

THE CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS..... \$4.00 per annum
 THE FAVORITE..... 2.00 "
 THE CANADIAN PATENT OFFICE RECORD AND MECHANICS' MAGAZINE 1.50 "
 L'OPINION PUBLIQUE..... 3.00 "

THE DESBARATS LITHOGRAPHIC AND PUBLISHING COMPANY;
 Montreal; Publishers.

SUBSCRIPTIONS PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

All remittances and business communications to be addressed to,
 THE MANAGER—DESBARATS COMPANY, Montreal.

All correspondence for the Papers, and literary contributions to be addressed to,
 THE EDITOR—DESBARATS COMPANY, Montreal.

When an answer is required, stamps for return postage should be inclosed.

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

MONTREAL, SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1874.

THE Minister of Marine and Fisheries has been sent on to assist Mr. Brown in his negotiations for a Reciprocity Treaty with the United States. This circumstance proves either that Mr. Brown requires more information direct from Ottawa prior to further and more definite action, or else that he has committed himself to some policy which it requires a Cabinet Minister either to approve or disapprove. The fact of Mr. Smith being selected to aid in the negotiations likewise points to the conclusion that the vexed question of our fisheries is coming up for discussion and settlement. We are told by the Opposition press that Mr. Brown, whose leanings for the present party now dominant in Washington are well known to date back from the era of the civil war, has made undue concessions to the Americans. This at best can be only a surmise, and we do not credit it. We are particularly sceptical, because the Government must be aware that, considering its antagonistic stand to the Washington Treaty, when in opposition, it cannot afford to relax any of those conditions which it formerly stigmatised as cowardly surrenders to American bravado. For ourselves, we are not very sanguine as to the favourable result of the conferences now being held at Washington. It is quite true that among the commercial men of the United States, a feeling in favour of reciprocal relations with Canada has been growing for several years past, and that this feeling has, on several occasions, found expression in resolutions passed by the National Board of Trade. But there is no indication, that we are aware of, which shows the existence of any such sympathy in Congress, and as a matter of fact, the question of Reciprocity has not been discussed in the Senate or House of Representatives for years. The mission of Mr. Brown will, however, not be fruitless in any case. It may even lead to the laying down of the preliminaries of a treaty, the particulars of which will have afterwards to be discussed and acted on by the American Congress and our own Federal Parliament. The Speech from the Throne gave no inkling of the basis on which Mr. Brown was instructed to negotiate. Perhaps the Government has data to work upon which are unknown to the public. If such be the case, we shall only be too glad to welcome the prospect of opening once more the channels of free communication with our neighbours.

We should not be surprised if British Columbia made some attempt at secession from the Confederacy. It is perfectly certain that she entered the Canadian union out of pure self-interest, not through any sympathy with Canada. Now that the motive of self-interest may be said to have disappeared, it would only be natural that she should consider herself at liberty to return to her former position and act as best suits her. The British Columbians are shrewd enough to know that the Pacific Railway is indefinitely postponed. The Government may not choose to say so in as many words, and we do not blame them, but in the nature of things, they cannot honestly promise to build the road before the next twenty-five years. Nay Mr. Scott, in a speech at Ottawa, pushed his candor so far as to declare that neither the present government, nor the next, nor yet the next after that, could undertake to construct the Pacific Railway. The British Columbians are shrewd enough to know this, and from the tone of their press, notwithstanding the reassuring pledges of Mr. DeCosmos, it is evident that they comprehend the unreal character of the situation. The Pacific Railway being then put out of the account, it remains to inquire whether any other arrangement may be made which shall satisfy the British Columbians and hold them to the Confederate Compact. Mr. Edgar has been entrusted with a special mission to Victoria, around which the government have thought fit to throw a great deal of mystery. Replying to pointed interpellations on that head, the Prime Min-

ister, has refused, in quite peremptory language, to communicate any information. We are quite willing to wait for the issue of the negotiations, if they prove really as important as the mystery which invests them warrants us to presume. It is the business of the present Administration to do its uttermost towards allaying the uneasy feeling now prevalent in British Columbia. Whether or not they are responsible for this feeling, it is idle to inquire. Their plain duty is to maintain the integrity of our Confederation, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In a nascent country such as this, where the national sentiment is only beginning to assume a certain stability, it would require but a slight occasion of discord indeed, to throw us back into the old sectional jealousies of eight years ago. The Pacific Province must be thoroughly pacified, not in a mere mercenary spirit, nor with bare makeshift money indemnities, but with large pledges such as shall convince her that we regard her as necessary to our United existence. The present Government, considering their course when British Columbia claimed admission, are particularly bound to show profound sympathy.

