The Colonist.

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DOUBLE-FACED POLITICIANS.

The elasticity of Grit principles and the adaptability of the Grit policy cannot be sufficiently admired. It is now well known that the Grit policy on the school question has been twisted and turned in such a way that it has been made to suit any locality in which a Grit candidate presents himself for election. If a harvest of votes is to be gathered in Quebec the candidate and his friends represent themselves as strong advocates for "justice" to the Manitoba minority. If the scene of the candidate's operations is Victoria, B.C., the Grit policy presents a totally different aspect. Interference with Manitoba is there denounced in the strongest terms and the application of the minority of that province for a redress of its grievances is stigmatized as "coercion." No one could possibly be more zealous in favor of provincial rights or more strongly opposed to remedial legislation in any shape than the Victoria candidate. Yet the Quebec advocate of remedial legislation and the Victoria denouncer of remedial legislation are both Grits—both enthusiastic followers of Mr. Laurier.

On the tariff question the same elasticity and the same adaptability are noticeable. In Ontario and Quebec the sound Grit is an out and out advocate for free coal. He is ready on the slightest provocation, and on no provocation at all, to dilate upon the wickedness and the oppressiveness of imposing a duty on coal. To tax one of the prime necessaries of life such as coal is, he declares with apparent earnestness, truly iniquitous. But in Cape Breton, where a Conservative leader is to be kept out of Parliament, the Grit candidate and the Grit stumpers are to a man in favor of a duty on coal. The idea of putting the Yankee coal producer on the same level in the Canadian market as the honest, hard-working Cape Breton miner of coal, is worse than absurd. The Liberals have always been and will always be true and warm friends of Cape Breton miners. The reason of this change of policy is that the people of Ontario and Quebec are buyers of coal, and the voters in Cape Breton are producers of coal. "Circumstances alter cases," says the clever Laurierite, "and what is the good of a policy that cannot be changed to suit the conditions of constituencies?"

Some of our readers will perhaps say that this is exaggeration and misrepresentation and what not; but it is the sad and sober truth, of which the election recently held in Victoria and the one to be held to-day in Cape Breton are striking exemplifications.

OVER-REACHES HIMSELF.

The news from Ottawa shows that Mr. Laurier's policy of concealment and deception is breaking down in a way that he and his fellow-schemers did not anticipate. They all thought, no doubt, that the demand for a Commission of Inquiry was a very clever device indeed, as it gave them an excuse to be noncommittal on the school question until after the general elections. They must have chuckled at the success of their trick and congratulated each other on having dished the "Tories." But there was a beastly snag in a part of their course of whose existence no scheming Grit even dreamed. The French-Canadian Grits who believed that the minority in Manitoba had been badly treated by the Government of the Province had never been very favorable to Mr. Laurier's policy of concealment and delay; they saw that they were on the point of being fooled. They had been kept quiet for some time by the assurance that the Government were not in earnest when they promised remedial legislation, and that they might depend upon it Sir Mackenzie Bowell would not in the January session or any other session attempt to redress the grievance of the Roman Catholic minority of Manitoba. But when these men found that the Bowell Government were bound to be as good as their word they saw that if they opposed the Government's remedial measure and voted for Mr. Laurier's Commission scheme they were dropping the substance to grasp at a shadow. For who was to know what the commission would effect; who indeed could tell whether it would ever amount to anything? Commissions they knew generally ended in smoke, or something almost equally unsatisfactory, and they concluded that the time had come to bind Mr. Laurier to something definite and specific. So Mr. Beausoleil, it appears, undertook to pin the elusive Leader of the Grits in a corner and not let him out until he had given the malcontents a pledge which they would consider satisfactory. This, an account from Ottawa says, was done. The details of the negotiations are, of course, known only to the principals. But the result of the conference soon became apparent:

The result was, says the Ottawa correspondent of the Mail and Empire, that on Friday night Mr. Tarte was put up by Mr. Laurier against the advice of leading Liberals from Ontario to declare a modification of the party policy designed to bring the bolters again into line. The declaration of Mr. Tarte for an investigation by a committee of the House in order that there may be legislation this session, was practically, though guardedly, accepted by Mr. Laurier. A week ago the Liberals were for an independent Royal Commission composed of educationists, who should go to Manitoba and institute an inquiry. To-day they will accept a parliamentary committee which will sit in Ottawa, call witnesses, force the Manitoba ministers to attend, and report in the course of a few weeks. The original policy was to evade the issue; the amended policy is to precipitate it.

