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THE CANADIAN ECONOMIST.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, 13th FEBRUARY, 1847.

EXECUTIVE INACTION.

In a former number of this paper we took occasion to allude to the serious incovenience to which our commerce is subjected, by he apparently apathetic manner with which our Provincial Adninistration view those great and important questions, with which hey must ere long grapple. Even before we had what is called he Responsible system of Government in full force amongst us, rould such laws as those which were passed in the Imperial Parliament last session-affecting so vitally our interests, and scessitating so immediately a corresponding change in our fiscal ode-have remained dormant in the archives of Government louse for six or seven months, without at least the ceremony beng gone through of summoning the Provincial Legislature to take em into consideration? We are satisfied they would not: but they had, we have no hesitation in asserting, that a general cry findignation would have burst forth from one end of the province the other, against the Governors who should thus have trifled ith the agricultural and commercial interests of the country. he Provincial Assemblies would have responded to the cry, and are added this to the annual list of grievances with which they ere in the habit of regaling the Colonial Secretary.

Yet now, under this system-which the Governor General, we now not if in irony, designates one of "self government," given to enable the people to exercise a salutary influence on the acon of Government"—is manifested a vis incrtia, a sluggishness, on of Government——is mannesten a vis merita, a singgisiness, a the part of the Ministry, which would not have been tolerated t any former time in our colonial instory, even under the most espotic of our Governors. And, what is still more astonishing, of a single voice has been raised, except our own, against this oss neglect of the best interests of the country.

This a comprishable fact, that single the Union of the Powinger.

It is a remarkable fact, that since the Union of the Provinces ere has apparently been a marked disinclination on the part of ee Government to meet Parliament, and this disinclimation has deach year to its assembly at the latest possible period which e forms of the Constitution would admit. This we consider an imixed evil. In the mother country, where the practice of a free stem of government is so well understood, it is always known, thin a few days, at what period Parliament will assemblerunn a tew days, at what period Parliament will assemble—variably a few weeks, at latest, after the Christmas holidays—di such a system was undoubtedly the intention of the clause in r Constitutional Act, revived in the clause of the Union Act, hich provides for the annual sittings of the Provincial Legislate. The practice adopted in the United States of meeting antally on a specified day, is perhaps preferable to the mode lopted in Great Britain, and intended by our Constitution.

There are many obvious reasons for this regularity of the ordinary sessions of the Legislature: both the members and the public

ry sessions of the Legislature: both the members and the public lculate on such an event, and make their arrangements accord-Various reasons may also be adduced for the meeting of gly. Various reasons may also be address. As the convenience of the clament during the winter months: the convenience of the

members, by fixing it at that time, is best consulted; and that being a senson when there is almost a total suspension of the business of the country, evidently points it out as the fitting time for making those alterations which may, from time to time, become necessary in our commercial laws and regulations.

All those reasons which point to the policy of this annual meeting of the Legislature at a stated convenient season, apply with tenfold force to the present year. Never was there an occasion in the history of Canada, which, on account of the trade of the country, called so imperatively for an early winter session; and we own we cannot conceive any valid reason for its not having taken place. In our former article on this subject, we took occasion to remark that the change of Governor does not, and cannot, plead the slightest excuse, and we know of no other that can be even pretended.

If we are to be governed by the principles of the British Constitution, let us have them in their integrity. The maxim, that the King never dies, ought to be applicable here as in Britain: the business of the country ought not to stand still for a single hour, on account of any change which may be made in the head of the Government; and we can only say, if the people submit, tamely and without remonstrance, to what is virtually a suspension for a time of the Constitution, they are unworthy of the blessing of living under a free form of government.

That the commercial prosperity of this country is jeopardized, and that the mercantile community are suffering, and will suffer, great incovenience and loss, from the uncertainty as to the intentions of Ministers, and which evils are greatly aggravated by the unjustifiable delay in calling Parliament together, is obvious to every one; and we cannot therefore but wonder at the equani-mity with which the inaction of the Government is borne. Such placidity is certainly calculated to change the opinion which our new Governor has expressed, that the administration of affairs new Governor has expressed, that the administration of affairs here "is a task of uncommon magnitude and difficulty." He must now, moreover, be satisfied, that our statesmen are perfectly willing, provided the essential business of the country, i.e. the drawing of their salaries, is conducted with due regularity, the minor matters, such as the passing good and wholesome "laws for the peace, welfare, and good government, of the province," may be deferred to "a more convenient season."

THE USURY LAWS.

The question of the Usury Laws, is one of those which we have deemed it expedient to reserve till we had fully discussed those broader and more comprehensive reforms which it has been our object from the commencement of our journal to keep steadily and clearly before our readers and the public. But in keeping this question in abeyance, we should be sorry that the public thereby inferred that it was one upon which we set little value. On the contrary, we look upon the Usury Laws as fundamentally erroneous in principle, and incalculably injurious to society in their effects-in a word, we hold that, whilst these laws are persevered in, whilst any fetter or limitation whatever is maintained upon the discretion of individuals in the way of buying, selling, borrowing, or lending money—the measure of Free Trade which we are struggling for can never be considered fully attained, nor the task of our Association supposed to be accomplished.

It is a question to which too much importance cannot, in our estimation, be attached, and we trust our legislature will not overlook it at its next session. Nor can we restrain ourselves from observing that we hope our city representatives will, when next called upon to vote upon this grave question, take a more enlightened view of it than they last exhibited.

From Mr. DeBleury we expect but little—he is a mere lawyer, and not very profound, we believe, even in that profession,-but