The British press is by no means unanimous in its praise of the issue of the Ashantee war. They complain of mismanagement in the earlier stages of the campaign. Thus the 42nd Regiment was left on the Gold Coast for want of means to transport them into the interior. There they remained at great expense and with much danger to their health, while their services were required at the front. Another ground of complaint is the burning of Coomassie. It is urged that the act was unnecessary, and savours of barbarism. To raze to the ground a city of ten thousand souls does look, *prima facie*, as a harsh measure. General Wolseley justifies it on the principle of necessity. He declares that he could no longer delay his return to the Coast, owing to the rainy season and the swelling of the floods. Besides, he saw no other way of bringing King Koffee to terms. The plunder of the Royal Palace was not allowed, though there was the usual, and, it seems, inevitable "loot." Neither are the English papers satisfied with the material results of the war. It is true that the Ashantee King promised to pay a large indemnity, but later intelligence hints that, now the troops are gone, he does not consider himself bound to carry out this condition of the treaty of peace. Punch expresses something of the popular feeling by a ludicrous cartoon, in which Sir Garnet Wolseley is represented presenting to Britannia a preposterously large umbrella, the property of Koffee Kalcalli. "It don't look much, madam," says the General, "but it has cost good money and better lives." When the cost of the expedition will be discussed in Parliament, we may expect the whole subject to be again canvassed, and perhaps more light in justification thrown upon the war. So far as Sir Garnet Wolseley is personally concerned, it seems admitted that he did the best that could be done under the circumstances. The treachery of his savage foes made his position one of peculiar difficulty; and this was enhanced by the unreliable character of his native allies. He had therefore to cast aside all conventional rules of action, and trust to his own inspirations. The abnormally insalubrious climate enforced celerity, and thus Sir Garnet had no room for humanitarian half measures. He was ably seconded by Lord Gifford, who distinguished himself in the highest degree. Captain Butler, well-known among us, likewise received the official commendation of his Commander for efficient services rendered in a subsidiary expedition, on one of the wings of the invading army.

It is to be hoped that the financial question arising out of an inevitable remodelling of the Tariff will be taken up without delay by the House. The reason of this urgency is twofold. First, as we are on the eve of the opening of navigation, and our shipping to and fro will be crowding to the different ports of the Dominion, it would be only consulting the good of trade to set the minds of importers and exporters at rest concerning any modification necessary to be introduced into their different lines of business. In the next place, if we are really to have improved trade relations with the United States—whether in the shape of a definitive Reciprocity Treaty, or something equivalent thereto—it must strike every one as of the highest importance that our Tariff should be fixed on a firm and intelligible basis. No doubt the various interests of trades and manufactures will render the proper adjustment of details a lengthy operation, but there is no reason, at least that we can see at present, why a general basis of action should not be determined on at once. One thing the Finance Minister can rely upon, and that is, that he will meet with hearty cooperation throughout the country, without political distinction, in any measure which shall point to rapid and decisive treatment of this vital question. With his hands thus strengthened, Mr. Cartwright can have no legitimate excuse for hesitation.

FROM THE CAPITAL.

BLACK ROD.—ELECTION OF A NEW SPEAKER.—MOSS OF WEST TORONTO.—SIR JOHN.—OLD FACES GONE.—THE RIEL EPISODE.—YOUNG MEN IN PARLIAMENT.—SPEAKING FRENCH.

OTTAWA, APRIL 6.—I need not rehearse the ceremonial of the opening of Parliament. It is sufficiently well-known and, this year, did not vary from the old forms. I may remark, however, that the ridicule which has always attached to them, in a more or less marked degree, was made particularly manifest this year. It is grotesque in the extreme, this retention of feudal display, and as to the antics of the Black Rod, if the present Government of reform were to prohibit them hereafter, it would meet with the approbation of everybody in Ottawa. Mr. Kimber is a very excellent man; indeed, he is a man of culture and it is therefore pitiable that he should be forced to go through such a series of tomfooleries as pertain to his office. The civil service men tell me, however, that the old gentleman is fond of the business and prides himself on putting extra touches to it. In deference to this amiable weakness, Mr. Mackenzie may perhaps be induced to postpone the suppression of the office, till after the superannuation of Mr. Kimber. This year, in honour doubtless of the new Ministry and Parliament, Black Rod wore a spanking new coat which was literally covered with gold. In this he cut a stunning figure, to the unbounded amusement of the girls in the gallery.

