

Britain would look on without interfering. Britain would not do that, because she could not do that: she would be false to all her traditions, and false to her own sense of honour and responsibility if she were to do that. However some British politicians may talk about leaving the colonies to guide and care for themselves—and they have done that until many in Canada have got sickened with it—Britain could not stand quietly by and see Canada at open rupture with the United States. Interference would be a necessity: but on which side? To compel Canada to acquiesce in the demands of the States, or to insist that the States act fairly toward Canada? Just as the "British interests" of the day might dictate. But in either case it would be fatal to the prospects of any closer union between Canada and the United States.

A Zollverein would not work; but to seek annexation would be to court national extinction. The States would like to annex Canada; but what has Canada to gain by it? Would the States pour money into Canada to build railways and harbours? Would they promote the scheme for the Pacific Railway as in the direct route from Liverpool to Japan? Would they send money and emigrants to open up our great North-west? Would they encourage ocean traffic in passengers and goods to Quebec? Why should they? For they have far more interest in draining Canada than they have in supplying it with people and money. The States have nothing to offer Canada as an inducement to change its present political relation but the questionable honour of being made partakers of the spirit and name of the "Yankees."

THE BALLOT-BOX CASE.

The decision in this case appears to be most extraordinary, and to an unsophisticated mind, very like a failure of justice; the crime of which the principal actors have been found guilty is a very heinous one, and the imposition of a money fine seems a very light punishment, if not, in plain English, a farce. Happily there was no attempt on the part of the prosecution to connect the Liberal candidate, Mr. Laflamme, with the offence, although one of the convicted parties was one of his agents. It is a very nauseous thing to wade through the evidence given in this *cause célèbre*; but the charge of Judge Ramsay to the jury, which has been published in extenso, is a very full exposure of as ugly an election conspiracy as ever was perpetrated. The evidence is calculated to make one reiterate the old proverb that "truth is indeed stranger than fiction." If we had read the story in a romance we should have regarded it as worthy of Edgar Poe in his most extravagant mood; but seeing that it was pieced together from the mouths of not overwilling witnesses, after cross-examination and re-examination, we are bound to accept the unwholesome and unsavoury mess with "what appetite we may." We must go back to England in ante-Reform Bill times for anything like a similar state of affairs; the days of Gratton and Sarum, and Grampound and Boroughbridge and Totnes, and we may safely say that these renowned boroughs could not show anything more scandalous than the doings on the 17th September, in this year of grace, in Jacques Cartier County, within an hour's ride of the metropolis of this Dominion. The ordering of the 3,000 additional ballot papers is proved a vast deal more satisfactorily than the subsequent distribution of them, the neglect of Mr. Valois, the returning officer, in not taking the oath; the deputy Tunsdall swore at the trial that he had never been sworn as deputy, though he was appointed and acted; he had signed the oath, but never took it; then the substitution of Forget for Tunsdall, as deputy returning officer, is so unique a piece of business that we give it in Judge Ramsay's own words in his charge to the jury, which was lucid and exhaustive:—

"There is one circumstance more to which I shall draw attention; that is, the substitution of Forget for Tunsdall. We are told in the most off-hand manner possible that Mr. Tunsdall had ceased to act. The first reason for this, and the one given by witness, was that he could be more useful outside than inside; that is to say, the nomination of Tunsdall was to be set aside after he had signed the oath and performed some of the duties; in fact, after he had accepted the office. In whose interest did he resign? In the direct interest of one of the candidates. If this deputy returning officer had taken the oath faithfully to act impartially, he had no right to resign. If his resignation was in the interest of one candidate more than another, it was an unfair act. It was quite enough to have chosen an active canvasser of one of the candidates without shifting him about to put another in his stead. It was not the witness alone who gave that reason, but it has been insisted upon by defendant's counsel in their speeches that he was put there because he could be more useful than outside. They even brought evidence to establish the same reason, to show that he was put there because he was the son of a rich *habitant* of St. Ann's. That is the avowed excuse, and it is a bad one, whether true or not. Another reason given is, that Tunsdall did not speak French. From what he said in Court, it is evident he knows French familiarly, and at all events he knew it as well on the 17th, as when he was appointed a week before. You were told he was not a lawyer and could not follow the statutes. But returning officers are not all supposed to be lawyers. Shopkeepers are constantly employed, and the idea that they must be lawyers is a novel one. If Tunsdall were ignorant of French, on the 16th September and could not carry out this statute in its simple form, he should have thought of this before, and ought not to have made the excuse at the last moment. Again, ten dollars had been given to him for his expenses. Had he had a right to them, he would probably have claimed them from the Government. But no, it was Lemay paid him a round sum of \$10 to induce him to resign."

We will not follow this extraordinary case through all its windings; the sideboard, which would have served for an automaton chess-player, or the *prestidigitateur* Robert Houdin, the sawing through of the floor immediately underneath, &c. &c., we might expect to meet with in Dumas, or Eugene Sue, but it has been the lot of a Canadian constituency in the fourth quarter of the 19th century to realize the disgraceful details of such an infamous conspiracy.