According to this account of a very intelligent observer the engineer has been hoist with his own petard. The clever scheme which was to have enabled him to out-general the Government and to get into power without making any pledges which he might find to be inconvenient, has had the effect of exciting the suspicions of his own followers and of forcing him to pursue a definite policy on the school question.

OUT OF HIS ELEMENT.

The Morning Advertiser of London evidently believes that Mr. Blake was a success as a politician in Canada. This is quite a mistake. Mr. Blake took, as a man of his high character and great abilities must take, a high place in the Parliament of the Dominion, but as a leader of men he was, as far as it is possible for such a man to be, a failure. The members of his party in the Legislature respected him and had complete confidence in his integrity, but very few indeed liked him. He was among them but not of them. He lived and moved in quite a different sphere from them. They followed him as a matter of duty, because loyalty to their party required them to acknowledge him as their leader, but he was not the leader that any of them would have enthusiastically chosen.

Mr. Blake could not, and perhaps would not if he could, make partisans. He was wholly devoid of what is called magnetism. He was on the contrary to most men repellant.

As he was in Ottawa so he seems to have been in London. Men respect him because he is a good man and an able man, but he does not appear to have won the affection of the warm-hearted, impulsive Irishmen with whom he is politically associated. It seems indeed as if they dislike him, and we would not at all be surprised to hear that the dislike is mutual.

We are surprised that Mr. Blake has not made a more favorable impression on Parliament, as a man of powerful intellect and a speaker, than he seems to have done. He is without doubt a very able man, and as a debater he is far above the average. But we have seen him alluded to slightingly by men who do not appear to have been prejudiced and who might be supposed to be good judges. The truth seems to be that practical politics are not Mr. Blake's vocation. He is out of his element in Parliament. He disappointed his party in Ottawa and he has not in London come up to the reasonable expectations of his friends.

IGNOBLE SLAVERY.

The slavery of American politicians to the mob is one of the most singular of the political phenomena of the time. Let a theory be started that catches the popular fancy, no matter how unreasonable or how impracticable it may be, and a number of intelligent and clever men take hold of it and become its advocates with no other purpose than to keep themselves in the positions they occupy or to enable them to attain positions to which they aspire. It is the same with any cry that may for the moment become popular. Let it be ever so absurd, and let it, if it is listened to and acted upon, be productive of any amount of mischief, it finds advocates among men of standing and education. In the same way men who ought to know better pander to the prejudices and dislikes of the populace, without apparently giving a thought to the consequences that may follow by acting as those prejudices and dislikes dictate. This is seen and deplored by patriotic and high-minded Americans, but it is impossible for them to make the legion of time-serving and dishonest politicians with which their country is infested, upright and independent. Harper's Weekly, commenting on the Venezuelan craze and the men who helped to raise and keep up the excitement, says:

Nothing is more conspicuous in the history of Congress since the Venezuelan question became prominent than the utter cowardice of members before an imaginary public opinion. In the true spirit of the demagogue nearly all have joined in the mad jingo shout or else waited to see whether it is politically safe to resist it. Fortunately for civilization the people are not so foolish as their would-be leaders seem to believe. The Davis resolution which was recommended by the committee of eleven against the sole protest of Senator Gray has found little favor with the press and the public, and that little is rapidly diminishing.

It is difficult to believe that this was the case, for almost every American newspaper that one took up while the craze was at its height contained the most furious diatribes against Great Britain and the British. If the position they took and the tone they adopted were indications of the state of public opinion in the United States on the question, hatred of Great Britain is the ruling passion in the breasts of the great majority of the citizens of the United States. It seems now that the journalists and the politicians of the States were scared by the noise they themselves assisted in making. They howled so loudly and in such hideous tones that they seemed to have believed that the whole population of the United States was ready to rise *en masse* to fight the British, and that the American public would utterly demolish any citizen who should have the audacity even to hint that they might be mistaken and that they were making a tremendous uproar about very little indeed. All this is seen clearly enough now, but a few weeks ago it was completely hidden from thousands of Americans who consider themselves far-seeing and sagacious.

