

SCOTCH LAND MONOPOLY.

Lord Derby wanted a Domesday Book to stop the mouths of the Radicals, who are constantly charging that the land of Great Britain has fallen into the hands of a small number of individuals, 30,000 and not less. He was sure it was all a mistake. A Domesday Book of Scotland has been made, and it shows that though the whole number of owners is 131,539, most of them are confined to the cities and borough, and have less than an acre apiece. The whole of Scotland outside of the cities is owned or leased by 17,151 persons, of whom a large portion hold less than twenty acres each. The average ownership of Scotland, which contains 19,000,000 acres, is 1,000, and there are 100 men who hold more than 20,000 acres each, and 52 who hold more than 50,000 acres. The Duke of Sutherland has 1,176,343 acres, and the Duchess of Sutherland 149,879. The two Mathiesons have over six hundred thousand acres between them, and the Duke of Buccleugh has 457,696. A hundred men hold over nine million acres out of nineteen.

Of course the cultivation of these vast estates is out of the question, and the Duke of Sutherland's estate yields an average of only a shilling an acre, while there are small estates in Scotland which yield two pounds to the acre. These immense estates prevent agricultural improvements and keep down population. The proprietors cannot afford the trouble of looking after small tenants, building cottages, and draining moors, and providing schools and charities. They find sheep much easier to tend than tenants, and oak bark is a much less troublesome crop to raise than oats and peas and potatoes, and they naturally prefer parks to peasants. And very naturally the poor people dwell at this pushing off process, and protest against the accumulation of these vast estates in the hands of a few great landlords. But it appears that the titles of these estates are of the most shadow character. Most of them belonged originally to the tribe or clan, and the chief exacted a small portion of the produce from his followers and retainers. This annual tax increased and hardened in time into a regular rent, and finally left the estates in the hands of a few great families who happened to hold them. They really belong to the clan, and the land reformers who are protesting so loudly against land monopoly find their arguments against the present unequal distribution of land and property all ready shaped to their hands. The evils of the present system are patent, but the teeth of monopoly, like those of the tortoise, never willingly let go what once they have fastened upon.

Anything that concerns the welfare of Newfoundland is a matter of interest to Canadian readers inasmuch as everything points to an early absorption of the island in the Dominion. It is with great pleasure, therefore, that we learn that there seems to be a prospect of a speedy settlement of the West Coast Fishery difficulty, which has so long retarded the progress of that portion of the island. It appears that the French Government has expressed its willingness to come to a final arrangement, and the Colonial Secretary has accordingly notified the Newfoundland Government, with the view of eliciting its views on the subject. In a matter of great consequence that a difficulty which at one time threatened serious complications should thus happily come to an amicable solution.

The premature closing of navigation last autumn produced much distress among the inhabitants of Gaspe coast, and this misery has just been considerably aggravated by the recent destruction of a schooner laden with provisions destined for that coast. The Quebec Government is about to send grain to be distributed among the poor settlers of that region.

It would certainly be the crowning of the American continental if the United States could annex the Dominion of Canada by the 1st of July, 1876. A Washington Magazine writer throws out the brilliant suggestion, and our people are considerably given two full years to digest the idea and get used to it.

The French Canadians of this Province are making preparations to organize a monster celebration of their national festival, on the 24th June next. A large number of their compatriots in the United States are expected to join them.

Serrano, having flogged Don Carlos, thinks he is equal to cabinet-making. But it is hard to make that sort of furniture out of Spanish wood. It is too knotty to work and to brittle to wear, and too rotten to hold together when it is joined.

Don Platt proposes that a hat be put on Annie Ream's statue of Lincoln. That shows his appreciation of the beautiful and his love of art. He would doubtless put a gown on Venus and trousers on Apollo, and bundle cupid in short clothes and put a pair of number three gaiters on the feet of the Madonna.

The House of Commons has determined to have an official report of its debates. This is right; the resolution should have been made long ago. There is no more valuable work of reference in the Library than the English Parliamentary reports of Hansard.

On Friday last, in Ottawa, a young French Canadian, who could not speak a word of English, was married to an Irish girl who knew nothing of French.

OCEAN TELEGRAPHY.

