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TUESDAY MORNING AUGUST 4, 1886.

The Lesson of the Fire.

Very luckily the wind yesterday

morning was not blowing from the lake,

and we would have to chronicle to-day an

appalling devastation.

The fire, by dint of great exertion, kept on

the south side of the Esplanade. It would

be well to consider, in view of the

frequent fires which occur on this

thoroughfare, if it is the correct

thing to have so many old wooden

buildings, which may be fanned into flame

at any moment, in such close proximity to

so much of our valuable property. Monday

morning's fire may let new light into the

new street of project building a new

street south of the Esplanade. There is

now very little left in the shape of

buildings on the site of the proposed new

street, and if the railway companies, the

property owners and the city could come

to terms, the time is opportune for

definitely arranging the matter. In any

case we hope we will see no more of the

old wooden structures that made the

Esplanade an eye-sore and a source of

great danger to adjoining property.

The Disorganization of Parties.

The Glasgow London correspondent

states that in England there is a distinct

and unprecedented upheaval in the

political world, and that the situation may

be described as volcanic; and this

view of it is well confirmed by the very

latest coming to us through other chan-

nels. Mr. Bright's powerful arraignment

of the Irish party appears to have

trunk home, and the Marquis of

Hartington, stung into remembrance

of his murdered brother, used lan-

guage hotter than any heretofore, and

the anti-Irish breeze, on both sides, has

become so strong that Lord Randolph

Churchill has been compelled to draw

in his horns, and to promise that he will

hold off from Parrell, for the present, at

all events. He has, it is said, submitted to

party discipline, has agreed to take a

humble public role, and further to address

the expected public meeting at Liverpool

in the interest of the conservative candi-

dates there, which some days ago he

plumply refused to do. The split in the

tory camp is serious indeed.

But the liberals are not much better

united than the tories, if indeed any bet-

ter. One cable correspondent says that

had off politically as the tories seem to

be the liberals appear to have small prospects

of securing unity of conduct in the coming

elections, and smaller prospects still of

"growing on a party cry. Mr. Brett,

secretary to the Marquis of Hartington,

Mr. Gladstone minister for war, caused

more or less political excitement the other

day by writing a public letter deploring

the lack of party unity among the liberals

and insisting upon the necessity of the

party's joining in a formal declaration of

policy. It is now said that Mr. Brett's

action was undertaken with the design of

drawing Mr. Gladstone out and inducing

him to speak. Mr. Gladstone refuses to

speak, refuses to formulate a policy for his

disfranchised party, despite the constant

representations of his colleagues that it is

time to proclaim the principles on which

he means to appeal to the new electorate.

The breaking of party bonds—this failure

of party unity—is no more nine days

wonder, to amuse us for a while, and

afterwards soon to be forgotten. It is, on

the contrary, one of the gravest signs of

the times—one of the shadows which are

cast before by coming great events. The

time was when a conservative victory

would have been celebrated with a har-

monious display of offices and honors, and

the easy submission of all the party leaders

to the one man who held the position of

chief. Far otherwise is it now; we see

that Lord Salisbury, who is no weakling,

is scarce able to hold his party together. On

the other side we see a nominal submission

to Mr. Gladstone, but with a plentiful

lack of the real thing. There is mutiny in

both camps—there is rebellion and inter-

disorganization on the very eve of battle.

Recent cable dispatches indicate that

the death of the Mahdi is at this present

moment exercising an important influence

on European politics. A fanatic of an

African desert has actually had such

influence on the international relations of

the great powers that his death becomes

an event of importance to them all. That

such things should be is surely remarkable

enough; but there seems no reason to

doubt the fact. It is even said that

the departure of the false

prophet is an element of some

consequence in the great contest now

pending between the two parties in

England. The party that is in power

distinctly gains by the event, while the

party now out of power may almost be

suspected of wishing that the Mahdi had

remained alive and in vigorous good

health. We would not really go so far as

to charge this against them, but the gain

to the present man from the death of the

Mahdi is distinct and unquestionable.

Dissell said that Britain was an Asiatic

power; he might have added that her

Asiatic connection compelled her to be

something of an African power also. It

appears now as if it would be sound British

policy to let the Sultan of Turkey take upon

himself, at a considerable extent, the

burden of keeping Egypt and the Sudan

in order. Amongst Mohammedan peoples

false prophets, with sword in one hand

and the Koran in the other, are always

arising. When any such customer becomes

troublesome to England, she had better deal

with them by proxy, through the Sultan,

until supply the Turks with money and

munitions of war, and they will make

short work of false prophets, in either

Egypt or Arabia. And the job will be

over the Turks, too, what the expense of

doing it by British forces. At all events

the disappearance of the Mahdi from the

scene appears to be making the Egyptian

problem somewhat easier of solution than

it was before.