GAME LAW AMENDMENTS.

TO THE EDITOR:—I thought that in my last reply to E. L. Harrison, I had done enough of what he calls "interpreting," but he has got himself into such a knot on some points that his unravelling would be quite a difficult matter. The special constable and the right of search on private property is a pet grievance; it is not proposed that the special constable shall be a salaried personage, he would get half the fines; nor would the right given him to search persons suspected of killing game illegally on private property empower him to enter private houses, a proceeding which E. L. H. so much feared. He wants to know "what is the use of the trespass law if a constable is to be paid a large salary to prevent trespassing?" I might as well ask "What is the use of having a law against burglary, if there are no police to apprehend the burglars?" He says that there is already a law against the carrying of guns by boys; quite so, but it has been found inoperative, therefore we have proposed a small license, believing that as a rule the boys cannot afford to pay it, and that the gun he carries is his dad's, who in nine cases out of ten would not go beyond paying for his own license.

"The veritable rough is oftentimes worth many thousands of dollars and well able to purchase a license." E. L. H. seems determined to unearth wealth somewhere; why in the world don't he advertise this country properly? According to him the one dollar members of the G.P.A. are purse-proud individuals; even the boys can afford double-barrel guns and game licenses, while the very "roughs" are worth thousands of dollars. What a country to settle in!!! If these facts were only noised abroad we should be deluged with immigrants, every one of them armed with his double-barrel shotgun, and the wealthy roughs would soon make a paradise for E. L. H. by exterminating the depraved pheasants and deer. The paragraph concerning leeches is a little too coarse for notice. The act against shooting between sunset and sunrise was never advised by the G.P.A., and is being opposed now. In the Daily Times of 31st ult. "Another Farmer" indulges in an attack upon the G.P.A.; he is much to be sympathised with—those awful nights spent among the carrots and peas!!! and all for nothing! He might have brought on a bad attack of rheumatics. I should have thought it would have been better, in the course of years, to have made the fence a trifle higher, or even to have tied a small dog in the garden, and then gone comfortably to bed; he should really take more care of himself.

I have not been a resident in England for many years, but I remember that the farmers used to declaim loudly against the reprehensible conduct of the pheasants in their grain fields, but patient investigation has proved that the number of grubs and grain destroying insects which they devour more than counterbalance any harm they may do. I think that when pheasants are plentiful enough to warrant their legal sale the farmer should be able to kill enough to compensate him for any loss he may sustain by them, that is if he will put a stop to poaching on his preserves, but as he cannot be everlastingly running after "purse-proud individuals" "wealthy roughs," and license holding boys, the next best thing he can do is to have unpaid police to do it for him. E. L. H. maintains that 95 per cent. of the farmers are against the propositions of the G. P. A., a truly formidable percentage (if correct?) the balance, I suppose, are the virtuous few who, in order to "shoo" off the pheasants and the deer, spend those dreadful nights among the carrots and the peas.

FARMER.

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A SET OF ROGUES

BY FRANK BARRETT.

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CHAPTER IV.

Finding a sheltered secret corner, we made a very hasty breakfast of these stolen dainties, and since we had not the heart to restore them to our innkeeper, so we had not the face to chide Moll for her larceny, but made light of the business and ate with great content and some mirth.

A drizzly rain falling and turning the snow into slush, we kept under the shelter of the shed, and this giving us scope for the reflection Don Sanchez had counseled my compunctions were greatly shaken by the consideration of our present position and the prospect of worse. When I thought of our breakfast that Moll had stolen, and how willingly we would all have eaten a dinner got by the same means, I had to acknowledge that certainly we were all thieves at heart, and this conclusion, together with sitting all day doing nothing in the raw cold, did make the design of Don Sanchez seem much less heinous to me than it appeared the night before, when I was warm and not exceedingly sober, and indeed toward dusk I came to regard it as no bad thing at all.

