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## THE TIMES.

### AFFAIRS IN CANADA.

The third session of the third Parliament of Ontario was opened on Wednesday the 9th of January, with the usual ceremonies—and a speech from the "Throne" of extraordinary self-complacency and grammar. Thus it opens: "I am glad to meet you again for the despatch of business in connection with the Government of the Province, and *with the legislation which the public needs require.*" Does the Lieut.-Governor really meet the Legislative Assembly "with the legislation which the public needs require," or does he simply indicate the legislation required in the interests of public peace and prosperity?

But passing by the involved sentences—the jubilate notes that break out here and there—the Ontario Assembly may be congratulated on its opening and prospects. There is a surplus in hand—an evidence of watchful economy in all branches of public expenditure—a desire to develop the vast resources of the Province, and to legislate for the general good. The Lieut.-Governor aspires to be more than an ornament, and has set himself to the work of making personal acquaintance with the people in the outlying towns and districts. It is a good example.

The most practical measure foreshadowed in the speech is the one relating to the Civil Service. It is not likely that any violent changes will be made—but as far as they may go they should be radical. Political patronage is a great evil; and in the interests of public and private good, should be abolished.

Sir John A. Macdonald met his friends among the workingmen of Toronto on the evening of the same day to receive an address expressive of their confidence in his ability, integrity and general faithfulness to "The Cause," which address was accompanied by a gold watch to mark the time when the Liberal Government shall be turned out of office, and the Conservatives shall walk into office. That was unfortunately the burden of all the speaking—as it is the burden of almost all Canadian political speeches. We hear but little of principles, but little of policies, and much of office. Sir John is an able statesman, an astute politician, divided from party, an honest man, who, if his lot had been cast in healthier times, would have done a greater work. If he has the majority of workingmen and others on his side, he will soon have the power he covets, and with it an opportunity to inaugurate a better state of things. But Sir John must let the regulator of his watch alone, and try to run down time.

The Hon. Peter Mitchell has resigned his seat, and it is said will be re-elected without opposition.

The Speakership of the Ottawa House of Commons appears to present some difficulty. It is vacant. The Cabinet is silent about it. So is the Conservative party. Mr. Anglin was unfortunate in his trading policy, as far as the Government was concerned. By dint of much scheming he was let down easily, but it will require more than mere scheming to exalt him again. Nothing but hardihood could venture to replace a gentleman in the honourable position of Speaker to whom suspicion and something more has attached.

The *Morning Freeman*, of St. John, N.B., is trying to perpetrate a joke. In a criticism on the first issue of the SPECTATOR, while referring to our demand for religious liberty, it says of the Editor:—"To be free, he must have the power to rob the Catholic Church of the Province of Quebec of the property *it holds in trust for the people, and administers so carefully and so judiciously.*" The *Morning Freeman* is a peculiar paper, but it is decidedly witty.

The Oka Indian trial has come to an end for the present, the jury not being able to agree on a verdict—five declaring that they found it impossible to convict the Indians on the evidence produced before them.

A remarkable article appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* of Tuesday last on "RUSSIA'S POSITION." It declared that the end of the war,

whatever its issue, would leave Russia in no enviable position. That Russia has lost the "sympathy she might have had from Governments or people twelve months ago." That the war has been less "sacred as to aim or execution than most of the wars of the present century." That "not religion and philanthropy, but ambition and revenge, were its chief motives." It calls the war "a farce;" says that the Russians have lost prestige and the Turks have gained it, &c., and then proceeds in a high and mighty way to ask "What good has it effected? Has it bettered, or in any way tended to better, the condition of the christian provinces? Has it done anything to hasten the day of good government among the Pashas? Has it brought the Eastern question any nearer to a settlement? Has it not rather arrested Turkey in the path of reform in which its rulers and *his* advisers have entered? Has it not tended to undo whatever good was done in that direction? Has it not embittered the minds of Christians towards Mohammedans?" &c. And then the sapient writer winds up by saying, "and Russia's claims for compensation for sacrifices through her own obstinacy and pride are not worthy of a moment's hearing. The best thing she can do now is to use the lesson that has been forced on her by using her efforts henceforth to the amelioration of her own condition, and to leave the concerns of others in the hands in which Providence has placed them." Now it does seem strange to find a political writer asking what good a war has done, while that war is yet in progress. Still more strange to be told that the conqueror has lost prestige—that her claims are not worth a moment's hearing—when other European powers are waiting anxiously to know what those terms are, acknowledging that Russia has the right to dictate the price of peace so long as there shall be no interference with their interests! Will the writer of the article indicate to a humble and enquiring public what or where is "the path of reform in which Turkey's rulers and his advisers have entered?" We know what promises were made, and we know that Russia was one of the powers pledged to enforce the fulfilment of those promises, but are ignorant of any reforms accomplished; even of the path, that led to that desired end, being entered upon. Most of the world imagined that the *casus belli* was in the fact that "the path" had not been found by Turkey. When we are told what good was done previous to the war, we may be able to say how much of it has been undone by the war. The Turks promised to abolish slavery, and did not; promised to redress the wrongs of the Christian population, and did not; promised many good things, and did not one of them. Russia, of all the European powers, has redeemed her pledge.

The advice the *Gazette* gives to Russia is really lofty. She is to leave Turkey "in the hands in which Providence has placed them," and she is recommended to use her efforts to the amelioration of her own condition. A glance at recent Russian history would tell the writer that Russia has made most wonderful progress in that direction, consolidating the Empire, developing internal resources, encouraging education; and without war, or even riot, set ten millions of male serfs free. It may be well enough to write for a party, to swear by a party name, be it in England or in Canada, but political writers should be careful not to put forth statements so foolish and misleading.

## THE WAR.

Austria desires the maintenance of the Treaty of Paris; she also wishes to prevent Russia from gaining a preponderating influence; Austria will never renounce her position as a guaranteeing Power. The question relative to the political autonomy of Bulgaria and other conditions affecting Austrian interests as a frontier Power, and in fact the settlement of conditions of peace, cannot be permitted without the participation of Austria. The foregoing declaration has been communicated by the Austrian Ambassador to the Porte. Lord Derby made a similar communication to St. Petersburg on Monday. Nevertheless it is believed no previous understanding existed between Austria and England. It is stated that Russia has not yet communicated the terms of peace to Austria. Notwithstanding the attitude of Great Britain and Austria, it is expected complications will be avoided, and Russia arrive at an understanding with the Powers.

The Press Association learns that the Queen's Speech will express the opinion that the negotiations now pending will result in peace. While no extra supplies will be demanded, the speech hints pretty strongly that they will have to be asked for in a very probable contingency.