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Our Ministers Abroad,

Or rather AT HOME, being a faithful account of an interview between CANADA'S DELEGATES, and the DIGNITARIES of DOWNING STREET, LONDON, ENGLAND.

IN the obscure and untutored community to which the *Sprite* addresses itself, it may not be generally observed that we are in a state of crisis. It is quite true that, in a political sense, the Province has been in a state of *chronic* crisis for some time past. But good old Stadacona looks upon crisis with a coolness only to be surpassed by the frigidity of a stiff January morning. The *Sprite* has frequently, in the innocence of his soul, made attempts to account for such glacial indifference. His pre-conceived opinions, and *couleur-de-rose* hopes, are, however, in all cases, doomed to be blasted and withered.

When it was announced some few weeks ago to the people of Canada by the booming of cannon from the heights of Durham Terrace and the pomp of vice-regal solemnity, that our Ministers were about to confer with the Imperial Government on several great subjects, we naturally anticipated some excitement in Quebecian circles, but again we have to record, that an unusual dullness has pervaded the atmosphere ever since that awful announcement. Circumstances, and advantages over which the *Sprite* has control, enables him to rouse our citizens from that chronic state of apathy into which they appear to be plunged, and to entertain them with the first genuine account of the grand *Conversational Conference* between our Canadian political heroes and the old and tried warriors who recognize PAM as their chief.

The conversation may not be very interesting to Quebecers, because Point Levi is in the case, but other parts of the Province will have an opportunity of judging the merits of the great questions of Confederation, Defence and Armament, Treaties, (whether Ashburton or Reciprocity,) and all the other great and important points, now attracting public attention:

DIALOGUE 1st.

10 o'clock, A. M.—Great excitement in and about the hotel where *our delegates* are quartered.

Brown, Galt, John A., and Cartier appear at a late breakfast, duly attended, of course, by Lieut. Col. Bernard. A deep and mysterious silence prevails. Suddenly Brown exclaims, with that peculiar accent so well known in the vicinity of Bothwell,—

BROWN.—“Cartier, these haddies are not equal to McEwan's cure!”

CARTIER.—“Ma deere Brown, dere are many cures for de gen'ral evils, but de biggest cure of all is de Representation by population.

BROWN.—“Cartier ye're always at politics, can ye no tak yere breakfast, and keep sic things for Maister Cardwell.”

JOHN A.—“Galt, old fellow, how about those codfish.”

GALT.—“Don't annoy Brown, you're at politics too Macdonald, we must be serious.

CARTIER.—“Well Mac, ve shall understand before ve shall leave dis place, who it shall be who shall open de ball.”

JOHN A.—“Why Cartier, you represent the-e-e (codfish,) no, no, Brown does,—I forgot. *He* must open the ball.”

BROWN.—“Now, my freends, let us be serious; I apprehend that we are all here on the same errand, and with the same honest intentions. The great constitutional difficulties that have agitated our unhappy Province for years have been amicably settled; let us shew the Government of Great Britain that we are firm in our purpose, and determined to hold our own.”

COL. BERNARD.—“Bravo, Bravo.”

JOHN A.—“Now, Hewitt, my dear fellow, I admire your patriotic style, but you must really understand that we are not in the armory of the Civil Service Rifles.”

BERNARD.—“My dear Mr. Macdonald, I quite appreciate your friendly caution, and although Secretary to this important Delegation, I feel like Uriah Heep, “werry 'umble.”

CARTIER.—“Of course, since I have been to make one visite at Windsor, it must be suppose dat every man dat is in de bisness, must be very humble.”

GALT.—“Now, gentlemen, a truce to your *badinage*. (Is that a good word, Cartier?) My dear Brown, of course every fool in Canada knows, that, for years, you have denounced us as being as unlike angels as possible, but an important crisis in public affairs has induced you to look upon us as worthy companions. All we now ask is, that in meeting our swell friends of the Colonial Office, you will make an attempt to avoid any and every expression that may compromise your previous opinions. You are of course aware, Brown, that the *Leader* and other newspapers of the same stamp are on your trail: beware of surprises! I merely mention this little matter with the best possible good feeling, because it must be strange for you to be in such company as you now are—the heroes of that memorable event of 1858, which so neatly put out your candle.”

CARTIER.—“Galt, I do not like de severity on de persons who may have been our conquered adversaries. Brown has improved since 1858. Ha, ha!”

JOHN A.—“Gentlemen, our hurried breakfast is now over; we must assume a serious demeanour, and we must meet Downing Street with calm vigor and determination. Our local quarrels must be ignored, and Upper Canada—Clear Grit and Conservative—making common cause with Lower Canadian PLUCK, must decide the future of our hitherto prosperous colony.”

