms they have sought to make it appear that the Metis were goaded into rebellion by robbery and oppression beyond which forbearance would have ceased to be a virtue. In the light, however, of sober investigation it has been shown that these half-breeds were without a single substantial grievance, and that they had been stirred into revolt by the wicked and designing Riel. The *Free Press* has called for the items of grievance, and calls for them now. Let the papers that have been raging about the abuse of the half-breeds paint a single act of oppression or of injustice on the part of the Government.

The hanging of Riel has raised a whirlwind of excitement and indignation in a certain section of the Dominion, and the year closes with all patriotic Canadians forced to witness the humiliating spectacle of leaders of the Reform party seeking to fan that agitation in order that political capital may be made out of it. So great is their thirst for office, that these wire pullers seem willing to sacrifice their regard for the law of the land, by assisting one section of the people to bring retribution upon the Government which upheld that law in the interest of the whole people. They have declared the execution in question to have been nothing short of judicial murder, and are willing to distort every fact in connection with the rebellion and the hanging, so that it may bear against Sir John A. Macdonald—that grand old statesman, whose declining years are being busied with the weightiest matters relating to the country he loves so well.

The *Lancet* says that "children who are allowed to go barefooted enjoy almost perfect immunity from the danger of 'cold' by accidental chilling of the feet, and they are altogether healthier and happier than those who, in obedience to the usage of social life, have their lower extremities permanently inviolated, and so to say, carefully swathed and put away in rigid cases. As regards the poorer classes of children, there can be no sort of doubt in the mind of any one that it is incomparably better they should go barefooted than wear boots that let in the wet, and stockings that are nearly always damp and foul."

HON. MR. FOSTER'S ELECTION.

The return of Hon. Mr. Foster, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, by the handsome majority of 242, demonstrates that the Government is more than holding its own in the affections of the people. In 1882 Mr. Foster's majority was but 71. The latest trial of strength has resulted in another of the great victories won by the Administration in the Maritime Provinces within the past six months. Antigonish and one seat in St. John's city and county have been wrested from the Opposition, while Ministerialists have held their own in a second seat in St. John's and one in King's. Add to these triumphs the enormous majorities piled up by the Minister of the Interior in Carleton Place and by Mr. Ward in East Durham, and it will be seen that so far at least as his political ascendancy in Parliament is concerned, Sir John Macdonald has no reason to complain of this eventful year—1885.

CURRENT TOPICS.

People with weak eyes in New York, who go out of an evening where there are electric lights, carry parasols and umbrellas to protect their eyesight.

Telephonic communication between opera and palace, now so frequent on the Continent, does not seem always desirable judging from an adventure of the Queen of the Belgians. Lately her Majesty, seated comfortably in her room at Lachen, was enjoying by telephonic means the rehearsal of a new opera at the Theatre de la Monnaie, in Brussels. Suddenly the royal ears were shocked by the conductor, swearing violently at the chorus, and ever since every member of the Monnaie company has been obliged to keep strict guard over the tongue lest such an offence should recur.

A new departure of a very splendid kind in organ playing has been decided upon at the Albert Palace at Battersea—nothing less than an international representative series of solo-playing organ recitals. The instrument itself is a magnificent one, having nearly a hundred "stops." Mr. Best of Liverpool, Mr. Fyne, of Manchester and Sir Robert Stewart, of Dublin, have been engaged to represent England, perhaps the most desirable choice they could possibly have been made; while, to do justice to France, Saint-Saens, the great composer, Guilmant, the eminent soloist (both at this moment in England), and Widor, the organist of St. Sulpice, have been invited to exhibit their skill before the public of the metropolis.

Lysander Dickerson, who is delivering a course of lectures in Boston on the Egyptian, devoted a portion of his lecture to the condition of women among them. He said that about there was a trace left of a marriage ceremony, there were laws and contracts in force that made the women equal, and even superior to the man in property and social rights. He traced the marriage contracts to show the gradual progress in freedom and influence of married women. In 181 B. C., the divorce law was introduced into Egypt, and Widor, the organist of St. Sulpice, have been invited to exhibit their skill before the public of the metropolis.

BOOK NOTICES.

THE PASTOR'S DIARY AND CLERICAL RECORD. W. D. D. Montreal. Funk & Wagnell Co. New York.

This excellent aid to Ministerial work has been prepared by the Rev. Louis H. Jordan, D. D. Montreal. It is suited to the use of the generally, being of a non-denominational character. It contains the "Practical Lessons" for 1886; the "Pastor's Diary" for each day in the year; an ample Congregational Directory, ruled for a record of visits made, columns for "Studies made," and a space for text for sermons, as they may occur to the mind of the preacher; a Bible class and roll; list of candidates for Communion, admissions to Baptism, Marriage, Burial; platform addresses to be delivered, collections had, business coming forward at Church meetings, cash accounts, etc., together with a large amount of miscellaneous information. It forms a complete work of the kind, and there is much pleasure in commending it to the ministerial profession.

OVERLAND MONTHLY: San Francisco, January, 1886.

Among the American magazines the "Overland" holds a high place. The current number is especially excellent, containing a large number of very articles. A paper on "Water Rights in British Columbia," and some "Observations on Chinese 'Labor,'" by Hon. A. A. Sargent, will be found especially interesting to Canadian readers.

NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, January, 1886, New York.

In many respects the publishers propose a new and advanced programme, of which the present issue is an excellent forecast. It is replete with good matter of a varied kind. There is a paper by General Beauregard on the celebrated Shiloh campaign, during the great rebellion. One by Canon Farrar, touching the "Work of the Church in America," in which his admirers will find much gratifyingly true. It is earnest and wholesome. "Canadian Impressions" has three contributors in the persons of the Marquis of Lorne, Mr. Alex. Pirie, of Toronto, and on the part of Sir John Macdonald. "Democracy in England" is a timely, well-written contribution, setting forth the salient points of the revolution that has been established by the admission of an addition of some two millions of new and heretofore untitled voters to the franchise in England. Col. Ingersoll contributes two pages on "The Imagination," which partake of his well-known attractive style. A series of letters addressed to "Prominent Persons" has been commenced, promising good things. "At Last" refers to Irish affairs, and the coming establishment of Home Rule. The writer goes a long way back in the history of the country in order to prove that such a measure is needed at the present time. Other papers of value are also to be found in the pages of the North American Review, making it very attractive to readers of all classes.

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MR. DORENWEINDT, Toronto, Sept. 21, 1885.

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D. C. MACDONALD,
Manager.
London, 27th June, 1885. G1104-2-17

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