

age to lie, nor to admit that I am indigenous to Canada. So I hedged:

"I am thinking in all humility on my sins, Sir. I do not need to be reminded of them."

I don't think he fully comprehended the answer; with a ghastly attempt at a whisper he asked:

"Are you from Canada?"

"Yes, thank Heaven! and likely to stay too!"

"No! no! what I mean is, have you lived in Canada?"

"Never! never! I starved there, existed a moribund existence. People don't live in Canada. Postmasters, politicians, and other profanations and preachers do, of course. But honest people don't. They spend part of their time in electing the bigger rascal to office and the rest in scraping money together to pay the taxes he imposes."

I had only got thus fairly started when the gentleman folded his tent and like the Canuck politician quietly stole away. Now, gentle reader, you may think I was trying to be very clever with the old gentleman. I was not. The whole secret of the matter is this. There had stepped into the railed space a knot of great people, evidently Canadians. The last person on earth whom a Canadian knows by sight is a Canadian celebrity. The old gentleman realized that before him stood the greater part of all that is noble and good in his country and he wanted me to label them for him. Now I did not know one of them at the moment—they were pointed out to me afterwards by a London pressman—and I hate to air my ignorance. So I willfully misunderstood the gentleman, and hereby apologize to him for so doing.

As we waited, I was a witness to one pathetic incident. The Hon. Something Foster, to whom, I understand, is entrusted the management of the public debt of Canada—a big job I should think—was one of the group of great ones. He was pointed out to me, so I know. Well, those of you who know him as I do know what a very large man he is compared with the size providence created him. He was standing as only he can stand, fingertips in overcoat pocket and leaning forward on tip-toes, when an humble representative of the press of Great Britain and Ireland, realizing that whosoever stood within the charmed circle must be a very great man indeed, leaned over the rail and touching the Hon. Something Foster on the shoulder said in an audible whisper:

"Excuse me, sir, but who are you?"

We all saw the colossal figure drop quite an inch, and all felt sorry for him.

There was a tight jam of loyal Canadians around the rails when my Lord Rosebery condescended to grace us with his presence. He began by—for a lord—making a huge mistake. He tackled the crowd at the wrong corner. Now Lord Rosebery is also short and pompous—not so much so as Foster, but then it's the business of a minister of finance to be always short. The verger in charge of us had worked himself into a serious state of excitement trying to keep a gangway clear for the orator, and was busy "moving on" Canadian men and ladies when Lord Rosebery came tip-toeing along until opposite the industrious verger's gangway leading to the auction stool. Rosebery brought with him a modern St. John, pompous and obese, who with much puffing and jamming and shouldering worked his way to the rail, bringing Lord Rosebery in his wake. Finding his way barred, St. John began in a modest way to attract the attention of the valiant verger; to herald, in fact, the arrival of Lord Rosebery. This he did by a series of short "sisses" across the railed space. But the verger was busy and he heard not the warning but continued to request the Canadians to keep the gangway clear. Then St. John tried snapping his fingers, and finding that no good came of this, commenced in a bashful manner, being unused to public speaking, to call out the plebeian word "Hey." Twice the verger condescended to look over his shoulder and motion the fat gentleman to keep quiet and to remember that he was in a church. Rosebery by this time was getting very warm and began to mutter, doubtless repeating his oration to make sure he knew it well. Then the all-

seeing press caught sight of Lord Rosebery and next caught the tail of the verger's aforementioned flowing robe and nearly jerked the good old gentleman over on his back.

"Lord Rosebery," the press said, pointing in our direction. The verger looked amazed, but I imagine it was that a lord should make the mistake of approaching the auctioneer's stool from the wrong direction, for he said:

"You'll have to come round here," and immediately turned his attention to the all-important gangway.

St. John and Rosebery struggled out of the crowd again, fought their way like brave English-Scotchmen to the gangway, and were rewarded by finding themselves safely installed with the famous Canadians.

You have all read Lord Rosebery's oration, every one of you, and if you get a backwoods revivalist to repeat it, you will get a fair idea of the delivery. When he finished he stepped off the box and gently drew the sheet from its place. We all looked sympathetically and long at the face in clear white marble, a face with its towering brow surrounded by waving curly hair, its large blunt nose, broad, rather thick lips (almost parted in a cynical smile) and beardless, dimpled chin—the best known face of Canada. The bust is artistically executed and a good likeness. Underneath is recorded his statement that he was born a British subject and intended to die one. He did, and in Britain's heart is now honoured. May the good he did live, and the evil, if any he did, die.

Year by year the number of Canadians who visit this country increases. From the usual slavish round of shopping, visiting, play-going, race-seeing, let each one who hereafter crosses the Atlantic snatch an hour to visit the crypt of Saint Paul's, there to see for himself the bust of Canada's premier and the great spaces of blank wall which wait for the records of those who, whether in Canada, or India, or Africa, or the ends of the earth, make for themselves a name. There is room and to spare.

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PARIS LETTER.

