

CARDS AND CORKSHEETS.

The liberal politicians have always assumed, personally and through their newspaper organs, a high moral role and professed to be par-excellence, the right sort of people to rule the land and elevate the standard of public morality. Like the Pharisees in the days of old they pass by on the other side and thank the stars and high heavens that they are not as their political opponents are. The egotism and assumption of these partisan politicians should be stamped out by all intelligent people. These in power at Toronto assume to be rulers of the masses and masters of the situation. The conservative members of the legislature have found it difficult to get at details of public expenditures, but they forced items to be brought down at the session of a year ago. In the public accounts for 1896, passed in March last and recently published, appear some very interesting items which may shock good people. Here are a few from page 75 of that book:—

- 33 packs playing cards.....\$23.70.
 - 300 corksheets.....\$23.17.
 - 4 testaments.....\$1.70.
 - 999 pocket knives.....\$688.29.
 - 1028 pocket books.....\$732.83.
 - Supplies of lead pencils.....\$217.20.
- No one will object to the government purchasing lead pencils, pocket knives or testaments, for use in public service. But what do billions pay for them buying pocket books, devil's cards and disreputable corksheets with their money? Thousands of honest liberals throughout the land have believed that the government at Toronto was one favorably disposed towards Christianity and temperance but when they undertake to elevate the standard of morality with cards and corksheets what will be thought of them? Then look at the price paid. The cards must have been gilt-edged, enamel-faced and fancy figured backs, while the corksheets must have been nickel plated and gold tipped, as good ones can be bought in town at from five to ten cents each. The government has been extravagant and wasted some of the people's money. Still there is hope for these political parasites and the nation as they invested one dollar and seventy cents in religion.

OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

The educational system of the province of Ontario is undoubtedly the best in the world, thanks to the good work done by the late Rev. Egerton Ryerson, and yet there are some defects in connection with the same which should be remedied. The collection of a royalty by the government on all school books published and sold is nothing more or less than a tax on knowledge. It increases the cost of books to the purchaser, while a monopoly in school book publishing has been created. The frequent changes made in text books the frequent years was a source of much annoyance and extra expense to parents of school children, who were compelled to buy home libraries whether they wanted to or not. The evolving of a new theory in regard to natural science, or the discovery of another frog pond in Muskoka, was evidently deemed a sufficient reason by the minister of education in authorizing the issue of a new book or geography specifying the same. The imposition of from five to ten dollars on collegiate pupils entering for certificate examinations is considered undesirable by some, while many think the fee collected by the department should be refunded in cases where applicants fail to pass. The authorization of books to be issued being solely in the hands of the minister is much commented upon and severely criticized by the members of the teaching profession. The production of books for use in our educational institutions should be open to public competition, prizes to be given, then the best results would be attained. As it is, some personal or political favorite of the educational autocrat in power gets the benefits of an award for books compiled, while the modest teacher with probably more talent and greater literary ability receives no recognition whatever. Fault is found with the amount of money annually spent on higher education, as it is out of all proportion to that devoted to common school purposes. The school regulations issued under the supervision of the Hon. G. W. Ross, minister of education, is a remarkable and mysterious production. Many of the clauses are incomprehensible to the mind of ordinary mortals, and many a teacher has been sorely perplexed as to their meaning. When explanations have been asked for at times from the department of education the answers have seldom been satisfactory, indicating that those who should know what was meant or intended were as mystified as those who sought information. The unintelligibility of the regulations are recognized by all teachers, probably the only one who thinks there is no Chinese puzzle about them is the minister of education himself. The recent frequent alterations in the standards of certificate examinations too, is a subject of comment amongst those interested, as they seem to indicate uncertainty and a lack of definite purpose on the part of the controlling power. The great mistake made by the provincial government in regard to our educational system was in placing it under the control of a council of the ministers, creating a political head for a department which should have been kept entirely free from any taint of partisanship, but it is simply a part of the centralization of power plan adopted by the liberal administration. Mr. James P. Whitney advocates the placing of the system under the control of a council of public instruction or advisory board, and this proposition is highly approved of by the Rev. Principal Grant of Kingston, one of the most intellectual men in America, and by educationalists generally. It should now be endorsed by the people, when the desirable change would soon be effected.

