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*Board of Works*

# THE DISPATCH.

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## THE MUSINGS OF THE IMP.

### IS AN EVENING WITH BURNS WELL SPENT?

**The Imp Goes to the Ball.—He Soliloquizes on the Weather.—Runs up Against a Heretic who Floors Him with an Astounding Question.**



I hear that a Woodstock society is to spend an evening with Burns this week. It is to be hoped that they will not follow the riotous precedents established with regard to these evenings in his society,

by the festive poet when he was in the flesh. Augustine Birrell says, "His countrymen love Burns because he is full of a peculiar kind of strong drink called whiskey," and it sounds reasonable. He certainly did love the stimulant. If he had lived in Woodstock he would have been a chronic witness, and a regular bonanza for the inspector. It looks a little incongruous for a religious society to celebrate his memory, when they reprobate the boys for celebrating his methods.

I was allowed to go to the ball last week, so I meandered up to circulate for a few hours with the nobility. I know very well that it is not considered good form to appear to have a good time. The correct thing among members of the first families is to put on an air of being bored, as though one has that tired feeling, for which there are so many cures afloat to day. But I am as one who knoweth the correct thing and doeth it not, for I spent a most enjoyable evening, and am sure that almost everyone found it out. I know it is not the thing for the upper classes to enjoy life, that only the lower classes do that sort of thing, but I can't help it.

What an effect the weather has upon people? Now, take a bright, frosty day, like Monday, with the sun shining its brightest. People have to stir about. There is no loafing on the corners in such weather, and the result is that the blood circulates freely, and everyone takes a more or less roseate view of life. Compare the dispositions of people on a rainy, drizzly winter day. Everyone's mood becomes as the day, dark, unpromising, dreary. Commercial travellers will leave town without seeing anyone, rather than attempt to do business on a dark stormy day. Climatic influence is a very strong influence indeed.

To sit down in a chair without an object is to jump into a thicket of temptations. A vacant hour is always the devil's hour. When time hangs heavy, the wings of the spirit flap heavily and slow. Then it is that a book is a strong tower, nay, a very church, with angels lurking among the leaves as if they were so many niches. Reading helps to make conversation harmless, by making it less petty and censorious, by furnishing us with other topics than our neighbors' faults and foibles. It is very hard for a person who does not like reading to talk much in company without sinning. Furthermore, a taste for reading often hinders our taking the wrong side in practical questions which are mooted in the world, but bear upon the church. It does this either by the information it has enabled us to obtain on the subject itself, or by making our instincts accurate and sensitive through our familiarity with right principles. —Faber.

I met a man the other day who ought to be suppressed or broken on the wheel or beat at the stake to convince him that he is heretic, and to show him the immeasurable superiority of our orthodoxy. The man I met is an agnostic and if he had lived in the good old days when witches were burnt would have been gently (?) convinced of the error of his ways in the way I have indicated. But alas for orthodoxy, there are in these degenerate days, no thumb-screws, nor racks, nor iron beds, or boots to keep our doxies from straying into the fields of heterodoxy. I will not sully these pages or pollute your morals by relating all the heresies of this heretic, but will give you an extract from his corrupt code of ethics, that you may see how far afield a man may stray who scarcely ever attends more than one church, when he might attend a half dozen or more. I met this agnostic and he knocked me down with the question, "What difference is there between the God you worship and the gods of the heathen? They

have gods of lust, thieving and lying, and you have to help your God by lying for him. Your God tells you the end justifies the means. Your God is so weak that he borrows the devil's weapons with which to fight his battles. And then you cant and whine, and tell us that truth is stronger than falsehood, that right is stronger than might, and you don't believe what you profess to teach. You lie to catch a rumseller, and then instead of telling us it is wrong, you tell us you have done a righteous act. Did you ever read Dr. McDonald's words, 'I would not favor a fiction to keep a world out of hell.' The hell that a lie would keep any man out of is doubtless the very best place for him to go to. 'It is truth, yes the truth that saves the world.' When the agnostic talked such blasphemy, I passed him by and went into several churches and thanked God that I was not as other men were, not even as this agnostic.

### Board of Trade.

The Board of Trade had a very interesting meeting on Tuesday evening of last week. The attendance was very good, and the discussion of various matters was carried on quite energetically.