At this juncture, all rose, and prepared to wait upon the dignitaries of the Colonial Office.

(To be continued.)

"The Chronicle" vs. The Bureau of Agriculture.

What is the matter with the *Chronicle*? Are the times out of joint? Is our friend unwell—billions? Perhaps he is disappointed—disappointed in his tenderest affections; his advances rejected; himself scorned. Such may be the *cause*; the *effect* is independence and patriotism. Natural enough, too. Not Liebig and Ude conjoined, could name a dish on which patriotism waxes so fat and lusty, as on one compounded from bile and disappointment.

A few days ago our august confrere was mercilessly severe on the Bureau of Agriculture, its illustrious chief, and its Annual Report. The Report recommends the culture of the vine in Canada. Why not, Mr. *Chronicle*? We know instances of turnips being grown on mahogany tables; and it is certainly possible to raise pine-apples at the poles. We vouch for the Bureau containing distinguished cultivators. We can point to one who, at this moment, has as fine a box of cress on his bedroom window sill, as ever flourished in St. Rochs. And to another, who, last year, had a field of oats in Beauport, so vigorous in their growth, that they retained the greenness of youth to the end, scorning to fall into the sere and yellow leaf. And why should not the *chef* be a good farmer? He who so well can chop logic, may be able to chop logs; he scatters chaff like a whirlwind, which implies that he can winnow wheat; and it is not unreasonable to suppose that one so clever at planting a period should know how to plant a potatoe.

We regret having to plough up the *Chronicle's* arguments; still more to harrow his feelings. But we will make atonement. Whenever we find our friend unable to thrash, we will take the flail and thrash him.

This mode of treatment will prevent a recurrence of his recent distressing malady, and maintain him in his pristine vigour.

Stanzas.

(From our Beauport Correspondent.)

I.

I took her ripe, red hand in mine,
With overwhelming glee—
Oh, dark the lowering moon did shine,
And tipp'd the azure sea.

II.

She said, "I love another man"—
I struck the hag a blow!
Out spouted forth, and o'er her ran
Her gore, as green as snow!

III.

Dark flashed the thunder from the earth,
And smote the paly sky—
The lightning sang, with vengeful mirth,
A soft, sad lullaby.

The Queen's Plate.

We are enabled to give the names of four of the horses entered for our Canadian Derby, next month:

CONFEDERATION, by J. A. Macdonald out of Crisis.

DEFENCE, by Canada out of England.

GOVERNMENT, by "No Means" out of Quebec.

CANADA, out of Pocket by Jingo.

A Subject for Debating Clubs.

Is the United States at peace or at war?

Our Municipalities.

"How few the ills that Kings can cause or cure!"

Most heartily we wish the same could be said of that many-headed monarch, a Municipality. The *Sprite* is not inclined to kick up a row with Municipalities about trifles; he will not quarrel with them because rain falls and wets our streets, or wind blows and raises a dust; or, still less, because they bestow their patronage on a short man in preference to a tall one, or, because the warm blood of Erin sometimes boils, or the fist of England comes into contact with a nose, to the serious detriment of the latter; no, he will take higher ground, he will assail them in their very Constitution; perhaps, it would be more correct to say that he objects to the laws under which they live and breathe and have their being. Every one knows, feels, that we are too much governed, and it is needless to say by whom. The *Sprite* objects to the laws which enable a Municipality (which all do as a matter of course) to run, senselessly and deeply, into debt. He objects to their power of unlimited taxation. He objects to their extraordinary, tyrannical and vexatious interference with business, with trade of all kinds, and even with amusement. He objects to their very democratic origin, and a good deal beside; but, as this is not war—call it, if you please, an armed neutrality—it would be folly to point out the vulnerable spots which may, probably, very soon be the objects of attack. All he can say is that, unless that same young lady, now so roughly repulsed, be admitted next time she calls, he will muster his forces and march on the *Hotel de Ville*.—Bravo, *Sprite*.

The Forsaken.*

What, not a kindly glance bestow,
Ere we for ever part?
Nor breathe a soft or gentle word
To soothe a breaking heart?

Remembrance of our happy days—
Is that, alas! no more?
All I have been—will that, too, fade,
When fades your native shore?

The sun will shine, the flowers will bloom,
Your wand'ring steps to cheer;
For hearts, crush'd down, no spring returns,—
My course is brief and drear.

Adieu: no more I bid you pause,
No more for mercy crave:
You may relent;—return, and find
Where we now part, a grave.

* To these verses—though they may be considered rather out of place—we could not refuse insertion.—Ed.