A bill has been for some time before one of the Committees of the Senate, which has considerable interest for all who are concerned with the telegraph, and who is not concerned with the telegraph. It is well known that the company or companies by whom the submarine service between Europe and America is at present performed, have a monopoly of the right to pass their cables over the island of Newfoundland. Whether the use of this outlying piquet of the continent is absolutely essential for transatlantic cables we do not know; but its convenience is at all events so great as to give a decided advantage to those who employ it. The monopoly is, unfortunately, to last for fifty years as the island government has allowed the time for its pre-emption to expire. The bill we have just spoken of is intended if possible to counteract the manoeuvres which are being employed to this end. It is a short one, and drawn in rather complicated and not very intelligible language; but its effect, if passed, will be this—it will deny the privilege of landing a cable on any of the shores of the Dominion, to any telegraphic company, which being possessed of a monopoly elsewhere will not abandon to share that monopoly. Thus the present owners of the Atlantic telegraph, whose wires pass over Newfoundland and touch the continent in Nova Scotia, will, except under the circumstances to be hereafter mentioned, be either forced to resign their island monopoly, or to find some other way to the main land, than that by which they now have access thereto. The bill was moved by the Hon. Mr. Dickey on its second reading in the Senate; but it was referred to the Committee on Banking without division, and it is there the contest has been going on for the last two or three days. It is understood that one or two Senators are interested in the continuance of the present arrangements, and Lord Monk, who is the chairman of the company, has, we believe, telegraphed from England to complain of the measure as an infringement of vested rights. That, however, ought to have been avoided by the bill, which was stated to contain a clause protecting grants even of exclusive powers wherever they existed. But the value of the bill, if it had been carried in that shape, would have been for which it was intended, have turned upon a question which we understand is somewhat debated—that is to say, whether the company now in possession has any legal right to land in Nova Scotia, or on any other part of the Dominion. If it is the property, after all that shape, would not have been interfered with its privileges. If it have not, and at present only lands on sufferance, it could not have claimed an infringement of vested rights which did not exist, and never has existed. The charter granting these monopolies being against the public interests, must be construed strictly, and the owners of them must be allowed to claim no more than they really possess. But with this proviso, their rights ought to be as sacredly maintained as any other description of property, for after all they are based upon the same principles. Men obtain in order that they may apply it to useful purposes, that which was useless before, and might have continued useless for ages without their intervention, enterprise and adventure. It is the same with the charters granting the monopoly of the landing of a telegraphic cable. The moral title, apart from the legal title, consists in the reduction of that which had no value while in a state of nature, to the service of mankind, and he who effects that reduction has a just claim to the property. He had indeed created the ownership, but by creating the material part of the property, but in giving it the value in which alone the idea of property consists. We have no sympathy, therefore, with those who would deal lightly with the rights of the company, and who are affected by this bill, and who set up the pretence that because large profits have been made by the owners of the Atlantic telegraph they should not be deprived of the powers which may have been conceded when it was doubtful whether their enterprise would result in profit or loss. The bill, however, is a concession of a range of rugged rock into an important element in the transmission of instantaneous messages between two continents, are entitled to whatever property they have thus acquired. On the other hand, we would give them no more than they can claim under the strict letter of their contract, honestly interpreted. Because, while they have incurred a risk in investing their money, so has the public in granting privileges which, small at the moment, have become enormous in the result. The debate in the Committee is a lot of wild talk, and a mere question whether both sides of this problem should be considered, or only that one which no doubt, has about it the most popular characteristics. It has been decided in the sense of breaking up the monopoly without regarding the rights which any one may have in it, however justly acquired.

In the House of Commons, on Thursday last, Mr. Ross, the Minister of Militia, on the Orders of the Day being called, referred to a charge made against him a few evenings since by Sir John A. Macdonald, that he (Mr. Ross) had written a letter during the late Cape Breton election directing a Government official to vote for Mr. McKay, the Government candidate. This letter had since the charge was made, been published in a local Government paper. Mr. Ross now distinctly denied he had ever sent any such letter or telegram, or had used his influence as a Minister of the Crown, in a single instance to bias a vote.

Miss Nellie Grant, daughter of the President, was married on Thursday last, to Mr. Sartoris. The happy couple intend leaving, in a few days, for Europe.

A bill has been passed in the House of Commons imposing more stringent regulations on the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquors in the North West; also a bill relating to the prompt administration of criminal matters in the Province of Manitoba.

A firm of London merchants, Messrs. Oppenheim & Co., have failed for some £20,000,000.