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The letter of Mr. John McDonald, railway contractor and lumberman, of this town, in regard to the lumber wealth of the province and its mismanagement, should be read carefully by every citizen. There is much food for reflection. If our natural wealth is in lumber, where will the revenue come from in later years to pay for cost of local government. Will it not be by direct taxation?

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Mr. Blair long ago promised the Kingston people that the contract for making several locomotives for the Intercolonial railway should go to their city. Then he went to England. When he returned it was discovered that he had given the order to an American company. A deputation at once went from Kingston to protest, and insist that the promise made to the city works should be kept. They obtained little satisfaction. This shabby treatment

TAPPING TREASURES.

The control of the retail liquor traffic in Ontario was taken over by the provincial government, under the provisions of the Crook's Act, a little over twenty years ago. An army of license commissioners and paid inspectors came into existence. The one good feature in the measure was that it limited the number of licenses to be issued in municipalities in accordance with population. The objectionable points were that it added a lot of officials to the list of public servants, while the municipalities lost about one-half of the license fees. The government now rake in annually some \$289,000 of the liquor license money. The municipalities granting licenses are thus legally robbed by the central power at Toronto, which evidently passed the law in order to secure more revenue to meet increasing expenditure as well as to obtain greater control of the province. The total amount taken from the town of Lindsay since that act came in force is not less than \$25,000. It amounts to some fifteen hundred dollars a year at the present time, but was not as large when license fees were lower. In addition to taking money from the town the provincial government appointed a police magistrate whose salary is fixed at \$1,000 a year, the council or people having nothing whatever to say about it. Twenty dollars a week, not counting Christmas holidays, is a good amount to pay for disposing of a couple of cases a week, with lines aggregating less than three hundred dollars in the year. In twenty years the town has paid the government license fees and magistrate's not less than \$40,000 to \$45,000, a sum sufficient to pay for a good drainage system, to granulate pave a good portion of Kent and William streets, or buy up the best part of the waterworks. Your taxes are high, and it is not any wonder—the liberal government at Toronto has helped to make them so. This is a true bill. What do bonded taxpayers think of it? Under the matter over, and when the election comes on vote against the supporter of a government guilty of such legislative impositions.

A CHANGE WOULD DO GOOD.

"It is impossible for any body of men to be in power for a continuous period without getting lax in their ideas of public duty." "This is the innate tendency of mankind." Besides, long terms of office induce the members of governments to get the notion that they not only have a divine right to rule, but that instead of being the trustees and servants they are actually the masters, and all favours are to come from them. "This is a substitute of the whole theory of popular government, and it is in the interests of the people to have it clearly understood that governments are not Heaven-appointed rulers, but mere instruments of power, subject to the will and control of the electorate."—Attorney-General Langley (liberal), of the Nova Scotia government.

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created a strong feeling of righteous indignation among the citizens. But, of course, the great body of the liberal press defended the minister. One liberal journal, the Kingston Whig, however, denounced it in the strongest terms. Other deputations were sent to Ottawa. Sir Richard Cartwright, a Kingston man, was applied to, and the upshot of the matter was that Mr. Blair promised again that he would give some of the business to Kingston. But since then the Canadian engine works of that city have waited in vain for the order. One or two big Baldwin locomotives have been brought in from the United States for the government road, but none have been contracted for in the Canadian works. Now, after twice fooling them, Mr. Blair reappears with his promise, this time as a bid for votes for Mr. Harty. If the Kingston people are as spirited as they ought to be they will leave Mr. Harty at home by an overwhelming majority. At the liberal meeting at Kingston on Monday last Mr. Harty read a telegram from Hon. Mr. Blair, promising that three engines recently procured for the Canadian locomotive works to construct at once, with the additional promise that another order would follow after parliament had voted the necessary appropriation. Mail Empire

LETTER NO. 5.

AUSTRALIA.

COL. SAM. HUGHES' LETTER DESCRIBING THE FIJI ISLANDS. (Continued from last week.)

Yet, those very fellows, or many of them have even under British rule—as late as 1876—on the main island, and within a few years on the outer islands, been guilty of cannibalism. True, they no longer indulge in "missionary," for he comes rather costly; but they were until recently prone to eat the natives of the colonies whom they could capture, just to show their contempt for them.