Mr. J. B. E. Dorion.

We have it from the best authority that the above illustrious gentleman will inaugurate the coming session by moving for a Committee to enquire into the cause of the Canadian delegates going home and returning in Cunard steamers, while Canada has steamers of her own.

The Politics of the Toronto "Leader."

The politics of the above paper may be ascertained by taking a copy of the Toronto "*Globe*," and reversing any opinion expressed by that sheet. This method is infallible—we have tried it.



NO ADMITTANCE.

CIVIC REFORM.—I have heard that I am very much needed here :—Can I go in ?

CITY FATHER.—No ! We don't want you ; we can do very well without you.



JOHN A.—My dear L—r P—v—s, I dare say you find my cake hot, hard, and tough; but *do* try to swallow it.

A Vision.

(By the Nephew of His Uncle.)

I stood upon a height overlooking a fair country, and I said, oh, my country! thou art a goodly inheritance. My heart is glad, and I worship thee as an angel of beauty! Thou art like unto a woman of surpassing loveliness, draped in a mantle of white! But why is thy cheek so pale, and thine eyes dim as with weeping, oh, idol of my soul. And methought her gaze of sorrow was turned upon me, while pearly drops fell from her eyes and lay like diamonds on the green grass at her feet. She spoke and her voice was wasted to me on a trembling zephyr, and the sound of her voice was plaintive as the song of the lonely bulbul, and its notes tremulous as the Eolian when the night winds moan amid its strings. "Thou speakest to me in my sorrow, but my tears cease not to flow—thou speakest, but thy words bring no comfort to my soul! Why is my cheek pale, and why have mine eyes grown dim? Because of sorrow, tribulation and affliction. Because of my children who are trodden in the dust. Their oppression is great! And thou, oh, son of man! cease not to wail and lament. Make thy voice to be heard on the highway and in the narrow streets. Cry strenuously against the oppressors and spare them not; for their eyes glitter after gold, and they are greedy, and lust after power. Their strength is upon them, and they would overturn and completely cast down the altars of thy forefathers. Because they are of the past, and therefore sacred, for this would they destroy them.

"Vanity and Folly have lifted them up, and sit with them in the halls of Pride. And their voice is as the sound of the trumpet, and they laugh to scorn the humble and meek.

"They say, we have woven a cunning web of many colours: the weak and the strong are woven together, and the strength of man cannot rend asunder the work of our hands. They rejoice in their strength and their cunning, and feast in palaces, while the lonely and humble cry at the gates and there is none to hear."

Correspondence.

Mr. *Sprite*.—Of course you have read the Hon. Mr. McGee's speech at Wexford, in which he alludes to the liberality of the Canadian Government in furnishing him with a Protestant minister and a Roman Catholic layman, as aides-de-camp. My Jim, who is rather a smart boy, astonished me this morning with the following:—

"I say, papa, why is Mr. McGee sure to get back safe from Dublin?"

"I give it up, my son."

"Why, because he has a Protestant *divine* on one side, and a Catholic *Devine* on the other."

"That Piece of Feather."

We beg to correct the Editor of the *Montreal Gazette* as to the meaning of "that piece of feather." We do so reluctantly, but rather than have the wearers accused of "rescuing raiders," we give the true state of the case. The pieces of feather, denote the contributors to the *Sprite*. So you see, friend *Gazette*, some one has been *raiding* on your credulity.

The sound of her voice is gone and her form is still—her white mantle is like unto a shroud.

And as I looked—behold a stately pile! Lights dance and glitter within its silent walls, and a sound as of laughter and boisterous mirth issues from its opening doors. And as I looked behold seven forms! Their forms are like unto those of men, but their features are distorted in laughter and mockery, and they approach the idol of my soul. And one of them, whose hairs are whiter than the mantle of my beloved, (and old enough to know better,) gazed down upon her, and his eyes glistened like those of the serpent. He raises his voice, and it is harsh like the grating of a file, or the rending asunder of new linen. Moreover his words were broken, and jangled in the pure air, and were lost to me. Then, as they laughed and chattered, another stepped forward and his face was full of cunning, and his limbs were thin as a young spruce tree, and appeared to grow in length but not in comeliness, and the hair of his head was like unto a black sheep of the mountains when the winds scatter her wool. While he leered upon the idol of my soul, a third approached, and his form was more ungainly than the last: he also had limbs like unto the young spruce, but they bent together as he walked, and had no strength in them. He placed his foot on her neck, and his foot was of monstrous size—there was no beauty in it.