The Globe and Mail yesterday estimated

the loss by the Esplanade fire at one

million of dollars. Casually while the fire

was in progress it did look as if more than

a million dollars were at stake. A look

over the ruins yesterday by daylight how-

ever shows that The World's figures were

far nearer the mark than its big contem-

poraries.

It will scarcely do to say that the N. P.

has done nothing towards developing a

domestic coal trade in Canada. There are

now eleven steamers constantly engaged,

—during the open season, of course—

—carrying coal from Nova Scotia to Mon-

real. In addition to this, many cargoes

are carried by sailing vessels and by

steamers that take coal as freight occa-

sionally. And the fact is most unques-

tionable that the price of American coal

is owed to Canadian buyers because of our

dues.

Lieut. Finlayson is an officer of the

Montreal Garrison artillery. He acknow-

ledges that the officers had starved him

before the steamer and that they had two

good meals a day, but yet he has a

grievance, and the grievance is thus given

in an interview with a Montreal Witness

reporter: "I do not know whether the

officers were entitled to a Pullman car or

not, but we had none between Owen

Sound and Toronto." Truly Lieutenant

Finlayson has grave cause for complaint,

but really if he cannot travel without a

Pullman he should at once relinquish the

fighting profession and confine himself to

the gentle exercise of lawn tennis, for

instance.

Over the border the revival of trade, so

long looked for, appears to have set in at

last. Almost every day's dispatches bring

reports of iron works and mills having been

killed for some time, and now they are

in full blast. The demand is better, the

iron mining companies' combinations have

been in a breaking-up condition for several

weeks, or months, and the prospect is that

coal will be cheap this season. It looks as

if there must be an improved demand for

commodities generally, but with this con-

dition annexed, that sellers will not be

able to force any advance in prices.

Signs of a reaction.

The following letter sent in by Rev. Mr.

Keefer some weeks ago was accidentally

mislaid. It was written on July 2.

Editor World: In a leading editorial

to-day, under the above heading, you

assume, rather than prove, that there is

a taking place against the Scott act. I have

carefully examined the article for the

evidence that would justify a "knew and

deliberately observed" charge, and I

conclude that the line of argument is

concluding "Growth implies culmination,

and there are not wanting signs that the

fever is subsiding, that the tide is

beginning to ebb." Such mixing of

phases suggests too great enthusiasm for a

"disinterested observer."

Where are the signs of a reaction?

Surely, not in your admission that the

promoters of the act are likely to carry

many more constituents. Nor can you

require us to accept as evidence the

assertion, "But it is quite clear, we think,

that the masses are beginning to get just a

little tired of this everlasting turmoil

and agitation, and that thoughtful minds

are beginning to enquire how far it is justified

by its effects."

Even as evidence it would prove little

that in defeating the repeal in Halton

they revealed their hostility to agitation

against the Scott act so emphatically that

a similar movement was observed? The

attempted for some time. The liquor

party, despairing of agitating "the masses,"

have more hope of an irresponsible senate.

What, what thoughtless minds are

beginning to enquire whether the effects just

ify the agitation? Let the following

resolution, adopted without dissent at the

annual meeting of the Halton, Barrie,

Monday, June 29, answer:

Moved by Mr. Strong, seconded by Mr.

Hindley, resolved that the committee

for observing the operation of the

Scott act in this county has been necessary

to take a course of observation, and to

report the results of their observations

under the disadvantage of officials who

appear to be in the habit of observing

the Scott act with a view to its repeal

under the Scott act local executive the

necessity of the repeal of the Scott act

is the most gratifying result. The

sale, except in the most secret manner,

is destroyed. Drunkenness is almost

unknown. A case of drunkenness before the

Barrie court or the Halton court is a

novelty. The general result of the

repeal of the Scott act is a result of

drunkenness which the general opinion of

the community has been vastly improved.

You remark—

(1) "For the first time in its history

the Scott act is upon trial in a considerable

number of constituencies, and the results

reported to-day are of a convincing

character." It may be strictly correct as

applied to The World that the reported

results are not convincing. The World

and some of its readers—but it is not true

that no results of a convincing character

are reported in other papers, etc. Wit-

ness the above resolution which was

adopted by the first quarter of the con-

vention of many testimonies "reported," I

admit, not by The World.

(2) "It has closed no jail." Yet the

Barrie resolution says "No jail has been

reopened since the repeal of the Scott act

as a result of drinking" since May 1.

While for the corresponding period of

year not fewer than thirteen drunk-

ards others charged with crimes

resulting from drink, were committed

to jail. The above resolution is not

true. Several counties under the Crooks

act have recently presented the judges on

circuits with white gloves. Five times in

succession did that court under Scott act

in Halton. You do not say that it did not

happen at the last court there.

(4) The check of the peace in Halton

reports for the first quarter of the current

year a larger number of convictions than

for any similar period during the past

year.

I am not in

possession of the facts of this case but