There is an old song among the islands on that delectable subject:—
Wool loom so loo! Wool loo!
Loves white man and eat him too,
White man strong, but that no matter,
Brown man fat, but white man fatter;
Put him on hot stove and bake him,
Orlop and crackling soon we'll make him.
Round and round the dainty goes:
Kat his fingers at his toes;
His body shall our palates tickle,
And then we'll put his head in pickle.

On the white man dine and sup,
What you teeth and eat him up.
When a boy in Durham county I used to know a rhyme that ran:
"Buckwheat pancakes and Indian batter
Make white boys fat and darkeys fatter,"
etc.

but I never before knew that "Whitemans" made darkeys "fat and fatter."

However, cannibalism is unknown in any part of the islands and indeed crime is very rare. The laws are very strict both in relation to whites and Fijians. The prisoners are nearly all in for trifling offences, such as would not be noticed by more than a slight fine or thirty days' imprisonment in Canada. Many of them are for adultery, for failing to pay through their chief the tax, for leaving the tribe for a time without permission and similar petty offences. In Fiji as in Honolulu, there are no extensive prison walls and gratings. Indeed, the prisoners were seen all over the Warrimoo alone, they being there with the harbor officers; while on shore though some were seen under escort of native policemen, yet many were strolling about alone. There would be no use in their running away; they could not escape anywhere off the islands, so they just remain quiet and work out their sentences.

The Warrimoo had to take on a lot of bananas for New Zealand for Xmas. times. As the government is not entreprising enough to build a wharf for large vessels to lie at the Warrimoo had to be towed out in the bay. Scores of sailing craft from among all the islands had gathered in port ready to unload their cargoes on the great steamer. They came along side and carried bunches and boxes of bananas, pineapples, coconuts, mangoes, yams, etc., up the steps, up rope ladders, handed them from stage to stage till finally all were loaded. On checking off it was found that about six thousand bunches of 200 each, and two thousand boxes of four hundred each of bananas were on board, besides great quantities of other fruit, and a great quantity of cotton, beche-de-mer, fish, etc.

To watch those great, nearly naked bulgy-headed fellows handle boxes and bales in bare feet and bare shoulders was a sight. Yet they did fairly well. For a hard day's work such as that they got two shillings and two meals. English loafers could not do that. It is all the sovereign and the shilling, and really I like it as well as any other system.

Finally at 6:30 p.m., the Warrimoo was ready for sea. As the steamed out of the harbor under direction of Commander Hay, for he is such an expert seaman that the various ports have commissioned him a pilot for each harbor, the scene looked even more charming than in the morning under the glare of mid-day sun. The lofty verdant clad mountains, the fertile palm plate, valleys and slopes, the cottages covered hills, the fruit boats and steamers dotting the harbor, with the early glimmer of lights ashore and the innocent native groups gazing wonderingly after the Warrimoo, combined to make up a scene fit for a master artist's eye and pencil.

I left Suva most favorably impressed with the importance of the islands and colonies of the Fiji group. Everything pleased me except what I heard of the governor. No one seemed to have a good word to say of him.

There seems great chance for development in Fiji. First there should be a large wharf extended into deep water. It would be an easy problem to make one of coral concrete that would last until Gabriel's trumpet would be heard over the neighboring mountains. The trade of the port demands it.

Then roads should be more generally opened through the islands, and the natives should be encouraged to labor. As now they are not required to work and there is little necessity for their laboring. But unless the Fijians take to labor, he will give to the Hindu, Japanese, Chinese, and other Pacific islanders supplanting him, and he will become like the dodo a rare variety. It would be for the advantage of both Britain and the natives too were they encouraged to labor, or even be permitted to do so. Now the chief of each tribe must be consulted, after permission to employ them has first been obtained from the govern-

ment of the colony; then the laborer gets only a small fraction of the pay given for his labor. The chief plan of government will never preserve the Fijian race much less make it increase.

The enterprise of Mr. Joaks, too, greatly pleased me. He is in the shipping business. In this one shipment he had gathered in from all the islands on a short notice, for the order only arrived a few days previously, the fruit in excellent condition. There was great disappointment in Suva and the islands generally over the failure of the Warrimoo to bring in 400 tons of flour from Canada. It had been delayed by the wharves in the mountains and will follow in four weeks. To prevent "short business" in the Fiji Islands the Warrimoo left off part of a lot of flour for Wellington, N.Z., and thus set the people at ease.