They unroll a web of many colours—they spread it by the side of my idol. They seize her in their polluting grasp, and lay her quivering form upon the earth; then with loud acclaim and fiendish laughter they toss her to the sky, and catch her snowy form again, but to repeat their devilish game. And as she rises and falls, methinks her form melts away into thin air—and she is gone. My Canada disappears from the face of the earth!

Oh, least idol of my soul!

Oh, fiendish, deluding ministers!!

Oh, web fatal, of Confederation!!!

The Amateurs of the Royal Fusiliers.

Our limited space will not admit of an extended notice of the performance of Wednesday evening last. The acting, on the whole, was good. The first piece, "Deaf as a Post," although rather antiquated, was creditably put on the stage. The Lancashire Hornpipe would certainly have put some of our Negro Minstrels to the blush. The second piece, "Bombastes Furioso," was well performed; the same may be said of "The Illustrious Stranger." Capt. Cole's songs were capital, and reminded us very strongly of Capt. Bayly in his happiest moods. The solo on the whistle was also well executed.

Now, we intend, brave boys, to give you a few hints:—Rehearse, as often as possible, in the Hall where you intend acting,—thus getting used at once to place and play.—Look more to your dresses, especially those of the female characters—do not attempt to be too funny—and lastly, give us a good old comedy, or a startling melodrama,—farces are "played out" (to use an Americanism). Without doubt, an excellent company can be made up in the regiment.

Advice

To officers and others who flirt with garrison belles:—Take them to church and ring them there.

A Rumour.

It is whispered about in fashionable circles that the Hon. George Brown intends leaving off his usual "Swallow-tail coat" after his return, restricting himself to the uniform of the civil service, at least, as long as he may remain in it.

A Recommendation.

We would strongly recommend to our Executive, if it is their intention to have a Session this summer, that it be held at Cacouna, or some other watering place, as the debates are likely to be heated, and a cool atmosphere might be beneficial to some of our choleric members.

Post Office Delay.

That nice sense of honour, which guides and governs the *Sprite* in his every word and act, impels him to make known to the public that the recent late deliveries of the mails are, in no respect, attributable to any remissness on the part of the officials of the establishment. All have done their duty, and well. Our friend *Dun*, never appeared in brighter colour: reproach to any would be injustice. The inconvenience has been unavoidable, and has arisen solely from the extraordinary and unparalleled amount of *Sprite* correspondence which has passed through the office. On the average of the last five days, seventeen additional bags have been received each morning, filled with communications, compliments and tribute from every portion of the Province. Athenian Toronto, Bæotian Blankville, Bustling Montreal, Sleepy Hollowtown, Sea-washed Gaspé, and the *terra incognita* above Superior, each appear there in due proportion. How, then, could delay be avoided?—The *Sprite* has been favoured with an intimation from the Postmaster-General, to the effect, that he intends to treble the staff of the department, and that he honours himself by placing one half the appointments at the *Sprite's* disposal. The *Sprite* is gracious; pleased to accept the compliment, and will place the raciest of his wits among the men of letters; not, however, without apprehension that they will find themselves in strange company in a public office.

Court Circular.

H. E. the G——r G——l dined alone last night. After dinner he smoked two cigars and dissipated three Sherry Cobblers. At ten his boots were pulled off. At eleven he put his night-cap on. Half an hour after he was asleep and,—dare we say it—snoring.

Quebec Weather.

If any place in the world has had reason to regret the decease of the Clerk of the Weather, (poor Admiral Fitzroy) it certainly is Quebec. Our weather, which at all times has a will of its own, since that lamentable event has indulged in the most capricious vagaries. Small rain, big rain and deluges; mist, haze and fogs; sunshine, sometimes faint and sometimes frying; cloud and thunder; breezes from east and north, south and west, and points uncompassed, some of them stiff as a serjeant of grenadiers, others puffy and variable as a fat and choleric colonel; dead calms and calms at their latest breath; heats, that would stifle a dustman or melt a Guinea-man; chills that would give the ague to a polar bear; frigidity never before met with out of B——r's speeches; a general coolness that made the Hon. Mr. Mc. and some of his friends wish themselves in the more genial atmosphere of the neighbourhood of Downing Street;—these, and other special varieties, have lately been tumbling after and over each other like a string of porpoises in the gulf. In the interest of B. N. A. we pray the elements to come to an understanding. Anything would be better than their present uncertain condition; yes! even an elementary confederation!

Steps in the Right Direction.

Steps over the *débris* at St. John's Gate.

The Review.

FRED.—"I say, Charley, what awful muffs the volunteers made of themselves on the Queen's birth-day."

