

MORNING GUARDIAN

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 1900

THE BEST THING TO DO.

The letter of Mr. Horace Haszard, which appears in another column of this issue is worthy of serious attention, and will require perusal, even to those who may not be able to accept his conclusions. In any way it would appear reasonable that provincial affairs might be more efficiently managed than they are at present. We could secure a cabinet composed of able men of both parties who would work together on business principles. Under our present system nothing is clearer than that we do not get the best business ability of the country applied to our public affairs. In the House when it is in session, and in the political campaigns in which candidates and electors meet, there is not the measure of fair and dispassionate discussion that is calculated to produce the best results. Three-fourths of the earnest effort put forth on both sides is to prove that political opponents are in the wrong. As Mr. Haszard has expressed it, the energy that ought to be devoted to lift the country out of the mire of perpetually recurring deficits is expended in a continual struggle of the parties to retain power, and of the Outs to get it in.

What but financial ruin or disruption would be the fate of a banking institution, a great manufacturing industry or a board of Trade conducted on party lines? Our provincial affairs are conducted as if we deem it wise to exclude party politics from our Board of Trade, our City Council and our multiplied dairying companies. Why do we not with equal advantage exclude party from the affairs of our little province, which is after all little more than a larger municipality? Doubtless there are difficulties in the way. Our people have been for generations past inextricated with party spirit, with favor and trust in the leaders and measures of their own party, and with disfavor and distrust toward the opposing party. And change proposed may be thought to be radical that it might be difficult to bring it about, except under the leadership of a number of strong and capable men whom the general public have a large measure of confidence.

It ought to be remembered, however, that the experiment has been tried, and with success, outside of Prince Edward Island. When party politics had brought about a dead-lock in the affairs of old Canada, leading men of both parties there and in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia united together and brought about the union of the Provinces which could not have been otherwise effected. In the sister Province of New Brunswick both Liberals and Conservatives have from the first been associated together in the Government with good results. We have today in Prince Edward Island conditions existing in regard to Provincial finances and a practical dead-lock between parties for which no more promising solution is offered than is afforded by the examples just cited.

The experience of New Brunswick has, we think demonstrated that in the relations between a Province and the central Government it is expedient that the Provincial Administration should sustain an attitude of friendly neutrality. When one party holds power at Ottawa and the opposite party controls the Province, as must frequently occur under the existing system, the Province is distinctly at a disadvantage. When the two are in accord the central Government is always embarrassed in conceding a just claim lest it be construed into political favor. Our Island experiences in these matters have not in any large measure demonstrated the benefits of the party system.

Just now all will agree that we need a strong, capable Administration commanding the full confidence of the community in order to restore the equilibrium between receipts and expenditures; in order to equalize taxation; to rightly apportion the Provincial expenditure; to effect greatly needed reforms in our public institutions; and to promote useful public measures under which our resources may be both developed and conserved. The current of political events have shown a waning confidence in the Administration of the day without any growth of confidence in the Opposition, and the strong and capable administration needed cannot be constructed not of either party as now represented in the Legislature. The time therefore seems ripe for a new departure by abandoning a system that has failed in order to give a trial to another system which affords good promise of better results.

RECTOR UNCOVERS MURDER.

Dean Donne Finds a Skull with a Nail in it and Traces a Crime.

When Dr. Donne, afterward dean of St. Paul's, London, was in possession of the first living he had, he took a walk into the churchyard, where the sexton was digging a grave and chanced to throw up a skull. The doctor took it up, and, influenced probably by unconscious recollections of a scene in "Hamlet," indulged in serious reflections on the mouldering remnant that once was the dome of thought, the palace of the soul. He perceived a small piece of headless nail sticking in the temple, which instantly excited other thoughts and feelings. He drew it out secretly and wrapped it in the corner of his handkerchief. He then learned from the gravedigger that the skull was that of a man who had kept a spirit store. He was an honest, but a drunken fellow. One night he drank two quarts of the spirit, and the next morning was found dead in his bed.

"He weren't much respected, 'cause he was nearly always tipsy; but the neighbors talked hard about his wife after he was gone. She was always a hard working respectable sort of person, but she married again the day after her husband was buried, an' people didn't like that. It wasn't hardly decent, sir, was it?"

The doctor replied that he did not think marriage so soon after a bereavement was at all decorous, but suggested that the woman must have had some reason for such an uncommon proceeding. He himself had conceived a terrible reason. Going on a round of visits to his parishioners, he called on the woman. Among other questions, he asked what sickness her first husband died of. She told the story he had already heard. The doctor suddenly opened his handkerchief and in a stern voice demanded:

"Woman, do you know that nail?"

She fell as if an accusing voice from heaven suddenly thundered in her ears. Overcome with horror, she uttered a stifled cry. With her gaze fixed on the doctor's face, she sank at his feet helplessly.

"You know all. I did it—I killed him. Have mercy!" she tremblingly gasped.

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