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The Canadian Post. LINDSAY, FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1890. Circulation.....4,170.

WEST VICTORIA REFORM CONVENTION.

Following the example of a good many other constituencies West Victoria reformers are to meet in convention in Lindsay, on Saturday, April 20th, at 11 a. m., to choose a standard-bearer for the next provincial election. The delegates to the convention have been elected at meetings held recently for the purpose in each polling sub-division throughout the riding. West Victoria was lost at the last general election largely through a feeling of over-confidence as to the result. The reformers of the riding were determined on this occasion to commit no such error, but to carry it by a handsome majority. By proper exertion it can be carried with a majority in the three figure list. The ministerial candidate can count upon hearty and undivided support. The record of the Mowat administration during the last four years renders it stronger than ever before the people; and the reform candidate in West Victoria can enter upon the campaign under the most favorable auspices. We are confident the convention will make a judicious and happy selection, and that the party will go into the contest when it may come with the determination to win that will have its reward in victory. We trust there will be a large attendance at the convention. It seems to be the general expectation that the elections will take place in June.

The outlook for the opposition is most discouraging, and no one is more sensible of this chilling fact than Mr. Cross himself. He knows that he obtained many votes by making promises that he never fulfilled, and probably never intended to fulfill. For instance, he promised to give the Mowat government a fair support, but he has voted with Mr. Meredith every time. These who voted for Mr. Cross under the impression that he would support the government in all good measures will not renew their confidence in him. Mr. Cross is conscious of the weakness of his position, and, in fact, of the weakness of the opposition cause, and is unwilling to face the music. He feels that the "re-party" dodge will not avail a second time.

JUDGE ROSE'S CHARGE.

The full text of Mr. Justice Rose's admirable charge to the jury in the libel case of Cooper vs. Hughes is printed in other columns. A more severe and a more deserved condemnation of the defendant's style of journalism has never been expressed; and coming as it does with all the weight of the judge's learning, ability and high character it cannot fail to have a salutary effect, not, perhaps, so much upon the defendant as upon this community. It may stimulate the leading men in a large portion of this community to a deep sense of their individual responsibility in the premises, and make them keenly conscious of the great wrong that has been done, largely in consequence of their failure to discharge a clear duty in not effectively protesting against and condemning a style of journalism that has made the Warder a disgrace to the town and a by-word and a reproach amongst the newspapers of the province. It is nonsense to contend that this could not have been done by the leading conservatives of the town if they had been animated by the feelings which quickly found expression from the bench. In Mr. Justice Rose the only conservator of public morals that is to be found? In the discharge of his high duty a flagrant case—but by no means the most flagrant and disgraceful—came before him; and he said truly that he would not be doing his duty did he "let such articles pass by without words of the severest condemnation." Are there not others in this community who occupy yet higher positions as guardians of the public morals, and have they faithfully and fearlessly discharged their duty? For months—for years—the Warder has been made the avenue of attacks and slanders some of which, as Judge Rose said, the editor "did not attempt to justify" and which "no man would dare to stand up in the face of purity and honesty and justify;" there had been printed in it "insinuations, suggestions, immoral thoughts," "which were base, low and degrading;" thereby doing a wrong to the community it would "take years to efface." The injurious effect of these articles upon the young people of the community seems to have stirred up the righteous indignation of Judge Rose, and his severe condemnation of the articles in question will be re-echoed by many who have hitherto been silent before this reckless influence for evil.

We do not expect that leading local conservatives have the courage, the manliness or the public spirit to exert the influence which they must naturally possess, and which as citizens interested in the moral and intellectual welfare of the community they ought to exercise. We cannot believe there is any other community in the province in which such discreditable newspaper licenses would go on without exciting wide-spread and profound indignation and effective protest and condemnation. Those who are given to moralizing upon the respective influence of the pulpit and the press may dwell with profit on the noble principles of toleration enunciated by Judge Rose when he came to say a word as to the constant attacks upon the Roman Catholic church. We apprehend his lordship is far in advance of public sentiment in this respect. With too many it passes for courage and pluck to pander to prejudice and to stir up passion. It requires a rare and noble courage to inculcate the genuine principles of toleration and broad Christianity as expressed by Mr. Justice Rose. How many conservators of public morals in the highest sense have had the courage in the past to deal with this particular phase of the local evil? How many in the future will have the courage publicly to declare that they stand beside his lordship on this question?

There is not a more vital or more serious local question before the community than the one that has received the attention of the court. A few individuals have had to undergo ordeals most unpleasant in the discharge of a public duty. It was thought that a current of slander and defamation unknown hitherto in the history of Canadian journalism might in some way be stopped. Stopped in some measure it will be. A very severe lesson has been administered; but we fear it will have no more than a temporary effect unless the leading residents conservatives show that his lordship's words have quickened them to a livelier and a profounder sense of the duty they owe their fellow-citizens and especially to the younger generation. Already "a great wrong has been done to the community it will take years to efface."