The election of Mr. Anglin to the speakership was a foregone conclusion. As he could not possibly get a seat in the Cabinet, it was necessary, in deference to his position as an Irish Catholic, that he should be promoted to the next highest office in the gift of the majority. I have heard some French members grumble that the honour was not conferred on one of their nationality. This, however, is not reasonable, as the two preceding Presidents of the Senate were French Canadians. What they might complain of with more reason is the fact that the present Speaker does not know one word of French. As the members must always address the Chair, and are presumed to ignore the rest of the House altogether, it struck me as the height of absurdity to see Mr. Laurier, second of the Address, expending his glowing eloquence on Mr. Anglin who sat as immovable as a stone statue.

Writing of the member for Arthabaska reminds me of Mr. Moss, who moved the Address. The entrance of this gentleman into Parliament looks like an acquisition. He is evidently a man of information and has a certain fluency of speech which will be certain to draw him frequently into debate. Perhaps Mr. Moss would have done himself a service if he had declined the honour of moving the Address. I have a notion, from what I think I know of his character, that it would have been better for him to have remained in the background for several weeks. A man inclined to be self-assertive ought to choose his opportunities to give out his views, and those opportunities should be infrequent.

Sir John A. Macdonald has surprised his enemies, which is saying a great deal. They all expected and possibly hoped that he would be spiteful, snappish and vindictive. Instead of that he is as smooth as oil and as sweet as honey. Sitting muffled in a large red scarf, on account of a cold, he attracts the attention of every one who comes into the House. He is pointed out to visitors as a kind of central figure. He is evidently suffering from rheumatic cold, at present, but I fancy it is nothing serious. His voice is good, his language flows free, and there are scintillations of the old playful spirit still flashing out occasionally. If his party has any sense left, it will stick to him as leader.

The benches around Sir John tell plainly the havoc of the late elections. The broad, handsome face of Tilley has disappeared. The bent white head of Sir Francis is gone. The serene, solid Langevin has vacated his old seat. O'Connor is missed, though not on account of his beauty. The lounging, sprawling, easy-going Pope is away in Europe and will perhaps not return before the end of the session. There remain only Mitchell, Tupper and Robitaille, the Adonis of the House.

The Riel episode has been miserably overdone. The excitement over it is entirely factitious, gotten up by a few restless spirits. I presume to say that if the ex-President of Assiniboia had been left to take his seat without hindrance, the real solution of his singularly vexed case would have been reached already. It is not that the people of Ontario are any less incensed against him than they were four years ago, but they have no intention now, as they probably had then, of taking the law into their own hands. One thing is certain and it is that the government is seriously embarrassed by the untoward event. The French Liberals would have consulted their own best interests by persuading Riel to keep away altogether from Ottawa.

There are fewer young men in the House than is good for it. The most of these are from your Province. They look rather romantic and dandified, enjoying their high estate with ill-concealed delight. But judging from the conversation of most of them, they do not speak English with any ease. This is so serious a deficiency that it may be said to counterbalance all the other good qualities which these young men may possess. French is useless in Parliament. There is no use arguing about it. It is a fact. For a Quebec constituency to send a member up here who knows no English is simply to suffer itself to remain unrepresented.

From present appearances, I am inclined to think that we shall have a long and laborious session. It will probably be stormy at times, and perhaps will produce results on the present composition of the House which will surprise a good many people.

CHAUBIEN.

"HARASSING LEGISLATION."

To the Editor of the ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

SIR,—The above quotation, from Mr. Disraeli's late address to his constituents is an expression seldom surpassed in significance by statesmen. The idea is doubtless the result of great historical research, and describes a political evil to which popular governments are and have ever been exposed. "Harassing Legislation" is the sure forerunner of despotism, or anarchy which is still worse. The greatest danger often exists where no danger at all is apprehended. The abuse of free institutions may result in something just as bad as despotism.

Judging from the result of the late general election in England, the significance of the term has not been overlooked there.