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 interest.

Canadian Illustrated News.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, SEPT. 26, 1874.

THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT.

Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE has at length succeeded in forming an Administration. The party journals are already canvassing the merits of the new incumbents, and predicting the success or failure of the Ministry, according as their sentiments are friendly or hostile. We accept the Government as it is, without such personal criticism, only rejoicing that the awkward interregnum is at an end, and that at length the public affairs will no longer be allowed to fall into neglect. While saying so much, we still adhere to the opinion expressed some weeks ago, that it would have been more in conformity with British precedent, and more consonant to Canadian ideas of free government, where the people rule, had the Lieutenant-Governor seen his way to a dissolution of the Assembly, and the ordering of general elections. We have failed to see any answer to the argument put forth by us that Mr. JOLY, as leader of the Opposition, should have been called upon to form a government, after Mr. OUMET had resigned the seals of office. We were well aware, as we then stated, that Mr. JOLY, with his present support, was unable to carry on the Government, but we urged his appointment to the Premiership because, among other reasons, we knew that he would make an appeal to the people a condition of his acceptance.

The trouble which Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE experienced in forming an Administration proved precisely the need of these general elections. Several of the strongest men in his party, men to whom public opinion pointed as his most necessary coadjutors declined accepting office, for the sole reason that they did not care to face an election this year and another next year. Whatever people may think, elections are more serious concerns to the candidate than appears upon the surface. They entail considerable expense, even when that expense is curtailed to strictly legitimate disbursements, and they further carry with them a heavy burden of anxiety, uncertainty, and disappointment. The hesitation of such prominent and strong men as Dr. BLANCHET, Judge Couvazol, and others further proves that the Conservative party is not so confident as it was two months ago, or as its organs would have us believe. It stands to reason that the hesitancy of Mr. OUMET during so many weeks had a tendency to demoralize his followers to some extent, while it furnished the Opposition a corresponding element of strength and cohesion. Nothing is so damaging in political life as a display of weakness; nothing, on the other hand, is so inspiring and creative as a bold firmness, which is an outcome of true power.

As we have no criticism to pronounce upon Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE, neither shall we presume to offer him any advice. However, we may be allowed to hope that he will not regard himself as a merely *ad interim* Minister.

We mean to say that he will not consider himself bound to follow in the footsteps of his predecessors in matters of general polity. If his party supports him during the next session, and especially if he finds that it is disposed to uphold him in the general elections of next year, we believe he ought to strike out for himself, and give the Province the advantage of a vigorous initiative. Let us not have the simple exchange of one set of men for another. The Lieutenant-Governor evidently called upon Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE, not as a mere available mediocrity, but because he discerned in him those qualities of statesmanship which are indispensable in the Premier even of a small province. Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE bears an honoured, historical name; he holds an independent position in the world—a great recommendation in these days of mercenary temptation; he has had much Parliamentary experience, and he has the respect of the Province, irrespective of party. All he needs now is to display that knowledge of men and that science of government which will insure his safe direction of public affairs. Without entering upon any invidious retrospect, it is only true to say that this Province has fallen into a humdrum line of legislation not at all in harmony with the enterprise of her citizens, nor her own magnificent resources. She has lost more than one golden opportunity of progress, and it needs the lever of a talented, energetic administration to give her the required impetus. We hope that Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE has not the intention of merely bridging over the time between this and next year, leaving the general elections to decide the great issues now pending before the people. We cannot afford to lose a whole year in a course of inactivity, however masterly. Let him seize the reins with a firm hand. Let him make his own issues. Let him not only work the departments, but manifest a statesmanlike policy as well, and instead of ruling only by sufferance he will operate upon public opinion, creating a support, for himself. Political parties are not so exclusive in provincial matters but that they will support a strong, able, and honest man without enquiring too closely into his theoretical opinions or past record.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The papers have all at once taken up the subject of constitutional change in the Dominion. No notice was given of the discussion. The people were not prepared for it. The consequence is a rather general surprise. Who asks these changes? Why are they hinted at just now? The leading Liberal organ in this city had indeed a pretext for introducing the subject. That was its disgust at the delay of Mr. DE BOUCHERVILLE in forming a Ministry. In commenting on that circumstance it broadly calls responsible government a farce, and affirms that it never had any faith in the present Canadian constitution. This is saying, in other words, that the federal principle is distasteful to the writer, and that he would prefer to see the country governed by a legislative union. Is the editor expressing only his individual feelings in this case, or is he the mouthpiece of his party? It were a matter of some interest to ascertain the fact.

