

THE PROVINCE

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THE AMERICAN SETTLER.

The American invasion of the Northwestern prairies of Canada continues and gives promise of increasing. The dispatched of Saturday last note the acquisition of thirty sections of land in the Tramping Lake district west of Saskatoon, as the result of a visit by a party of Americans, and the members of the party are quoted as saying that they are but the advance guard of an army of settlers headed for the fertile stretches of Saskatchewan.

To those interested in the speedy occupation of our great wheat producing areas by an intelligent, industrious and thrifty population, and by a people speaking our own language, possessing our own ideals, appreciating our own institutions and practising our own customs, and to the full therefore representing exactly the class of settlement we desire, nothing could be more satisfactory than this American influx. And in addition to all these qualifications as citizens they possess another which makes them especially acceptable at this stage of western progress and development – they are all, or nearly all, expert farmers, men who have been trained to the occupation and who therefore can at once make the most of the opportunities offered them by a rich virgin soil for the creation of wealth for themselves and the country.

And apart, too, from the value they will be to the country as producers of wealth they will constitute a new element in the political life of the West, at least of the middle West. These people, reared under as free institutions as we can find anywhere in Canada, and accustomed to take a keen interest in the administration of public affairs, will not be satisfied tamely to submit to the arbitrary dictum which robbed the new provinces of their full powers, of their perfect equality with the other members of the Confederation. Having accepted the invitation to become Canadian citizens, and having taken the

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oath of allegiance they will not be prepared to sit idly by and regard with unconcern the Government of the country. They will insist on participating to the full in the political issues which will arise and they will be resolute that the provincial community of which they are members shall not be relegated to a subordinate or unworthy position in determining the future of the Dominion. Their loyalty to the country of their adoption will be an active and not a passive loyalty and it will be all the better for that.

They will not tolerate conditions such as they find there at present whereby the federal power is able to dispose of the public resources of those provinces at its will and make the population support a system to education of a mediaeval type. They will demand the fullest freedom in those matters – the freedom for example which we in British Columbia enjoy but which we would not long enjoy were the present federal administration able to rob us of it.

Nor will these new settlers in the Canadian middle west be content that the political weight of the country should remain so decidedly in the East – that the western half of the Dominion should have to bow to the will or the order provinces and continue as a preserve for their commerce heedless of its own interests and necessities, that its very development, too, should be made to serve the basest purpose of party Government. With indifference to party affiliations they will select men for parliament and the legislatures whose allegiance will be principle rather than to names and who will insist the Government shall be for the country and not for party.

We can perceive even now in Western Canada that disposition evinced wherever the American settlements are strong and it would be impossible not to and in it a promise for good. Without doubt a generation or two will see party lines more strictly drawn than they will be by the new settlers but by that time the West will have asserted herself and the political preponderance will incline to the country west of Lake Superior to which the volume of immigration is tending and where the wealth of Canada will chiefly be created.

ANARCHISM IN INDIA.

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One of the most far-seeing and courageous actions in Lord Lytton's vice-royalty in India was his Press Act of 1878, which was intended to control the insensate ebullitions of the native newspaper. Unhappily it furnished material for the wild denunciations of Mr. Gladstone's Midlothian campaign and aroused the indignation of popular audiences who did not understand the subject. When a Liberal Government came into power, the act was repealed, and it may be fairly said that the consequences have been increasing disastrous. That this is so is evident from the fact that, at last, a Radical Secretary for India and a Viceroy who is under the orders of a Radical Ministry have been forced to acknowledge that India is not England, and that the same rule need not necessarily apply to the alums of Calcutta and to the newspapers of London or Manchester. Lord Morley is the more to be honored that he was one of the fiercest assailants of Lord Lytton's policy, and that his own sayings and writings are sure to be quoted against him by the white baboons (*spelled incorrectly in the article*) in and out of Parliament. Six months ago this firm action of the Indian Government would have been impossible with a House of Commons constituted like the present one, but the situation has become too serious; the lives of the leading members of the Indian Government, to say nothing of the honor of the white women scattered up and down the lonely districts of the various Presidencies, are in actual peril. And when the Indian representatives on the Viceroy's Council are forced to admit the necessity of the Explosives Act, it is not likely that the ravings of English Anarchists will be patiently listened to at home.

Nearly two months have elapsed since the atrocious outrage of Mizaffurpur, when two English ladies were blown to pieces by a bomb as they were taking their evening drive. In the interval the situation has grown appreciably worse; there have been deliberate attempts at the assassination of more than one official; an illicit factory of high explosives; fitted up on the most approved Anarchistic patterns, has been discovered while a portion of the native press is calling on the Bengalis and Goorkhas "to light a sacrificial fire fed with blood." In the face of this crisis the ordinary law has broken down; prosecutions under the Press Act have merely given a stimulus to the circulation of the incriminated papers, and loaded the obscure revellers with popularity and rupees. Nor are the existing penalties against the possession of explosives

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sufficiently stringent, nor is the procedure for their discovery sufficiently drastic. The two measures which were carried recently through the India Council sitting at Simla, should render the Government once more masters of a situation which seemed to be slipping from their grasp. The explosives Act is apparently a simple extension to India of the statute which was passed for the United Kingdom in 1883, and the unsparing use of which effectually stamped out the dynamite campaign. The Newspaper Act is purely administrative. It gives authority to the magistrate to deal in the most summary manner with papers publishing criminal incitements and enables them to confiscate printing presses on which such matter is produced, and to stop the issue of the offending papers. There is to be no prosecution, no publicity, no spurious martyrdom. The procedure is in the ----- the ordinary course of the law in its dealing with public nuisances, save that the act gives an appeal to the High Court to be exercised within fifteen days against a magistrate's order for the confiscation of a printing press.

In his speech to the Council, the Viceroy justified his conduct in proceeding by legislation rather than by ordinance and at the same time declared that if either of the bills should prove to be ineffective, prompt measures would be taken to strengthen it. It strikes us that the provisions of the Newspaper Act might well be extended from the publication of criminal incitements to the preaching of general action. But the most remarkable admission in Lord Minto's speech was the statement that India is not ripe for complete freedom of the press and that it is unfair to her people that for daily information they should be "dependent upon dependent upon unscrupulous caterers of literary poison." Of all the attempts to acclimatise Western products in totally unsuitable surroundings, perhaps the establishment of the "Liberty of Unlicensed Printing" among Orientals has been the most mischievous. Those who are acquainted with the more backward districts in other countries know something of the unreasoning faith which is attached to any fiction, however wild or improbable, that has once attained the dignity of print. In the East, whether it be China or in Egypt or in British India, the little scrap of dirty paper which is read aloud and passed from hand to hand is accepted as the oracle of God, and is little questioned, even among the comparatively enlightened, as a Papal encyclical by devout Roman Catholics. The so-called

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newspapers which compose the bulk of vernacular press in India are little broadsheets whose mendacity is only equalled by their ignorance, and it is almost incredible that superstition for English traditions should have allowed them to flourish unchecked save by the ponderous machinery of a state prosecution.