

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS

Change—T. Crosby.
Coal—A. Muldoon.

The Liberal.

RICHMOND HILL, Thursday, Aug. 6, '85

RIEL.

'Guilty, with a recommendation to mercy.' Such is the verdict rendered by the jury empanelled to try Riel. That the Metis chief should be found guilty is perfectly natural, for his crime was open and notorious. The grounds on which the clemency of the Crown has been invoked are not so clear. The jurors must have been moved by one of three things. (1.) Riel's offence was due to the gross and flagrant injustice of the Government of the day. (2.) He was held to be not responsible for his actions, either because insane, or at least a 'crank.' (3.) The jurors fell victims to a gust of that vapid, silly sentimentalism which has saved the necks of so many scoundrels.

The last consideration may safely be dismissed, because it is unsupported by any evidence. The reason for this startling appendix to an inevitable decision must be sought in either the first or second of the motives above adduced. Frankly, if the second contains the needed explanation, the safeguards of human life will have received a tremendous shock. Not a word which Riel has written or spoken, not an action of his, can entitle him to the mercy which is justly extended to one whose deeds proceed from that terrible calamity, the overthrow of the mind's sovereignty. So far as may be judged from the confessedly imperfect knowledge of the North West rebellion, it was sagaciously planned, thoroughly worked up, and failed only because every struggle against the barriers of fate of necessity fails. Had the Halfbreeds and Indians been well supplied with food, arms and ammunition, although the result would undoubtedly have been the same, the sum of our losses would have reached a figure appalling even to the most callous. Everything, in fine, proves that, if Riel be mad, his madness does not lack method. And even if considerable mental aberration can be established, the history of the past five months shows that, at most, such aberration falls under the head of marked eccentricity, a characteristic almost always found in those who dare to leave the beaten paths of men. *Riel's insanity or crankism* is vain as a plea for commutation of sentence.

But if the recommendation to mercy was based on the assumption that the Ottawa Government was primarily and radically responsible for the rebellion, if it is intended as a deliberate expression of belief that the mismanagement of affairs in the North-West was so great that an ignorant and excitable population could not be expected to resist the incentive to take up arms; if, finally, it is to be taken as faith in the doctrine that when constitutional means to obtain a redress of grievances have failed, armed resistance is not only justifiable, but even natural, then, we say, we must pause before we scout this recommendation, for it will be irresistibly borne on our minds that Riel is only the victim of tyrannical circumstances, created by one who took an oath to afford to all men the protection of the law, but who has been found to have been smiting contrary to the law.

MR. THOMAS WHITE, M. P.

We may accept as settled that Mr. Thomas White, the member for Cardwell, is now of the Cabinet. His portfolio, pending further shuffling, is the department of the Interior. In this allotment, he is fortunate, for, however insignificant he may be in ability and moral tone, he can scarcely fail to be an improvement on his predecessor, that torpid Colossus of ignorance, stupidity and flunkysm, Sir David Macpherson. The political epitaph of the latter, if honestly written, should prove a warning to those simple people who think that a man's mind is in direct ratio to his bulk, wealth and asinine pretensions.

We cannot congratulate the country on this latest addition to the Cabinet. It is true that Mr. White will not be any disturbing element among his colleagues. He will certainly be found to be another example of the fondness of like for like. But Mr. White is not the man to

attract admiration and esteem. He is, in fact, one of the worst specimens of those toad-eating, brazen-faced harpies who are feeding on the vitals of Canada. Five times, if we mistake not, he was a candidate at the polls, before he obtained a seat in Parliament. Yet this did not restrain him from the impudent effrontery of sneering at a Liberal whose election had been preceded by two defeats. His advent in the House of Commons clashed with his most particular hobby, the making of money, for all the world knows that Mr. White is the editor and proprietor of the *Montreal Gazette*. But Mr. White is not a man to be daunted by trifles. With an exquisite sense of honor and propriety, therefore, he turned the *Gazette* business into a joint-stock company, in which he and his brother Richard held nearly all the shares, and then his maw could, within the law, take in all the government pap (in this case, printing) which truckling or threatening could extort. We need not remind our readers that last year the *Gazette* received from Ottawa between ten and twenty thousand dollars for printing, real or supposititious. Indeed, Mr. White, is a Sir Charles Tupper in miniature. On a small scale, he recalls the 'stretcher's' fluency, loudness, coarseness and recklessness. In ignoble greed, he is rather above than below Sir Charles. The latter, it is but just to say, is incapable of Mr. White's fawning and cringing; the 'Chieftain' himself has no terrors for him.

Such is the new Minister of the Interior. We boldly ask whether or not the Halfbreeds and Indians have cause for rejoicing at this auspicious change.

HOW IS IT?

The celebrated French philosopher, Rousseau, wrote an essay in which he attempted to prove that modern civilization, far from advancing man socially and morally, has retarded him. In this writing, he exhibited an ingenuity, an eloquence and wit of which only a man of genius is capable. It is one hundred years ago since the essay appeared, and the nineteenth century is the very embodiment of those forces whose action he deplored. Never, in the annals of the world, was society more complex, never was it more intellectual, never so unbued with the spirit and ability of discovery. All men are known to all men. The most remote parts of the world are within easy hailing distance. The deeds of one quarter of the globe are known an hour or two after they happen in the opposite quarter. Did we not know the inventive skill of man, we might exclaim that we had found all. But the probability is that the twentieth century will be as far in advance of ours as ours is in advance of the eighteenth.

Yet to him who views the matter closely, Rousseau's conclusions will appear not without a modicum of truth. However much the eloquent author of the Social Contract may have confounded cause and effect, he was right in so far as he asserted that the spiritual progress of man was at a standstill, while his material progress was making gigantic strides. How far the doctrine of compensation affords an explanation of this, remains a mystery. 'Tis true that what we gain in one direction we lose in another. Are we then to believe that it is impossible for the material and spiritual to advance with equal steps? Is devotion to the one incompatible with due attention to the other? The benevolent christian cries out No. But experience is far from being on his side. Let us take a single example:

The sacredness of truth has almost ceased to be a factor in the trading world. Our food is grossly adulterated, our manufactures are hardly kept pure by the most lynx-eyed scrutiny. The maxim of producing at the smallest cost and selling at the highest price has been pushed until there has arisen a new word to describe a bad state of things, and that word is, *shoddy*. He who runs may see that nothing is so pure, so good, so holy that men do not try to turn a penny from it. Even the poor and ignorant sick, who stand most in need of fair play, are made the victims of the quack and impostor. And only the other day we observed a flaunting advertisement in which a man proclaimed that, out of consideration to the Volunteers, he had resolved to reduce his prices twenty-five per cent. Kind, very. We are borne to the conclusion that Rousseau's essay is not altogether wide of the mark.

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IMMENSE BARGAINS TO BE HAD AT THE TREMENDOUS REDUCTIONS!

NOW GOING ON AT SNEATH & GRENNAN.

SPRING 1885!

NEW PRINTS!

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An Immense Stock at the

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CARRIAGE BUILDERS,

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Repairing done with taste & despatch

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At the lowest prices.

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