CHARLES—(Of a facetious turn of mind).—"I can't see it, Fred; for surely you would not have them *regular*, when, at the best, they are but *ir-regulars*." (*Fred collapsed*.)

Notice of Motion [to be] before the House.

Moved by several members, and seconded by the Hon. J. S. Macdonald, that an humble address be presented to his Excellency, the Governor-General, praying that steps be taken to discover the whereabouts of the Commissioner from Canada, the Hon. Mr. McGee, at the Dublin Exhibition, during the visit of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, to the Canadian Department of the said Exhibition.

New Dances.

We learn from private and most reliable sources, that the Hon. George Brown has been learning some new dances, while in England, which he intends introducing into Canada. Among them is the Confederation Gallop, in which a goodly number of Scotch *airs* are introduced, and the Defence Quadrille, to be played with English Instruments at the cost of Canada.

Ornithological.

Of all birds, which is the most demented?—
The *Rave-n*, of course.



IMPUDENT BOY—(A fresh caught cockney).—"Fire."
 INSURANCE AGENT.—"Where, tell me where?"
 IMPUDENT BOY.—"Hif ye can't see with ye'r hies, just try and 'ear with yer hears."

The Little Foot Page.

I.

No messenger of love was he,
 No pet of ladies fair;
 He lived a life of misery,
 And never brushed his hair.

II.

He'd never seen a linen shirt,
 Nor heard of silken hose;
 His hands were all begrimed with dirt—
 He never blew his nose.

III.

At each new place he changed his names,
 To suit his master's will,
 And though he had been christened Thomas,
 We always called him Jack.

NOTE.—The last two lines of the third verse might easily have been rendered into rhyme, but stern truth compels us to admit that the page was *not* christened James and was not called Bill. Blank verse, therefore, in this case was indispensable.

Question and Answer.

We were recently asked, who, in our opinion, is the most sensible man in the ministry:—We should say, the Hon. Mr. Chapais, as he has not made a single foolish remark in the House, during his occupancy of a seat on the Treasury benches.

Items from Peter Street.

Timber is moving slowly and sinking—in price. We hope it may soon accelerate its pace and float—to a higher figure.

Flour is ground down to a drug, and nobody will take it.

Fish—cured—are in good condition. The market thirsts after salted herrings. Smoked, re-tail better than last week.

Coal—lumps—look bright. Grate enquiries after households. Dust, rules lower.

Freights dull. They will soon be enlivened. The *Sprite* desires to charter fifteen first-class vessels to load with his European edition.

In addition to the above, our correspondent sends us the following—whether as a conundrum or a rule of three sum we must leave to the judgment of our readers:—"Sold at 7½d. a foot: (we presume he is speaking of white pine) what was the price of toes and heels?" Yes, Sir! stupid enough. But then, our correspondent is only a log;—we shall take the first opportunity of cutting him up.

A Denial.

We are authorized to state that there is not the slightest foundation for the report that Mr. McGee and Mr. J. S. Macdonald have been writing affectionate verses to each other, during the absence of the former.

To Correspondents and the Public.

"Miss M. E. Baddon" Thanks. Remainder under consideration.

"News" received, and very acceptable.

Several communications reserved for want of space; others, because they came late to hand.

The public will perceive that our second number appears with a new Title Page. We desire to make the *Sprite* as perfect as possible, and neither exertion nor expence will be spared. At the same time, in the matter of our illustrations, we request a generous forbearance. They are the result of an entirely new system of Photo-Electrotyping, and, among its first efforts. We have good reason to anticipate that, with a little further practice and experience, they will arrive at a high state of perfection.

BUSINESS NOTICES.

Advertisers will find *THE SPRITE* one of the most valuable mediums for communicating with the public which exists in the Province. Its circulation will be very large; it will be everywhere read and preserved; which last is of the first importance to advertisers; and it will go amongst every class of society. Our space, in this department, is very limited, and early applications will be necessary. Terms:—For eight lines, or under, 75cts., any increase to be paid in the same proportion.

Subscriptions will be received for the *Sprite* from the rural districts, (\$2.50 per annum,) but, in all cases, they must be paid in advance. Cash or P. O. Orders addressed to Editor, will be duly acknowledged.

We shall be happy to receive contributions; but it is almost needless to remark that they must be of excellent quality, and suitable for a publication of a high order. Respectability is a *sine qua non*. In a short time we shall pay, and liberally, for articles of sterling merit.

All communications to be addressed to the "Editor of the *Sprite*, Post Office, Quebec." We shall strictly adhere to the rule of rejecting unpaid letters. Books for review, &c., can be lent with our publisher, Mr. Holwell, Buade Street, (opposite the post office,) Quebec.

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