A debate of some length and of much interest was carried on with respect to the adoption of standard time, and the bill was taken by the horns in a motion, unanimously carried, that the board petition the town council, asking them to adopt standard time. Another question which the board dealt with was the formation of a provincial board. The president intimated that the formation of a maritime board was considered impracticable, but the St. John board is anxious to sound the various local boards on the question of a provincial union. A resolution was passed favoring the formation of a provincial board.

W. P. Jones raised the question of water rates, urging that the charge to manufacturers was too high, and he thought they ought to be given the same rates as were accorded to the C. P. R.

W. Fisher supported this contention and it was decided to move in the matter at next meeting.

Julius T. Garden introduced the question of town assessment. He thought there should be a change made, such as would make the assessed value something approaching the real value. He contended that the taxation would not be raised, and at the same time the rate of taxation would be reduced, and we would appear better before the financial world, than under our present valuation. This matter was left over for further consideration until next meeting of the board.

### Mock Parliament.

The speaker being absent the hon. member from Alberta took the chair, until the speaker arrived. Upon orders of the day being called the house went into committee of the whole, Mr. Raymond in the chair, to consider the bill to reduce the postage on letters from 3c. to 2c. The bill was taken up by sections, the first section was passed by the casting vote of the chairman, after a stormy debate, during which the government used all the powers of vituperation and brow beating for which they are justly celebrated. Hon. members from Annapolis and Hamilton excelling even themselves in that respect. Section 2 was taken up, and an additional section was moved that no letters of any kind be allowed to pass through the mails free of postage. Committee rose and reported progress, and the house adjourned after a lively and interesting session.

### A Popular Poem.

The poem on the death of Sir John Thompson, written by Mr. A. M. Belding of the St. John Sun staff, has been issued in a neat and tastily gotten up leaflet, on the first page of which is a good picture of the late premier. Mr. Belding has, in the poem, risen in a truly poetic spirit to the solemnity of the event, and has written something which must have an assured position in every future collection of Canadian poetry. Lady Aberdeen, on reading it, at once gave it her warmest recognition, and even better, bought two hundred copies of the pamphlet.

### Death of Mrs. James Carr.

A sadness fell over Woodstock on Sunday morning when it was learned that Mrs. Carr, wife of Councillor James Carr, was dead. She had been suffering for a long time from heart trouble, and though it could hardly be hoped that she would live through the winter, yet when death did come it came as a shock. Mrs. Carr is a daughter of John Stewart and wife of Watson Settlement who are both living. She leaves behind her a husband, one daughter and five sons. Stewart Carr who is in New York will be home on today's express. The funeral will be today at 2.30 p. m.

## NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL.

### SPECULATION STILL RIFE AS TO WHEN ELECTION WILL BE

#### Governor General and the Carnival.—The Premier's Position.—New Parties in the Field.—Quebec and the North-West.—Who Will Win?

OTTAWA, Jan. 19.—The capital is divided just now over two exciting events, the carnival which is to open in a day or two, and the coming election. The governor-general comes in for some rather sound criticism for refusing his patronage to the carnival. It is thought that the mourning for the late Sir John Thompson has been quite long enough, and that the carrying out of a carnival, long advertised, can in no way suggest dishonor to his memory. But, while the carnival is the local affair of interest, the lobby of the Russell is the scene of much animated discussion on a more serious question. A few weeks ago almost anyone who was supposed to know, would have said that a short session would be held and a general election followed immediately. To be sure, the government does not have all to say on the matter of the length of a session, and while the men in power may wish to time it, so as to conveniently make the date of the election fit in with the conclusion of the work of the revisors of the lists, the opposition may not be of the same mind, and history invariably shows that when an opposition is bent on obstruction it can pretty effectually carry out its purpose.

At the time of mailing this letter the chances are strongly in favor of an appeal to the people early in March. Of course the cabinet has not revealed its intention and this can only be taken as surmise. It is undeniable that when the budget speech will be delivered, there will be found to be a pretty heavy deficit, and however justifiable a deficit may be at times, and under certain circumstances, it is not a popular thing to defend in the heat of an election. On the other hand, if as it is prophesied, times are likely to improve, the government would perhaps show worldly wisdom by delaying the appeal to the people and letting the business improvement and consequent good nature of the people counteract the weakening effect of a deficit.

Sir MacKenzie Bowell is far from a strong man physically. It is not a very long time since he was taken ill, and for a day or two his recovery was a matter of doubt. Moreover, he is an old man, and had just got comfortably settled in the senate—a well earned retreat—when the sudden call to assume the leadership came. It is no secret that there are dissensions in the cabinet, and the new premier is undoubtedly having his hands full keeping all the chargers in harness.

