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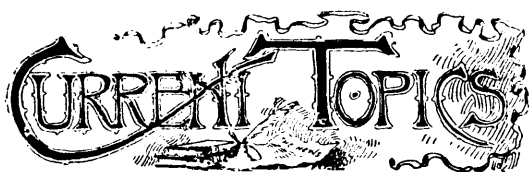
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## The Baie des Chaleurs Enquiry.

No doubt the revelations that have been brought to light in the Senate respecting the Baie des Chaleurs railway were a genuine surprise to the country at large; it is extremely probable that the average Canadian ratepayer was even unaware of the existence of such a company. But the strong under-current of distrust in the financial policy of the Quebec Government that has existed in the minds of most of the English-speaking people of the province for many months, has largely prepared them for just such a revelation. Whatever were the sins of the administration that preceded the one now in power at Quebec, they were trivial when compared with the shortcomings of the latter; in racial and religious matters it has done more to embitter the feeling between French and English Canadians than the combined efforts of agitators for the previous thirty years; while its financial course has been so marked by gross mismanagement, flaring extravagance, and marked instances of diversion of the public funds to private ends, that it was felt by most thoughtful men to be only a matter of time before a case of sufficient magnitude to attract public attention came to the front. It is noteworthy that whatever particulars of questionable transactions came to light previous to this case were evolved at Quebec, and for some reason or other attracted but little attention outside of this province; but the praiseworthy act of a majority of the Senate in persisting to follow up every detail of this case made it from the first a mark of close attention from all parties, especially in view of the scandals that had just come to light in the Public Works Department. So far the evidence is clear, and damning, and goes to show unmistakably that a large sum of the finances of the Province have been misappropriated, not only with the direct sanction of the Provincial Government, but by its most prominent supporters. True, we have yet to hear the other side of the story; but in view of the gravity of the charges, which it is evident should call forth intense eagerness on the part of the accused to deny under oath the statements made,

we see them dodging off in every direction; the principal offender furtively getting away to Europe, the others pleading ill-health and all manner of excuse. The most absurd reason of all for non-attendance is the alleged lack of jurisdiction on the part of the Senate to elicit evidence. Provincialism must learn that where its projects call for aid or legislation from the Central government every measure of enquiry into those projects is permissible—nay, is essential—as a strict check on Provincial management; if the two powers are to clash on these matters so much the worse will it be for Provincialism. The tendency towards the centralisation of legislative authority, which has been steadily gaining ground of late years, will receive a marked impetus if any serious conflict is raised on this question.

## Foreign Criticism.

It is refreshing to be able to draw a strict line between the Liberal party of the House of Commons and that of this Province. The leader of the former stands out perfectly clear from even the whisper of any shady transaction; he cannot afford to stultify himself by any defence of the conduct of his Quebec partisans, even if it costs him the defection of half his following. What he would lose in that respect he would more than gain in the increased esteem and adhesion of men of both parties, disgusted with the revelations of corruption in high places, and gross mismanagement in the public service. The leading party organ has also sounded no uncertain note on the subject; and the practical eagerness which the whole Liberal party and press should show towards getting at the bottom of the Baie des Chaleurs railway job would, if carried out, add greatly to their strength and popularity. It is, however, a subject for serious regret that so much unnecessary notoriety and exaggeration is given by both sides to these statements of corruption. Outsiders, both in England and the United States, have already taken grossly distorted views of the situation, and have uttered absurdly sweeping calumnies on the state of our entire political system. Their ignorance of Canada and Canadian matters is astounding, and would be ludicrous were it not that their remarks, based on an appalling degree of political exaggeration (emanating largely from Canadian sources) may seriously affect our credit in the London money market. It cannot be surprising that the effect of three-inch headlines calling attention to some supposed new scandal,—of columns of editorial charging the opposing party with crimes which are usually punished with penitentiary for life,—and of sermons which convey to the hearers the impression that the country is on the direct road to perdition—should so influence foreign readers, ignorant of the facts of the case, that they should think and speak of Canada as a hot-bed of corruption. Moderation in discussing the shortcomings of one's country becomes an act of patriotism.

## James Russell Lowell.

Within less than two-thirds of this year many men of high standing in the world of letters have passed away. Of the representatives of the old school of American literature few are left; and the last few days have witnessed the death and burial of one of its most prominent members. No student—no casual reader—of the literature of the United States could attain any good idea of its essentially native features without a study or perusal of the

work of JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL. Born in 1819 Mr. LOWELL entered on a literary career at an unusually early age, being but 22 years of age when his first work, "A Year's Life," saw the light, and from then down to a comparatively recent period his brain and pen were constantly at work. From 1844 to 1850 he published in quick succession, "A Legend of Brittany," "The Vision of Sir Launfal," and other poems; but these were overshadowed by the work by which he was known to fame throughout the length and breadth of America—"The Biglow Papers," a series of satirical essays in dialect on slavery and the Mexican war. These papers (which had previously appeared in the *Boston Courier*) were considered the most humorous productions of the period; concentrating keen wit under a guise which appealed directly to the sympathies of the American people, they exercised a powerful influence in the education of the masses towards a hatred of slavery, which culminated in its utter extinction less than twenty years later. He published several other works, the most noteworthy of which were "My Study Windows" and "Among My Books"—essays which are widely known and read wherever the English language is spoken; to British readers these are perhaps his best known works. His last volume, "Heartsease and Rue," a book of verse, came out in 1888, since which time his writings have been few and confined to magazines and newspapers. Fourteen years of MR. LOWELL'S life were spent in the editorship of two of the greatest of American magazines, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The North American Review*; of the former, he was its first editor, and to his guidance for five years was due the prominence it at once assumed in the field of literature. A second series of "Biglow Papers" appeared in its columns on the outbreak of the civil war, and commanded much attention. MR. LOWELL was a man of the widest and best sense. He travelled extensively in Europe, being appointed American Minister to Spain in 1877, and in 1880 was transferred to the Court of St. James, where he represented the United States for five years; his intercourse with the English people was marked with an unusual degree of mutual affection and respect, and his withdrawal elicited many sincere expressions of regret from his London friends. Oxford recognized his worth by the bestowal of the degree of D.C.L., in 1873, and in the following year Cambridge followed suit in making him an LL.D. As a *litterateur*, a speaker, and a kindly critic Mr. LOWELL deservedly held a high position in American life, and his death leaves a conspicuous blank in the list of his country's worthies.

## CHRISTMAS.

It may seem rather premature to talk about Christmas in this hot weather, but we wish to impress on our readers the fact that we intend issuing early in December, the most superb holiday souvenir that has yet been offered to the Canadian public. In supplements, it will be unusually rich in presenting features that have never been approached by any paper, while in general artistic and literary excellence it will be the event of the season.

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