There are however a few reflections which occur to us as arising out of this trial; firstly, we cannot see how the infamy attaching to the stuffing of a ballot-box with fraudulent votes can in the remotest way be adduced as a proof that

vote by ballot is a failure. We have been told before, many a time and oft, that the ballot was peculiar and an un-English mode of ascertaining the public will. As long as it is English for shareholders in banks and insurance companies, &c. &c., to elect their directors by ballot, we have never been able to see why an honest parliamentary voter should not have the protection of secret voting, nor is our faith in the ballot shaken by the present inquiry. We do not believe that the bottoms of all ballot-boxes are likely to fall through.

Secondly, whilst willing to allow a pretty wide margin to counsel, we must take exception to the following language of Mr. St. Pierre:—

"I cannot refrain from expressing a certain regret at seeing a case of this kind before this Criminal Court. It is now very nearly forty years since a criminal case of such a political complexion has come before a court in Montreal; one must refer back to the bloody assizes of 1838, when liberty was struggling against power, to find a precedent for a case of this description."

As one of our contemporaries says, it is a pity that any lawyer should find it necessary to "wave the bloody shirt" of the rebels of 1837 before a Montreal jury.

Another point we cannot understand is how Mr. Forget can be regarded as an offender in a less degree because he had not taken the oath as Deputy Returning Officer. As the Judge said, "He was an official, and bound to protect the integrity of the election. He had joined really in a conspiracy to defeat it. The not taking the oath showed that, although prepared to commit an electoral fraud, he was not prepared to add to this offence the crime of perjury." It might appear to a simple-minded citizen that declining to take the oath necessary for him to act as Deputy Returning Officer, with a view to committing the other offence, only aggravates the crime.

Worst of all is the fact that the contrivance of the false bottom sideboard, &c., is not a new idea, since it is said that the original inventor is now serving out a six months' imprisonment in France for his ingenuity.

To recapitulate. As a farmer would nail vermin or birds of prey against his barn door as a warning to evil doers, here is the end of this eventful chapter of Canadian history:—

Lamarche, the owner of the house in which the voting took place—A fine of \$100, or an imprisonment of 55 days;
Pilon, the carpenter who manipulated the floor—\$50, or 30 days;
Forget, the Deputy Returning Officer, whose conscientious scruples deterred him from taking the oath—\$200 fine, or 3 months; and
Christin, the agent of the candidate, Mr. Laflamme—\$100 fine, or 55 days.
The fines are paid, the prisoners are released, and so the Jacques Cartier election of Sept. 17, 1878, passes into history.

ENGLAND'S PERIL, OR THE BELLICOSE SITUATION.

From the commencement we have ventured to side with the minority, and to protest against being driven into a useless war in order to bolster up a demoralized and tyrannical government—a government which had proved to the feeblest mind its utter incapacity to rule over any people, much less the various nationalities that peopled Turkey. While doing this we put no blind confidence in Russia, nor did we suppose for a moment that the Czar was actuated by any philanthropical self-abnegation; but we were convinced—and still are so, for that matter—that it was indeed a hopeless task to endeavour to perpetuate the dominion of the Sultan over nations determined to work out their independence. If the "peace-with-honour" politicians had recognised this at first, it would not, as at present, have to be acknowledged on all sides "that England has her hands full just now." The Jingo Party having got into hot water, were determined to make such water hotter still, and consequently the next step taken was to send Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury off on a tour to Berlin, to be present at one of the greatest farces on record. There they carried out a masterly policy of "how not to do it," and, to give them credit, they succeeded so well that if the result of their actions was not too serious it would be amusing. Then we venture to say that the arrangements entered into were pregnant with the germs of future complications. By England's miserable secretiveness in the matter of the Schouvaloff-Salisbury convention she had cut herself off from the sympathy of all the European Powers whose sympathy was worth having; whilst in stealing Cyprus and assuming the protectorate of Asia Minor, Great Britain stultified herself and abrogated the principle of collective action for which all along the Government had pretended to have been contending. In Turkey "our spirited foreign policy" rendered "confusion worse confounded" by granting autonomy to one part of Bulgaria and leaving the other part under the rule, or rather misrule, of its old enemies. Of all the great blunders committed at the Congress, this creation was the most fatal—it was even more absurd than the peaceable (?) occupation of Bosnia by Austria; and the Russian Plenipotentiaries, knowing the position of affairs, and being as they were perfectly familiar with all the local traditions, made very little bones about signing away concessions which they were determined *practically* not to make. And then, as if to prove by demonstration how headstrong our "Imperial Government" can be, the British Fleet was allowed to continue stationed in the Bosphorus as a constant yet useless menace to Russia, and a direct implication on the good faith of that country.

If any proof that the people of England are already tired of an "Imperial policy" were needed, it could be easily found in the fact that all the newspapers of the country have turned from and upon it, the *Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* being the only firm supporters of the Government, and people think and say there are indeed good and substantial reasons for their toadyism—since the editor of the one has received a peerage and the editor of the other well, secret information. The question here naturally arises:—Why do the people of England tolerate with equanimity the perpetration of all these errors? Simply, we answer, because they know that the elections are close at hand, when they will be able to relieve the Government of its responsibilities.

Let us now calmly look at the results of the treaty signed at Berlin, which was braggingly stated to have settled the Eastern Question for ever, and out of which England was to obtain the acme of her aspirations—"Peace with Honor."

Furs Cleaned, Dyed and Made Over in Latest Styles, at REYNOLDS & VOLKEYS, 427 NOTRE DAME STREET.