The unexpected always, or almost always, happens in elections, and this coming contest will have its quota of surprises. Quebec and Ontario were about divided after the election of 1891, and, as you remember, it was the maritime provinces, the west, and British Columbia which gave the Conservatives a majority. There is a new element in the field, which has not figured on previous occasions—the Patrons of Industry. How long they will remain a party select and separate it is difficult to determine, but at present they remain sternly and uncompromisingly aloof from the old combatants. As they succeeded in making such an impression in the Ontario elections, no one will be surprised to find them electing quite a few representatives to the Dominion house. It may be prophesied with a pretty sure indication of the wisdom of the prophecy, that whichever of the parties has the reins in the coming parliament, the majority will not be anything like as heavy as it has been in past parliaments. Canada is simply having the experience which has become an order of things in Great Britain and the United States, viz., the multiplication of parties. Besides the Patrons, there is the McCarthyite element, but if this element succeeds in holding its own, and continues represented by Mr. McCarthy and his *Fidus Achates* Col. O'Brien it will be doing quite as well as most people predict for it.

In Quebec province there are indications that do not promise the very best things for the government. The strong feeling of anti-Mercierism has died out with Mercier's death, if it had not pretty well expired before its victim. The local Quebec government is not too popular, as some recent bye-elections have plainly shown, and as Quebec Conservatives and Liberals stick to the same lines in federal as in local contests, the unpopularity of the local government may have a serious significance in the Dominion election. The Northwest and British Columbia

members will hardly present such an unbroken rank of government supporters as hitherto. Tariff reform is a potent cry in the Northwest, and the erratic Mr. Davin is endeavoring to keep his place with his constituents by posing as a determined advocate of tariff reduction. But, while I have spoken of forces likely to work against the government, I must not fail to place on its side the vast power of the manufacturers of the country. They are a very potent lot of individuals at election times, and when they feel that perhaps their existence is at stake will pull together and work with a will.

I will deal with other elements in the situation in another letter.

ONLOOKER.

### The Ball.

The Ball in Graham's Opera House on Wednesday evening was a pleasant social affair. The managing committee Messrs. Graham, Merritt, Stewart, had made ample preparations for the evening and were rewarded by seeing everyone enjoy themselves. Jas. S. Creighton, L. R. McLaren and Grenville James were the reception committee and W. C. Everett was floor manager. There were present about one hundred ladies and gentlemen. The dances were chiefly of the kind called round, there were only three square dances on the programme. There were more new dresses worn than at any dance for a long time. The prevailing colours were pink and blue. As the fighting editor is away on his summer holidays the name of the belle of the ball will not be given.

At eleven o'clock the supper room was a scene of activity. At twelve o'clock it was a scene of dejection, and the dance was resumed. Robinson's orchestra of three pieces poured forth their dulcet strains from the stage. It was about two o'clock when floor manager Everett informed the multitude that the lights would go out in just about eight minutes. This made it seem desirable to go home, and home everyone went. After talking it over all day Thursday it has been decided that the dance was a fine success.

### To Sue The Company.

Prosper Curriere one of the men injured on the Woodstock bridge when its erection was commenced has brought an action for damages against the bridge company. It will be recollected that the accident was said to have been caused by the loosening of the guys which held the traveller in position, before the men Curriere and Lyness, who were working on top of it, had come down. They fell a distance of seventy feet, and were laid up here all summer and autumn. Lyness has gone home to the old country, but Curriere is in the hospital at Montreal, and it is he who is bringing the action against the company which will probably be tried this week. It is possible that witnesses may be taken from Woodstock to give evidence in Montreal.

### Woodstock Mails.

On Monday, 21st inst., and until further notice, mails will close at Woodstock Post office as follows:

Mails for points south, east, west and	
Upper Provinces .....	10.10 a. m.
Mails for Millville and Fredericton ..	12.20 p. m.
“ North, including registers ..	12.50 p. m.
“ All points south, east and	
west, including registers ..	10.00 p. m.
All matter intended for transmission by first mail should be posted at least 15 minutes previous to hour of closing.	
Mails will be due as follows:	
From south, east and west ..	5.45 a. m.
“ Fredericton and Millville ..	10.45 a. m.
“ South, East and West, and Upper Provinces ..	1.00 p. m.
“ North ..	10.17 p. m.

