

will be quite time enough to project other and perhaps subsidiary schools elsewhere. It is much better to have one effective school than half a dozen of manifestly inferior grade.

#### UPPER CANADA COLLEGE.

ANOTHER educational institution which is attracting a good deal of attention just now is Sir John Colborne's "advanced seat of learning" known as Upper Canada College. Shall it be abolished? This establishment has long since been condemned by the consensus of independent public opinion in Ontario. It was in its day a useful institution, and did much good work. Many persons whose names stand high on the roll of our country's history were educated within its walls, and there is naturally a sentimental fondness for it in the hearts of these persons and their immediate descendants. But the reasons which originally prompted its establishment have long ceased to exist; and to keep it up any longer at great public expense seems, to say the least, a doubtful advantage. Mr. Kingsford, in the *World* of Monday last, made an eloquent plea on its behalf, but it is doubtful if he carried conviction to any heart which was not already prejudiced in its favour.

#### THE TRIALS OF A CROWNED HEAD.

UNEASY lies the head that wears a crown, said Henry of Lancaster, when the infirmities of age were creeping upon him, and when he was tortured by anxieties arising out of his son's misconduct and the bad faith of some of those in whom he had trusted. The expression has long since become proverbial, and has received ample confirmation in the experience of pretty nearly all the royal heads which have ever been surmounted by a crown. Just now it is receiving emphatic confirmation in the daily and nightly cogitations of the Czar of Russia. Assuredly the path of His Imperial Majesty is by no means strewn with roses. Ever since his accession to the throne the manner of his father's "taking-off" has haunted his imagination like a hideous nightmare, and he has walked about in constant dread of being overtaken by a similar fate. On several occasions his forebodings have come unpleasantly near to being realized. At least twice he has escaped the assassin's knife by the skin of his teeth. Bombs have been exploded beneath his chariot wheels, and shots have been fired at him by unknown hands. A few days since he narrowly escaped being blown into fragments; and it is said that he has ever since been in a state of such nervous trepidation that it is hardly safe for anyone to approach him. According to common report and belief he, not long since, in a sudden fit of nervousness, did to death an officer employed about his own household, because the officer's hand strayed in the direction of his pocket, and His Majesty jumped to the conclusion that another attempt was to be made upon his life.

#### THE DREAD OF ASSASSINATION.

THAT any man, even the bravest, should go about in fear and trembling under such circumstances, is not in the least surprising. Dread of assassination may well cause the stoutest heart to quake and the ruddiest cheek to blanch.

It played havoc with the nerves of Oliver Cromwell, who certainly was not wanting in those heroic qualities which give the world assurance of a man. The Czar, with his father's fate ever before him, may well be excused for not being always master of himself. He is well aware that assassins, thirsty for his blood, are constantly prowling about, and only awaiting a suitable opportunity to resolve him into his constituent elements. He has good reason to believe that plots against his life and crown are widespread, and that some of his nobles and near relatives are more or less concerned therein. He knows that he is not absolutely safe, even within the precincts of his own palace; and he knows further that every time he moves beyond those precincts it is an open question whether he will ever return alive. He is tolerably certain that, sooner or later, his time will come to be swept into eternity in a moment of time, and that no precautions on his part can guard with certainty against such a doom. Surely it is no coward, but an exceedingly brave man, who can sustain such an ordeal as this year after year, when he could get rid of all fear and anxiety by the simple act of abdication.

#### "TAKING A SIDE" IN POLITICS.

A LEADING journal in the Maritime Provinces takes ARCTURUS gently to task for not "coming out straight" on the various Canadian party questions of the day, and taking a distinct stand for either Mr. Blake or Sir John Macdonald. But surely the writer who thus summons us to the bar cannot have read the prospectus of this paper, as published in the opening number. ARCTURUS has not hesitated, and does not propose to hesitate, to express its opinions on any subject whatsoever, political or otherwise, as to which it may feel an impulse to deliver itself. It has had its say about Sir John Macdonald, as well as about Mr. Blake. But it is no part of the policy of ARCTURUS to "take a distinct stand" for Sir John, Mr. Blake or any other person whomsoever. ARCTURUS is first of all a literary paper, and only concerns itself with politics to a very limited extent. To "take sides"—i.e., to espouse the side of either of the political parties, is precisely what ARCTURUS from the first announced its fixed determination not to do. It has no share in the machinations of either party, and has nothing to hope or ask from them. It is firmly of opinion that the respective parties in Canada have altogether survived their usefulness, and that a reconstruction is imperatively needed in the best interests of the country. It is further of opinion that such a reconstruction cannot much longer be delayed. No political principle is at stake between the so-called Reformers and the so-called Liberal Conservatives. The latter are in power, and the former have for years been struggling to obtain power. This is the main—indeed the only momentous—issue which divides them. Owing no allegiance to either party, and seeking nothing at their hands, this paper feels itself free to say its say out on such subjects as these whenever it feels an inward impulse to do so; but it does not propose to indulge in tirades about purely partisan matters in which it has no interest, and as to which it cannot "take a side" without ceasing to be independent.