The Suez Canal cost 480,000,000 frs. to construct, and represents now a value amounting to 1,500,000,000 frs., which, by a curious coincidence equals almost the sum—1,450,000,000—swallowed up in the Panama swindle. The Court of Appeal, before which M. de Lesseps and his co-accused are to appear early in January next, is a special police court; there is no jury, and the bench is occupied by five judges. The direct and cross-examinations of the accused ought to elicit an explanation of all the dodges, tricks and corruptions. The Parliamentary Committee of thirty-three deputies has for aim to find out if any and who are the legislators that have sold their influence and honour to blather up the sinking canal project. Serious people do not pay attention to rumours, beliefs, affirmations, etc.; they demand concrete proofs. Up to the present the winning has only produced chaff. But there is plenty of evidence in existence, only the authorities, it appears, oppose its production. As the Loubet Cabinet persisted in keeping the light under the bushel and threw all obstacles in the path of the Committee of Enquiry, it has been overthrown. Now there is a prospect that all the truth, and nothing but the truth, will be divulged.

The satirical press ought to cease their attacks against M. de Lesseps and his co-arraigned: they are in the dock awaiting trial; similarly the friends of the accused should remain silent, not beg for sympathy in advance, or try to whitewash what only the law can declare unblemishable. One skit exhibits M. de Lesseps running the gauntlet between a row of eighty-nine clenched fists, the number representing the departments of France. He faces the crowd unflinchingly, but his associates hang on to his skirts, heads down and covered by their coat collars. M. Eiffel brings up the rear, with his "tower" on his broken back. Now the worst victim of the

bubble does not even think, much less accuse M. de Lesseps of having personally defrauded the Canal Company of a centime; it may be said of him "Among the faithful, faithful only he." True, he concealed and misrepresented material facts, but the financial "boom" was at its height, and the shareholders knowingly backed the jockey, not the horse; they were also fully aware that the old promoter was in difficulties with his scheme, and that the land sharks were extorting money from him on "shent per shent" terms; he held on not the less, despite the ebb which set in six years ago in the flowing tide of subscriptions; he was dominated by the idea that he would succeed in the enterprise, and once ships passed through from ocean to ocean, the reckless expenditure of some millions would be forgotten in the frenzy of the triumph.

The victims and the national honour do not intend to accord any extenuating circumstances to the black hand that exploited the 15,000,000,000 frs., and who are all to the manner born; there must be an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, no matter what reputations go under and regardless of heads now high that must soon hang with shame. The copy of the indictment and its voluminous annexes are in the hands of the accused's counsel and of the Committee of Enquiry. Legally and of the contents of these documents ought not to be divulged till the opening of the trial on the 10th January next. Rest assured some journal will publish the indictment even at the risk of fine and imprisonment. Odd that it was in defending the post mortem examination of a "Prussian Jew," the Baron de Reinach, that the Cabinet was reduced to a corpse. That baron, the fact is now official, received 10,000,000 frs. from the Panama Company; he accounted only for the expenditure of one-third of that sum, and, cited to explain about the big balance, the big baron committed, "it is alleged," suicide. The public does not believe in the suicide, and that the coffin so "mysteriously interred" contains, instead of a body, only logs of wood and stones. The Government opposed all exhumation of the remains and avoided seizing the baron's papers, where the proofs against the corrupted lay. Naturally the Loubet Cabinet was ejected; it lived exactly twelve months, day for day, and how it existed for even that length of time will ever remain a puzzle for historical students.

M. Henri Brisson is the type of the "no surrender republican." As soon expect the Czar to disarm his legions on the eastern frontier of Europe, as for M. Brisson to hedge on the thirty-nine articles of his programme; expect as soon a smile from an undertaker at a funeral of the "upper suckles," as the ripple of a simper from the possible coming premier, who has been chief of a ministry in 1885, and if no better was no worse than his long list of predecessors and successors. He was premier when the obsequies of Victor Hugo took place, and never for an instant, as I was close to him the whole time, did he lose his gravity at that "pauper funeral." France concludes that her immediate want is a sort of Hercules flusker for her Augean stable.

If General Dodds had difficulties to encounter in reaching Kana and Abomey, his work would appear to be far from complete. The maps already mark Dahomey as "French territory," though a serious guerilla war can be carried on still by King Behanzin from his Hinterland, about which few know anything, as is mostly the case with such lands. Perhaps the greatest of all surprises is the Custom House occupation of the river Adjara by the English, notice of which had months ago been given to the French Government. This taking of possession of treaty rights means, that all the trade of Dahomey must still continue to pass through Lagos, unless the French construct a canal through the dismal swamps from Cotonou. Thus, say the French, as in the case of the Crimea, and of the Chinese expedition, we have pulled the chestnuts out of the fire for perfide Albion. If so, why did they? The French are not minors or imbeciles. But to propose digging a "canal"—this word now gives the fits—to transport ground nuts, India rubber, and bamboos to fill the English treasury at Lagos, is to add insult to injury.