About 6 comes back our don on a fine horse and receives our salutations with a cool nod—we standing there of a row, looking our sweetest, like hungry dogs in expectation of a bone. Then in he goes to the house without a word, and now my worst fear was that he had thought better of his offer and would abandon it.

So there we hang about the best part of an hour, now thinking the don would presently send for us and then growing to despair of everything but to be left in the cold forgotten, but in the end comes Master Landlord to tell us his worship in the cherry room would see us. So, after the same formalities of cleansing ourselves as the night afore, up stairs we go at the heels of a drawer carrying a roast pig, which to our senses was more delightful than any bunch of flowers.

With a gesture of his hands, after saluting us with great dignity, Don Sanchez bade us take our places at the table and with never a word of question as to our decision, but that was scarce necessary, for it needed no subtle observation to perceive that we would accept any conditions to get our share of that roast pig. This supper differed not greatly from the former, save that our Moll was taken with a kind of tickling at the throat which presently attracted our notice.

"What ails you, Molly, my dear?" asks Jack. "Has a bit of crackling gone down the wrong way?"

She put it off as if she would have us take no notice of it, but it grew worse and worse toward the end of the meal and became a most horrid, tearing cough, which she did so natural as to deceive us all and put us in great concern, and especially Don Sanchez, who declared she must have taken a cold by being exposed all day to the damp weather.

"If I have," says she very prettily, after wiping the tears from her upon another fit, "'tis surely a most ungrateful return for the kindness with which you sheltered me last night, senor."

"I shall take better care to shelter you in the future, my poor child," replies the don, ringing the bell. Then, the maid coming, he bids her warm a bed and prepare a hot posset against Moll was tucked up in the blankets. "And," says he, turning to Moll, "you shall not rise till noon, my dear. Your breakfast shall be brought to you in your room, where a fire shall be made and such treatment shown you as if you were my own child."

"Oh, what have I done that you should be so gentle to me?" exclaims Moll, smothering another cough. And with that she reaches out her leg under the table and fetches me a kick of the shin, looking all the while as pitiful and innocent as any painted picture.

"Would it be well to fetch in a doctor?" says Don Sanchez, when Moll was gone barking up stairs. "The child looks delicate, though she eats with a fairly good appetite."

"'Tis nothing, you know," replies Jack, who had doubtless received the same hint from Moll she had given me. "I warrant she will be mended in a

The don receives our salutations with a cool nod.

day or so, with proper care. 'Tis a kind of family complaint. I am taken that way at times." And with that he rasps his throat to tell that he would be none the worse for sleeping a night between sheets.

This was carrying the matter too far, and I thought it had certainly undone us, for stopping short, with a start, in crossing the room, he turns and looks first at Dawson, then at me, with anything but a pleasant look in his eyes at finding his dignity hurt, to be thus bustled by a mere child. Then his dark eyebrows unbending, with the reflection maybe that it was so much the better to his purpose that Moll could so act as to deceive him, he seats himself gravely, and replies to Jack:

"Your family wit may get you a night's lodging, but I doubt if you will ever merit it so well as your daughter."

"Well," says Jack, with a laugh, "what wit we have among us we are resolved to employ in your honor's service, so that you show us this steward fellow is a rascal that deserves to be bounced, and we do no great injury to any one else."

"Good," says Don Sanchez. "We will proceed to that without delay. And now, as we have no matter to discuss, and must be afoot early tomorrow, I will ring for a light to take you to bed."

So we up presently to a good snug room, with a bed to each of us fit for a prince. And there, with the blankets drawn up to our ears, we fell blessing our stars that we were now fairly out of our straits and after that to discussing whether we should consult Moll's inclination to this business. First, Dawson was for telling her plump out all about our project, saying that, being so young, she had no conscience to speak of and would like nothing better than to take part in any piece of mischief. But against this I protested, seeing that it would be dangerous to our design to let her know so much (she having a woman's tongue in her head), and also of a bad tendency to make her, as it were, at the very beginning of her life, a knowing active party to what looked like nothing more nor less than a fraud. Therefore I proposed we should, when necessary, tell her just so much of our plan as was expedient and no more. And his agreeing mightily, with Jack's natural turn for taking of short cuts out of difficulties, he fell in with my views at once, and so, bidding God bless me, he lays the clothes over his head and was snoring the next minute.