### Looks Like An Election.

There was a forenoon meeting of the Cabinet on Friday which Premier Bowell attended. According to the statement of one of Ministers the question of dissolution was not discussed. They sat until after two o'clock, and did not meet again next day. It is ascertained in other quarters that nothing of moment was done and Mr. D'Alton McCarthy who went west expressed the opinion that there will be a general election before another session and smacked his lips over it too. A gentleman stated Monday that it had been given out to a faithful few that there would be a general election before March 20th.

### Commercial Bank.

A statement of the condition of Commercial Bank, St. John's, N.F., was presented to the shareholders the other day. It showed assets worth 48 cents on the dollar. The meeting of the shareholders was very stormy and the directors were denounced in strong language. The five directors who composed the board over-drew \$1,250,000 and the total over-drafts amounted to a little over \$2,000,000. Prosecution of the directors of the Union Bank has not yet been begun, but the government has the matter under advisement.

## THE ADVENT CONFERENCE.

### A SUCCESSFUL MEETING OF MINISTERS AND MEMBERS.

#### Senator Boulton's Advice to the Northwest Patrons.—Free Trade Advocated.—The Armenian Question.—Turkish Despotism.

The New Brunswick Christian Advent Conference opened its quarterly meeting in the Advent chapel, Woodstock, on last Thursday evening, the 17th, with a social service led by Elder Hastings Kearney. The preachers present were Elders Joshua Denton, John Hutchinson, Hastings Kearney, Moses Corliss and Mrs. A. Wood. Representatives were present from the churches at Jacksonville, Jacksontown, Simonds, Peel, Milltown, and from Washburn, Me.; Ludlow, Me.; Bangor, Me., and Calais, Me.

On Friday morning there was a social service led by Elder Kearney. In the afternoon Elder Corliss preached.

At the Friday evening service Mrs. Wood preached a sermon on practical living. The sermon was followed by a short social service.

The social service on Saturday morning was led by Elder Denton. Elder Hutchinson preached on Saturday afternoon, an earnest sermon and full of spiritual life, after which the business meeting was held, presided over by President Hastings Kearney. On Saturday evening Elder Kearney preached.

The social service on Sunday morning was well attended and full of life. Elder Denton preached in the afternoon to large and attentive congregation, after which the Lord's Supper was partaken of. On Sunday evening Mrs. Wood preached. At the social service following three converts asked for the prayers of the congregation and gave testimony, and four others expressed a desire for greater spiritual blessings. The meetings will be continued every evening this week.

The chapel at Woodstock is free of debt and the congregation have about \$100 on hand for missionary work for the ensuing quarter. The officers of the conference are Elder Hastings Kearney, president; C. D. Dickinson, treasurer; and Harry Reed, secretary. Elder Hastings Kearney was appointed to the missionary work for the coming quarter.

### Favors Free Trade.

The following resolution was introduced by Senator Boulton at the meeting of the Patrons of Industry of the Province of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories in Brandon in annual convention:—"That in the opinion of this meeting the political principle to contend for at the present time is free trade. That free trade will remove taxation, not only from the necessities of life, but the necessities of labor, by which alone the productive power of the country can be increased, through the economy of machinery, tools and materials, which contribute to the support of the masses; that free trade which leaves to each individual the best opportunity for exercising his individual energy in whatever sphere he may find himself placed, and beyond the legislative interference that seeks to divert them from himself into the hands of the monopolists, the experience of protection having clearly proved that the laborer does not get all he earns."

### The Armenians.

Letters from sources in Turkey believed to be trustworthy represent that robbery and the exaction of taxes have caused such an exodus that some villages in the country between Van and Erzeroum are almost depopulated. There is uneasiness in Bitlis as to the safety of that city. Scrutiny of the mails by the Turkish authorities continues, and some letters addressed to officials of the United States are failing to arrive. The authorities are taking every precaution to prevent accounts of the massacre south of Moosh from reaching the outside world. To what extent Armenian agitation provoked the massacre it is difficult to determine. For a year or more there seems to have been an Armenian from Constantinople staying in the region as an agitator. For a long time he skilfully evaded his pursuers but was at last caught and taken at Bitlis. He demanded to be taken to Constantinople and to the Sultan, and it is said that he is now living at the capital receiving a large salary from the Government. Evidently he has turned State's evidence. The last accounts of the massacre state that 40 villages were destroyed and it is probable that 16,000 at least were killed. The lowest estimate is 10,000 and many put it much higher. This is allowing for more fugitives than it seems possible can have escaped.