The English papers have been much more outspoken of late on this topic. The *London Times* goes so far as to assert that the statesmen of the Dominion intend to merge all general power in the Parliament and Government at Ottawa. Who are the statesmen who thus intend the fusion? We never heard of them. We are aware that many of them, with Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD at their head, were in favour of union instead of federation; but they abandoned the idea in 1867, and we do not know that they have revived it since. The Liberal party in Quebec, both French and English, were and are still opposed to confederation, but it is news to us that they preferred legislative union instead. The French certainly do not. We are not discussing the subject now; we only want to know whether there is any organized movement looking to constitutional change.

Singularly enough the press of the Lower Provinces have at the same time revived the question of a maritime union. The *Halifax Chronicle*, in a very curious article, debates both sides of the subject elaborately and impartially, though its leaning to the affirmative is manifest enough. This is not the first time by many, nor will it be the last, that the contemplated union of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland into one province has been canvassed. Much may be adduced on both sides. By the union there would be a large diminution of expenses. Instead of three or four governors, there would be only one to maintain. Instead of three or four legislatures, a single House would be sufficient. Then the influence of the united province at Ottawa would be increased two-thirds. This is regarded as a capital advantage by the people of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Rightly or wrongly, they believe that their nu-

merical weakness reacts upon their moral strength. Notwithstanding all these arguments in favour of a maritime union, we are not sure that the project could be easily carried into effect. Certainly there is no enthusiasm about it just at present, and from the tone of the papers we should say that the prevailing disposition is to let things stand as they are. The example of New England shows that the existence of small states is not incompatible with healthy separate legislation. Rhode Island is probably more flourishing as a distinct commonwealth than if she were a mere fraction of an united New England. Her voice is as potential in the national councils at Washington as that of New York or Ohio. It is to be remembered, also, that New Brunswick, for instance, is bound to grow and become a large province in itself. When that happens, her interests may prove more continental than sea-board, and she will then have less affinity than she has now with Nova Scotia and Prince Edward's Island.

VACCINATION AND ITS OPPONENTS.

The action recently taken by the Montreal opponents of vaccination has led to a very general expression of opinion on the part of the faculty of this city in favour of a legislative enactment such as would ensure general vaccination throughout the Dominion. This is a somewhat unusual course for the medical profession to adopt, but in the present instance it is pretty evident that in order successfully to combat the dangerous ideas so actively promulgated by Dr. CODERRE and his following something more than ordinary measures must be resorted to. So long as the opponents of vaccination contented themselves with spreading their notions among their own *clients*, they were met upon their own ground. Now, however, that they have stooped to an unprofessional use of sensationalism in its most censurable form, and have made a public appeal to ignorance which may be fraught with the most dangerous results, it is time for the law to step in and deprive them of the powers they are now turning to such bad account.

The story of this last move on the part of the CODERRE section is briefly as follows: Some time in June last a French-Canadian woman took her child to the Board of Health to be vaccinated. On her return home after the operation it appears that she bandaged the child's arm so tightly that a local festering ensued, which subsequently, no relief having in the meantime being given by relaxation of the bandage, extended to other parts of the body. A physician was consulted who put himself in communication with Dr. CODERRE. Of course such a fine card was not to be thrown away, and a line of action was decided upon which for spiteful ingenuity and utter carelessness of the most elementary laws of professional etiquette has seldom been equalled. A number of highly sensational photographs were prepared, which, together with circulars containing an exaggerated appeal to vulgar prejudices, were displayed in various parts of the city, and especially in those quarters where the French element is most thickly scattered. It is impossible to estimate the amount of evil that may have been done amongst the more ignorant portion of the community by these unseemly exhibitions, and it is exceedingly regrettable that any gentleman connected with an honourable and respected profession should have been so deficient in proper feelings and in professional pride as to descend to such an underhand method of disseminating his own peculiar views. Fortunately steps have been taken which will doubtless have the effect of putting a stop to Dr. CODERRE's taste for practical inculcation of his anti-vaccination views. At a meeting of medical men held on the 15th inst., a resolution was passed condemning the action of those who had exhibited the objectionable photograph as being strictly unprofessional, and highly censurable as calculated to mislead the public, and adverse to the interest of science. Another resolution was also passed declaring the desirability of petitioning the Legislature to adopt such measures as would insure general vaccination through the Dominion by a special Act.

The proposal of the Montreal faculty will, doubtless, be highly acceptable to the large majority of the community. In the Province of Quebec, the only one, we believe, where the anti-vaccination movement has assumed anything like dangerous dimensions, the effects of a compulsory Act would be especially remarked. From statistics collected some time ago, by the Board of Health, if we are not mistaken, relative to the deaths from small-pox in Montreal, it was found that the large majority who had succumbed to the disease were French-Canadians who had never been vaccinated—presumably, therefore, disciples of Dr. CODERRE. There can be little doubt that under such an Act as that proposed by the faculty these small-pox returns would be largely diminished, and thereby a signal victory would