

General Porfirio Diaz is now nominated for his third Presidential term in the Mexican Republic. Almost all the members of Congress, the Governors of the States, and most of the papers are supporting him. This is pretty well for a Republic whose constitution forbids the re-election of a President for consecutive terms. In fact, all elections and appointments are under control of the nominal President, who wields almost as absolute a power as the Czar of Russia. It is well for Mexico that Diaz is a clever clear-headed statesman, for it lies within his power to exercise unlimited tyranny.

The *Chronicle* and *Herald* are still hammering away at the Cape Breton road money investigation, and their readers are daily treated to a rehearsal of charges by one or the other which cannot be considered high-toned journalism. The evidence that has been published is quite sufficient to prove in what manner the road monies have been expended, and no man with common sense is the more convinced by hysterical screaming editorials, accompanied by statements which misrepresent the facts. It is about time that the public should enjoy a new bill of fare. A political diet extending over months ceases to be inviting.

French ingenuity is on the alert as to the Newfoundland question. Since French lobster factories may not be erected on the "French coast" of the island, "therefore," says Monsieur Charles Jaroche, "let us build moveable factories, which will not only be more economical, but also quite within the terms of our treaty." This moveable factory will be part of the apparatus of a schooner of fifty tons, and the projector of the scheme affirms that the rent of a schooner, the canning equipment, and the expenses of dories and men for six months, would not exceed \$1,300. The experiment will be tried during next season by one of the lobster fishers at St. Pierre.

Traffic throughout Farther India will be speedily revolutionized, indeed, the commerce of the whole world will be affected by the introduction of the Siamese railroad. The first sod was broken at Banhook on March 9th, a ceremony rendered most interesting on account of the active part taken by the Siamese Majesty and the heir apparent. The new line will extend on the west to Tenasserim, and on the east to China. The Royal Treasury of Siam, supplemented by loans of wealthy natives, has undertaken the work, which is sublet to English contractors, under German supervision—a fine national medley. Another line will shortly connect Banhook with the sea, while operations are already underway to lay a road in the Malay peninsula, connecting Penang with the Siamese Gulf. And so the far East, the land of mysteries and spices and white elephants, will be made to yield up its secrets before the march of civilization.

The spring swindlers are at work again, and of course, their first victim will be some unwary woman, hooked by the tempting bait, "\$5.00 a day in your own home—costly outfit free." Almost every woman of small means has at some time been caught in this way, and the result is always disastrous to the speculator. The Womens' Educational and Industrial Union, 264 Boylston St., Boston, has undertaken to investigate the circumstances of the firms who make these sounding offers, and any circulars or cut advertisements sent to them will be promptly attended to. We cannot too earnestly impress upon the less business-wise half of the community, that the companies who make these generous offers are, for the most part, thoroughly dishonest. That, in many cases, no answers at all are received by the dupes who have forwarded "stamps for reply." That if the "costly outfit" arrives it will be found almost worthless, and the work, even if perfectly done when sent to the head office, will be rejected on one pretence or another. Hideous blackmailing schemes are sometimes resorted to when "the address and photo" of the employee are secured. In short, we warn the women of Nova Scotia to have no dealings whatever with these advertising sharpers.

Is free trade a great fundamental truth, or is it simply a policy? This is the question which the British taxpayer and the British politician is now considering. According to Cobden and Bright the adoption of free trade by the nations of Europe was to follow closely upon its adoption by the British Parliament. Instead of this the very opposite has been the result. In the last two score of years revenue tariffs have gradually given way to protection tariffs, and the British merchant has had to seek in the colonies and the countries of the East for the extension and continued growth of trade. Canada, situated geographically as she is beside a country that has adopted the protective policy, was forced to adopt a similar policy or to become a slaughtering market for the manufacturers of the United States. Canada has now offered Great Britain differential duties, provided the mother country will place a small duty upon the imports from foreign countries. The British press has frankly and freely commented upon this offer, and, heresy as it may seem to some enlightened minds, there are those in Great Britain who are beginning to doubt the truth of the theory of free trade, and there are those who believe that Imperial unity will best be preserved and Imperial commerce most largely extended by a great British Zollverein which shall include the mother country and her forty colonies. For our own part we strongly favor a wide reciprocity treaty with the United States, but it takes two to make a bargain, and if the United States will not favorably consider this, the next best thing for Canada is to endeavor to obtain a preference in the markets of Great Britain such as a British Zollverein would ensure.