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Early next month the annual gatherings of the different Protestant churches will take place in different places throughout the Dominion, the principal of which will be that of the General Synod of the Episcopal Church; the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in connection with the Church of Scotland; the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church; the Wesleyan and other Methodist churches; the Congregational Union; and the Baptist Convention. In connection with the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches the important question of Union will be among the leading subjects to attract attention. We do not feel free to discuss the merits of the question, but simply to express the opinion from an outside standpoint, that union of the two Presbyterian churches of this country is a consummation devoutly to be wished. From the discussions which we have read in the organs of the respective churches, and in the columns of some of our journals, there seems to be a considerable amount of fine hair splitting indulged in on some points, the importance of which is perhaps unduly magnified. Sooner or later, we have no doubt, the union will take place. There is a probability of the union between the Wesleyan and other Methodist churches, the taking place, as we believe the majority of the official quarterly meetings have voted in its favour. The next Wesleyan Conference promises to be one of the most important ever held in Canada. The present Conference was divided into three parts, one at London, Toronto, and Montreal. Kingston will belong to the latter. The present Eastern British American Conference will probably be divided into two. These conferences will meet annually. A General Conference will be held every four years. The first under the new system is to take place in Toronto in October next. For the first time lay delegates will then be present. On this question of lay representation, while no Church utilizes its laymen to greater advantage in other respects, Wesleyan Methodism has been the most successful, and the most successful of the ministers composing the present Conference will be located within the sphere of the new Conference to which they may be appointed. This will limit very much the choice of the people in selecting their ministers. Considerable discussion has taken place on the subject to be discussed, the various Church assemblies throughout the country will be watched with more than ordinary interest.

There is some talk of a new reciprocity treaty with Canada. Such a treaty is needed. We abrogated the former treaty because we were indignant with England. The result has been that we have injured ourselves at least as much as we have injured Canada. Were the treaty restored we would sell vastly more of our produce to Canada than we can now sell, and we could also do a very large business in imported goods for the Canadian market, especially during the months that the St. Lawrence is closed. It was a childish piece of folly to abrogate the treaty, and we ought to renew it at once.

Pittsburg, Pa., May 21.—This afternoon a crusading party of forty ladies, while visiting the saloons, were ordered by the police to disperse. Refusing to do so, they were arrested and brought before the Mayor. The ladies were dismissed with an admonition, that a repetition of the offence would be punished to the full extent of the law. The ladies sang a long metre doxology, and departed.

A Little Rock despatch says: Gen. Newton and his staff have sent in their resignations to Gov. Baxter.

TODAY'S COUNTRY HOMES.—This is a book that should be in the hands of every family, as it contains many useful suggestions about the cheapest and best modes of carrying on Building and Farming operations, and a great deal of general information. The study of such a book will enable all to save money. This book is strongly and neatly bound, and will be an ornament to any bookshelf. W. E. Mayhew is taking orders for this book. He is also selling "T. S. Arthur's New Crusade," a stirring book on temperance.

Interesting revelations continue to be elicited by the North-West Committee in regard to the Amnestic question. Governor Archibald testifies that he was instructed by Sir John Macdonald to secure Provencer as a seat for Sir Geo. Cartier, after his rejection by Montreal East, but not to allow it to be understood that the murderer of Scott had retired in favour of the Minister of Militia. The Governor accordingly negotiated with Riel, and the latter proved very accommodating, but all the world knew well enough the reason of his retirement.

THE CLERGY DISCIPLINE BILL.

The Clergy Discipline Bill, or, more strictly speaking, the Bill for the regulation of Public Worship, which was read for the first time in the House of Lords on the 20th of April, aims at putting an end, by one single Act of Parliament, to the troubles and worries caused in the method of Church discipline by the method of the Rev. R. B. Riddell, which was brought before the House by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in a calm, earnest, straightforward speech, and is very likely, with some modifications, to become law. The Archbishop announced his intention to propose his bill, and in the House of Commons, he stated that he did not wish to unsettle existing laws made at the Reformation, but he asked that certain difficulties in the way of the administration of those laws, should be removed. The difficulties he named under two heads: delay and expense. The delay in carrying out the law, through the Ecclesiastical Courts was such, that pending the settlement of a debated point, a parish might be thrown into confusion for years, and the parties to the dispute might be dead, before the question was decided. As to the expense, the more trying of the simple question, whether a clergyman had committed an irregularity in the performance of Divine worship, assumed very formidable proportions. In the case of *Shepherd v. Bennett*, the total amount of taxed costs reached the sum of £11,015, and in *Hobbs v. Partridge*, £7,000. The Archbishop would like to see the storeskeeper hold a meeting and come to some united decision upon the matter and I feel sure that if they decide to shut up at seven, the public will heartily endorse their action.

P. T.

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