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MONTREAL, MARCH 26, 1887

THE WEEK.

The Quebec Legislature has opened its sessions, and the debate on the speech from the Throne is going on. When the vote is taken the position of parties will be defined. The present indications that the session will be a brief one, and possibly another brief session may be held in the fall.

The elections are pretty well over throughout the Dominion, and the standing of the government is sufficiently understood to insure a majority of about forty. This is enough to give an easy working to the administration, and we may look for an outline of the estimates may be expected in a week or two.

Nothing definite has been done with regard to the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee, so far as the Dominion, and we shall probably have to wait therefore until the meeting of Parliament. It must not be forgotten that Canada is the Premier Colony, and as such. Something very special will be expected.

In New Brunswick a determined effort has been made to abolish the Upper House or Legislative Council. The assembly voted for it unanimously, but the Council itself naturally demurred, and so the matter remains in abeyance for the present. But a beginning has been made, and the reform is only a question of time.

It is a distinct reform. In Quebec the Liberal party has always been pledged to the abolition of the Upper House, but its present allies, the Nationalists, do not favor this, and the Government finds itself obliged to postpone any measure in that direction for the present.

It is not likely that the question of the Senate will be taken up this year,

inasmuch as the Ministerial party regard the retention of that body, as a necessary part of the administrative machinery, but the elective character of the Senate will doubtless be discussed, inasmuch as many Conservatives would prefer that a total removal of the Upper House.

We may look to some steps being taken by the Senate toward negotiating directly with Washington, some sort of scheme for reciprocal trade, and a medium term for the working of the fisheries difficulties without further complications. Canada should have directly in the premises, and insist on her right of initiative in this matter.

One or two of the Nova Scotia members of the Legislature have come out squarely in favor of annexation, and similar sentiments are fully expressed in some of the other Provinces, the feeling is not Canadian by any means, but the issue should not be overlooked because accident may make it a definite issue in the not distant future.

The result of elections in Manitoba and the Northwest shows conclusively that the Riel issue has lost all the vitality. Which it may once have had. In Manitoba, the French representation. Mr. Royal, was elected, and among the half-breeds of the Saskatchewan, the government candidate was elected by a large majority. The consequence is that this controversy will now be dropped and that something more practically useful to the Northwest may be taken up.

The German Kaiser has been celebrating the 90th anniversary of his birth, and the occasion is being made the subject of universal rejoicing throughout Germany. All this is very well as tending to increase the cohesions of the empire, but it is by no means a corresponding variant of peace, and how little France can expect from Germany is the fact of the alliance just concluded between that country, Austria and Italy.

So far the attitude of France has been worthings and dignified. She has and has remained cool under threats. It is to be hoped that she will continue in the same way. France has nothing to fear from Germany in war, but she requires the consolidation of her republican institutions, and add to her material prosperity.

BRIC-A-BRAC.

We have reached the end of March, and yet there is no sign of the close of winter. The month of March came in like a lion, but does not go out as a lamb, to verify the proverb. In the experience of every one, this has been the hardest winter in the past twenty years.

The present condition of things is not at all pleasant. Within the city, the footpaths have been partially cleared, but the streets are in an almost impassable condition. Walking is a positive hardship, where it is not a danger; and riding is both extremely inconvenient and expensive.

In the country there are no roads to speak of. Farmers find it all they can do to go from one neighbor to the other, while the road to the village, for church purposes, is kept open only by dint of hard work. Coming to town, with provisions for the market, is almost an impossibility, and the consequence is that our markets are scantily supplied.

Indeed, were it not for the railways, we should be in a plight with regard to the necessities of life. The supply of fish is miserably poor; butter has been inferior the whole winter, and is worse now, and among meats, veal which is the most seasonable at present, rules high and is of hard quality.

Much had been expected from the maple season, but that too will probably prove a failure. There is too much snow in the woods, to begin with, and the sun has not sufficient strength to thaw out the sap of the trees. There is a chance, however, that the month of April may prove more favorable in this respect.

A much more serious preoccupation is the flood, from the chances of which we are by no means saved. In this matter the Montreal people, and especially the Montreal Corporation, have been singularly blind and remiss. They have simply trifled with the subject, notwithstanding that it is one which involves an enormous loss of time and money, and is terribly detrimental to the health of the people.

This is preeminently the dull season of the year—the interval between the breaking up of winter and the opening of spring. The common laborer finds no work in the streets, building operations are suspended, the factories are running on slow time, and the circulation of money is, in consequence, notably stagnated.