In the morning we found the don just as kind to us as the day before he had been careless and so made us eat breakfast with him, to our great content. Also he sent a maid up to Moll to inquire of her health and if she could eat anything from our table, to which the baggage sends reply that she feels a little easier this morning and could fancy a dish of black puddings. These delicacies her father carried to her, being charged by the don to tell her that we should be gone for a couple of days, and that in our absence she might command whatever she felt was necessary to her complete recovery against our return. Then I told Don Sanchez how we had resolved to tell Moll no more of our purpose than was necessary for the moment, which pleased him, I thought, mightily, he saying that our success or failure depended upon secrecy as much as anything, for which reason he had kept us in the dark as much as ever it was possible.

About 8 o'clock three saddle nags were brought to the door, and we, mounting, set out for London, where we arrived about 10, the roads being fairly passable save in the marshy parts about Shoreditch, where the mire was knee deep; so to Gracious street, and there leaving our nags at the Turk inn, we walked down to the bridge stairs, and thence with a pair of oars to Greenwich. Here, after our tedious chilly voyage, we were not ill pleased to see the inside of an inn once more, and Don Sanchez, taking us to the king's posting house, orders a fire to be lighted in a private room, and the best there was in the larder to be served us in the warm parlor. While we were at our trenchers Don Sanchez says:

"At 2 o'clock two men are coming hither to see me. One is a master mariner named Robert Evans, the other a merchant adventurer of his acquaintance whom I have not yet seen. Now you are to mark these two men well, note all they say and their manner of speaking, for tomorrow you will have to personate these characters before one who would be only too glad to find you at fault."

"Very good, senor," says Dawson, "but which of these parts am I to play?"

"That you may decide when you have seen the men, but I should say from my knowledge of Robert Evans that you may best represent his character. For in your parts today you are to be John and Christopher Knight, two needy cousins of Lady Godwin, whose husband, Sir Richard Godwin, was lost at sea seven years ago. I doubt if you will have to do anything in these characters beyond looking eager and answering merely 'Yes' and 'No' to such questions as I may put."

Thus primed, we went presently to the sitting room above, and the drawer shortly after coming to say that two gentlemen desired to see Don Sanchez, Jack and I seated ourselves side by side at a becoming distance from the don, holding our hats on our knees as humbly as may be.

Then in comes a rude, dirty fellow, with a patch over one eye and a most peculiar bearish gait, dressed in a rough coat, with a wool shawl about his neck, followed by a shrewd visaged little gentleman in a plain cloth suit, but of very good substance, he looking just as trim and well mannered as t'other was uncouth and rude.

"Well, here am I," says Evans, whom we knew at once for the master mariner, flinging his hat and shawl in a corner. "There's his excellency Don Sanchez, and here's Mr. Hopkins, the merchant I spoke on yesterday. And who be these?" turning about to fix us with his one blue eye.

"Two gentlemen related to Mrs. Godwin and very anxious for her return," replies the don.

"Then, we being met friends all, let's have up a bottle and heave off on this here business without more ado," says Evans, and with that he seats himself in the don's chair, pokes up the fire with his boots and spits on the hearth.

The don graciously places a chair for Mr. Hopkins, rings the bell and seats himself. Then after a few civilities, while the bottle was being opened and our glasses filled, he says:

"You have doubtless heard from Robert Evans the purpose of our coming hither, Mr. Hopkins?"

"Roughly," replies Mr. Hopkins, with a dry little cough. "But I should be glad to have the particulars from you that I may judge more clearly of my responsibilities in this undertaking."

"O Lord!" exclaims Evans in disgust. "Here, give us a pipe of tobacco if we're to warp out half a day ere we get a capful of wind."

[To be continued.]

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