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Queen Amelié of Portugal will, this year, be the recipient of the Pope's Golden Rose, which is annually awarded to the woman whose benevolence has been most satisfactorily applied. In the present case, the costly emblem is well bestowed, for Amelié, daughter of the Comte de Paris, is a noble and pious woman.

We heartily congratulate the Allan Line on the inducement it offers now to emigrants. Instead of the large compartment hitherto provided for third-class passengers, where married and unmarried men, women and little children were compelled to herd together for the night, berthed and enclosed rooms are provided. The Allan vessels from Glasgow to New York are already fitted, and the new system will be extended to other branches of the service.

Amid the eccentricities and tyranny of European Governments, it is refreshing to find a young Monarch at peace with the world and beloved by his people. King Charles of Portugal and his young and devoted wife are turning a deaf ear to European wrangles, and are working like galley slaves to revive industry and to restore the former power of the little kingdom. They live in the simplest manner, their only luxury being a fine library. If kingly character is still a national force, we will before long hear more of the vine-covered country.

While the Russian peasants are starving the Imperial Government can afford to call a meeting of the Imperial Tobacco Co. of Persia to offer the Shah of Persia \$2,500,000 to settle claims for alleged damages. The Russian Minister at Teheran is urging the Company to accept the Czar's terms, but British stockholders regard the offer as a bribe, and are fearful of the effect of the loan on Persian diplomatic affairs, and the American press characteristically wonder why, with all this spare cash in the Imperial coffers, Russia needs to accept charity for her peasants.

The Presidential election in the United States, which is coincident with leap year, is now awakening a widespread interest throughout the neighboring republic. As the weeks fly by the chances of the re-nomination of President Harrison by the Republic convention become less certain, while the prospects of the nomination of "James G. Blaine, Blaine of Maine," daily grow brighter. So far these are the only two Republican candidates in the field, but as Mr. Blaine's health is precarious and he has expressed his inability to assume the arduous strain of a political campaign, it is fair to suppose that his candidature will not be heard of after the convention meets. On the other hand the pronounced unpopularity of President Harrison will not admit of his party assuming the risk of his candidature. This being the state of affairs the wise heads of the party look to the bringing forward of a dark horse at the eleventh hour, and it is covertly hinted that Mr. Lincoln, a son of the popular Abraham Lincoln, may receive the nomination, in which event it is thought he will carry a large vote. The Democratic party some months ago were divided in their choice of a nominee. Many there were who favored the re-nomination of ex-President Cleveland, while others clamored loudly in favor of ex-Governor Hill, of New York. Of the last two gentlemen named the chances of nomination are decidedly in favor of ex-President Cleveland. Nova Scotians will watch with interest this great political contest, as upon its result will chiefly depend the securing of a reciprocity treaty between Canada and the United States.

For the past twenty-five years the public schools of Halifax have been peacefully and satisfactorily carried on upon distinctive Protestant and Roman Catholic lines. There has been but little friction in the matter of school government, the education imparted to the children has been of a sound character, and the religious differences which disgraced former generations have practically ceased to exist. It seems, however, that this happy state of affairs may now be endangered. The Protestant schools, which are owned by the city, are under the control of a Board of School Commissioners, upon which Board the Catholics are represented. The buildings in which the Catholic schools are conducted are owned by the Episcopal corporation of the Roman Catholic Church. These buildings are leased to the Board of School Commissioners for school purposes. A new school building is required at the north end of the city, and in the section referred to a large majority of the children belong to the Roman Catholic Church. The question arises, shall this new building be erected and be owned by the city, or shall the Roman Catholics erect a suitable building and lease it to the city upon the same terms as St. Patrick's and St. Mary's Schools are leased. His Grace Archbishop O'Brien as the episcopal head of the Roman Catholic Church, avers that the cost to the city of these leased buildings is over 30 per cent less than that of buildings owned by the city. A special committee of the Board of School Commissioners, after investigation, reports that the difference is mainly due to the increased interest charges consequent upon the purchase of extensive school grounds in connection with the buildings. As the matter is likely to evoke a pretty lively discussion our citizens should inform themselves fully as to the facts. If the principle of separate schools for the Protestant and Roman Catholic children be accepted as satisfactory to the ratepayers of Halifax, we see no reason why a religious war should be stirred up upon the question of the ownership of the school buildings. If the Archbishop's contention is correct, the city is the gainer by the arrangement; but the question of suitable play grounds is one that should not be overlooked by those interested in the training of city youths.

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