It is remarkable, too, what an effect Lent has on the current of trade. People economize during Lent without intending it, and often without knowing it. They deprive themselves of certain luxuries, out of a proper spirit of self-denial, and take advantage of the wretched dull weather, to retire within their houses, as in a shell, and live on the broken victuals of the suburbs.

When it comes to the parsimonious mood, the rich are often meaner than the poor. In some of the large houses of the fashionable streets, the stints is something that would make certain people open their eyes, and the paltry sacrifices made in the interior of the house in order that the exterior show may be greater, would be enough to create heroism in other fields.

PERSONAL.

Lieut. Col. Quimet, M. P. for Laval, is to be the next speaker of the House of Commons.

Joncas, Ministerial candidate, has been elected for Gaspé, thus closing the long series of Federal elections.

The second half of Lady Macdonald's trip through the Northwest, will appear in *Murray's Magazine*.

M. Carter Troop has given a lecture on "Thoughts on Canadian Life," some of his suggestions are very practical.

M. Frechette will read some of his latest poems at the Prume concert to be given next Monday.

Lieut. governor Masson has returned from Bermuda, in the enjoyment of removed health.

M. Charles Robb, the well known civil engineer, died at Ottawa, last week. He was a son of the late Dr. Robb of Falkirk, Scotland.

M. Sylva Chapin will be appointed a provincial agent for Quebec at Paris. He is a literary man of considerable promise.

Kaiser Wilhelm was at Waterloo. He twice entered Paris with the victo-

rious Germany army in 1815 and in 1871.

Lady Stephen, wife of Sir George Stephen, was presented to the Queen, by the Marchioness of Salisbury, last week.

The comte de Lesseps is about to publish in two volumes his "Souvenirs of Forty years," which is sure to be a work of palpitating interest.

A successor to the late Mr. Beecher is hard to find. It is not so much ability that is required, as versatility and the faculty of adaptation.

Archbishop Lynch, of Toronto, writes a long and strong personal appeal to Lord Randolph Churchill, in behalf of Ireland.

It is said that Sir John Macdonald will shortly visit Washington on official business. The visit cannot but do good.

Queen Victoria is appearing more frequently in public, of late, as if to prepare herself for the publicity of the Jubilee demonstrations.

The new general of the Jesuit order, to succeed the late incumbent Beckx, is Father Anderledy, a Swiss, who resided many years ago in the United States, and speaks English well.

The health of President Cleveland is not at all good. He is sorely in want of exercise and it is gravely said that if he does not get it, he may not see the end of his term.

Sheriff Bowey's dismissal, has created a mighty stir in Sherbrooke and through at the St. Francis district. It appears that his successor, Mr. Webb, is only 18 months his junior.

Mr. J. G. Bourinot, of the Royal Society of Canada, has published a pamphlet on "Provincial Governments" which is attracting much attention abroad.

Grant Allen, essayist and novelist, who lately made a turn through Canada, is writing his impressions of his native land in a style that does scant credit to his discernment or patriotism.

Ex-Lieut. Governor Laird, having been unsuccessful in his campaign on the Saskatchewan, will return to Prince Edward Island, and probably resume his profession of journalism.

Mr. Munderloh, German Consul at this port, presided, on Tuesday, at a grand banquet given in honor of the anniversary of the Emperor. M. Munderloh is a typical German.

Mr. Nicholas Flood Davin, the newly elected member of Parliament for Alberta, is an author of reputation, his *magnum opus* being the history of fishermen in Canada.

OUR ENGRAVINGS.

A SNOW-YACHT ON THE NORTHWEST PRAIRIES.

This snow yacht of the prairie is 32 ft. long and 14 ft. beam, with mast 20 ft., main boom 22 ft., gaff 12 ft., and jib boom 12½ ft. The frame is of 2 in. by 8 in. plank, set vertically. The runner plank double. The mast is set between 2 in. by 12 in. plank, that taper to 8 in. high at each side, and are six in apart. The runners are strong toboggans; the front ones being 1 ft. wide, and made of ½ in. ash, 9 ft. on the run, and turned up 18 in. in front. They are hung to the runner plank with hinge joints, and stayed by malleable iron braces from runner plank to inner and front part of runner. The front runners are made of four 3 in. strips of ash, and have a central shoe 2 ft. long, projecting 1½ in. to prevent drifting. The rear runner resembles the front ones, except that it is only 6 in. wide, being made of two strips of ash. The framework is 3 ft.