It is Mr. Joaks' intention to visit Canada at an early date to look into the possibilities of trade between the two colonies. The various railways, boards of trade, manufacturers, millers and shippers generally, as well as the government of Canada should afford Mr. Joaks every opportunity to secure the best information regarding Canada it will be possible to furnish him. He is a shrewd Englishman and has done well in Suva. But he wishes to increase the trade between Canada and Fiji and so do all Canadians. Therefore, he will be welcomed. For "every little makes the muckle."

I hope to have another day in Fiji returning and to learn more of the colony—of interest to Canadians.

The Warrimoo struck a cold belt on Sunday which continued till New Zealand was sighted. The first sight of New Zealand was had about daylight on Tuesday morning, 14th Dec. The course to Wellington which is on Cook's Straits between the two great islands, lies generally east of the island. Though slightly north yet the sea is generally better. East Cape, a bold promontory and island loomed up grand early on Tuesday, and all day long with a spanking breeze astern the Warrimoo has swept along the coast. Late to-night or to-morrow morning will find the Warrimoo in the harbor of Wellington, the capital of New Zealand. A description of it will appear later.

The brief stays at Honolulu and Suva proved great rest to the passengers. They seemed like oasis in a desert. To-day New Zealand's fine bold shores re-vegetate all and the sea in its magnificent colony will, though not long, be certainly refreshing. I had a commission from my friend, Miss Treleven of Cambridge, to call on a relative at or near Christchurch, but as it will not be possible I mailed Miss Treleven's parcel from Fiji. It is now in the mails on this steamer. I also have a letter written to my good friend Finley, formerly of Lindsay, which I shall mail from Wellington.

It is now five o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 14th here. In Lindsay it is about 11:30 on Monday night Dec. 13th. A few days ago I obtained permission to go on the "bridge" to have the sextant, charts, chronometers, currents, winds, etc., explained to me. The second officer, a most intelligent well read Englishman, Mr. Hammon, took special trouble to give me an insight into all I could learn. I have rarely passed a more enjoyable two hours, and certainly hope that Mr. Hammon may soon command a ship of his own as he is in every sense well fitted therefor.

One warm night in the tropics the stewards got up a minstrel concert and displayed considerable talent. Stewards as a rule on fine steamers are of good English families, and this is no exception. One noticeable feature of the entertainment was the contrast between the London and the New York comic song. The English song was genuine fun, clean and elevating; while the New York Irish was low, disgusting and vulgar.

The Fijians are truly loyal to Britain and on several occasions have expressed through their chiefs a desire to assist the Mother Land in expeditions to tropical lands. They are proven warriors and are well drilled by their chiefs and the British officers attached. A large contingent—fully five thousand splendid men could readily be had from Fiji in case of emergency.

The Warrimoo is now in Cook's Straits and nearing Wellington. There the first news since Nov. 22nd from Canada or for that matter from anywhere will be received. The shores of Cook's Straits are bold and high. The jagged peaks show them of volcanic action, but the grassy uplands, tree topped hills and broad valleys indicate rich farming lands. In a brief space of time, however, I shall set foot on New Zealand and see a few sights on my own account, though a tourist along shore can form inadequate notions of the capacities and capabilities of a country.

ON THE RAGED EDGE.

According to the statement of the Hon. Mr. Harcourt, the total revenue of the province of Ontario since Confederation in 1867 is \$89,385,700, while the total expenditures amounted to \$89,131,561, leaving a balance of \$254,139. The money realized from the sale of annuities or mortgage notes amounting to nearly a million dollars, is counted in as revenue by the government, a most extraordinary thing in finance, as it represents a debt. When the liberal's took office twenty-seven years ago there was a cash surplus on hand of \$4,297,878 made up as follows:

Convertible stocks.....	\$2,747,704
Cash in Banks.....	1,550,174

During their term in office the liberals have expended some millions of dollars more than the ordinary revenue, the cash surplus having been wiped out and a debt of several millions created. Fifty-year annuities were issued so that railway certificates falling due could be taken up. These annuities form a sort of renewal notes and postpone payment. The railway bonds and annuities outstanding will amount to \$5,046,911, by the time they are paid off on the plan adopted by the government. In the twenty-seven years the natural assets, (timber wealth), have been reduced by twenty-five or thirty million dollars, although Premier Hardy placed it below the first named amount. His figures in this respect, as well as those in regard to the Sanfield surplus, have been recently printed by me. The government claims to have a surplus of assets—not a cash surplus—of some five million dollars, and it is in this that their financial juggling comes in. The trust funds were in the hands of the Dominion government when the liberals took office, and consisted largely of money realized from the sale of office reserve funds. They amount to \$4,200,000. In 1885 an extra subsidy of \$1,000,000 was given to Ontario by the Dominion government. This amount has been capitalized by the ex-Chief Harcourt and made to appear as \$2,800,000 in the surplus of assets. A large pull was made on the trust

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A. O. HOGG,

AGENT, 187-1/2 ST. GEORGE, OAKWOOD.

funds a dozen years ago, but the government still claim to have to their credit five and a quarter millions. Notwithstanding the special taxation resorted to by the government in order to raise increased revenue the province is on the ragged edge financially, a thing rapidly approaching direct taxation, a thing not at all to be desired. It is high time there was a change in provincial management. What do taxpayers think of it?

The Snake Editor.

Doubtless a large circle of anxious friends are worrying over the sudden and complete disappearance of the snake editor from these columns. Some are doubtless waiting in breathless suspense to hear of his demise. But there is no cause for alarm; "he is not dead, but sleeping." At last he was sleeping for a week or so. Yes! the fighting editor put him to sleep, closed up both his eyes in a workmanlike manner. On coming to, the perpetrator of those snake articles decided that literature (if this includes pugilism) was not his calling, and took up the stick the printer's stick. In this he fully agrees with him, and consider his laying down the pen for the stick a commendable action. In a week's time he has made rapid progress in the printing profession and he is now so well acquainted with the type case that he can readily lay his hand on the "4's" and spaces. But perhaps the most important accomplishment he has acquired is the ability to detect by the steady glint in the foreman's eyes the unprintable about to overtake him.

Deaths.
MORRIS.—At Inlay, Fenelon, on Thursday, February 3rd, 1898, Dolly, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Morris, aged 1 year and 6 months.
REK.—At the Methodist parsonage, Welcoming, on Tuesday, February 1st, Edna Wade, wife of Mr. Isaac Rek, formerly of Lindsay, aged 83 years.

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Try our CRAMCOAL for kindling and Summer Use.

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The Victoria Farmer

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1898.

A union hearts and a union of hands
A union nose and a union of eyes
A union of bones and a union of lands
And the flag, Barrier Union, forever.

THE NEW VOTE.

In the coming provincial elections there will be quite a large new vote, many of the young men exercising the right of the franchise for the first time in their lives as becometh men free-born. These first voters should be careful and make no mistake at the start, but carefully consider the principles and motives guiding and controlling the two great political parties of Canada in conjunction with the general condition of the country and its needs and requirements. There is much in the spirit and essence of genuine liberalism to attract the mind of the young man who wishes to enjoy the fullest freedom without restriction or restraint, but it is absolutely necessary that there should be a certain amount of conservatism in the mind of government to render the State stable and safe. The radicalism that would rip up and destroy every existing thing would not be of benefit to any land. The liberal politicians of Canada soon to have adopted the motto of "Government by the party, with the party and for the party" not the people and are willing to allow allies to come in and walk away with as much of our natural wealth as they wish. Willard Laurier believes in independence for Canada, and may yet try to gain it with his famous Saskatchewan market, while Premier Hardy runs Ontario for the benefit of political friends and Michigan lumbermen. The liberal-conservative party is pledged to British connection, believing in a united empire with a thoroughly patriotic national policy. Canada for Canadians and British people. They are loyal to the flag of their fathers, and true to the traditions of the empire. Their motto is "Conserve the right, reform the wrong." They believe in equal rights and equal laws for all, irrespective of race or religion. The new voter should have no hesitation whatever in allying himself with the liberal-conservatives, whose policy in the past brought the Dominion of Canada into existence, giving the country a backbone of steel and making it the great transcontinental highway for the trade of the east and the west. The young man who drops in with the liberals at the present time endorses their open-market policy and expressly endorses public expenditure, together with their abandonment of principle and political favoritism.