If a braggart rosy had paraded Kent street every Friday and indulged in coarse, indecent and reckless defamation of his neighbors the moral sense of the community would have been shocked and outraged beyond description, and the braggart would have been headed over to the noose for summary punishment. But the accidental control of a printing press and type appears in this case, in the eyes of many, to give the offender an immunity from the restraints of respectful journalism, and this man has been permitted to do his notorious and poisonous slanders and cast them forth upon the community. The performers have been applauded or condoned by many who ought to have had a higher sense of the responsibilities of citizenship, but who perhaps will not

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THE FRANCHISE ACT. In the house of commons last week Mr. Barron's enquiries resulted in the statement being extracted from the government that twelve revising officers for as many electoral districts had not yet forwarded to the clerk of the crown in chancery the voters' lists. The law requires such lists to be forwarded prior to the 31st of December, 1889. In April, 1890, such lists are behind, and the effect of this neglect is to require another law to be passed legalizing the statutory omission. This delay is likely to endanger the present year's revision, as each year's list must by statute be based upon that of the preceding year. Thus in a hundred different ways is demonstrated the impracticability of carrying out the franchise act, and that, too, though the cost to the country thus far has not been very far off one million dollars.

EDITORIAL NOTES. Mr. J. A. Barron's telling contribution to the tariff debate is elsewhere printed. The farmers should read it. Attorney-General Martin of Manitoba has withdrawn his resignation and will remain in the cabinet for some time longer.

The McKinley tariff bill has been reported from the committee to the house. All the clauses against Canadian productions are maintained. The Port Perry Standard says: "The effect of the duty imposed by the United States government on eggs is already quite apparent. Last year by this time Mr. Curta had over 20,000 dozen in the pickle, whilst this spring he hasn't as yet bought over a hundred dozen."

Mr. J. I. Hughes, the Toronto school inspector and equal rights agitator, has accepted the Tory nomination in Peel for the local house, and has opened the campaign. Mr. Kenneth Chisholm, the tried and popular reform member for Peel, would as soon have Mr. Hughes against him as anyone else.

Wheat has taken an advance of nearly 10c. in Chicago and New York. The European markets have not fully responded, but are firm, and it is thought a considerable part of the advance will be maintained. There has been a great deal of speculation in the American markets in consequence.

The tariff debate is progressing at Ottawa. A lively scene between Mr. Dewdney and Mr. Davin has taken place. Some new revelations in the Rykert case are making things interesting. Gen. Laurier has joined the Rykert Middleton brigade by getting mileage from London, Eng., where he claims now to reside, though his residence has been in Nova-Scotia.

The West Peterboro reform convention on Wednesday nominated Mr. J. R. Stratton, M. P. P., for another term as their representative in the Ontario legislature. Mr. Stratton fully deserved the honor, as he has made an excellent representative and has been untiring in his efforts to promote the material interests of the riding. His ability and public spirit render him worthy of hearty support. The convention was the largest and most enthusiastic ever held in the town. A masterly address on the public interest of the day was given by the Hon. A. S. Hardy. Mr. Stratton's reception was most enthusiastic and gratifying, and he can with confidence count on carrying the riding by a largely increased majority. His opponent is Mr. John Carnegie, who is now posing as an equal righter, but who a short time ago was an active circulator of "facts for Irish electors," and whose unpopularity has compelled him to adopt his present thin disguise.

A Lesson From the Street.—Judge Rose's condemnation of the Warder Journalist.

[From the Watchman, April 17th.] But the people have a duty to perform which they alone can perform. It is for them to examine their own selves and prove their own selves, and to see how much of the responsibility lies upon themselves for the objectionable features which had crept into and flourished in the journalism of this county, and which were so scathingly condemned by Justice Rose. Could such journalism as that condemned by his lordship have flourished for a day had public indignation met it at the outset? We think not. How have the printers of Victoria county discharged their duty in this regard during the past few years? One newspaper reaches farther than the votes of a dozen pulpits. How many of the latter have made a mild re-monstrance over it? But many we fear. The words that came from the impartial lips of the judge are proof that a great evil has been at work in the community; but it requires considerable courage, if we may so speak, to lead the van in the attack upon evil under certain circumstances. In all countries, those whose duty it was to have spoken out, but who remained silent, were open to the charge of cowardice and of being in the wrong. As it is, however, inevitable good must result to the public at large from the course of the past week in which the press of this county has been so severely rebuked. All parties and individuals will see their duty a little more clearly, and perhaps had the performers of it somewhat earlier and more what could.

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Lindsay, April 18, 1890.-95.

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