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It is useless nowadays to scan the Speech from the Throne for a forecast of the Government legislation of the session. The practice seems now to be to reduce to the minimum the number of forthcoming measures promised in the speech; nor are even those mentioned always the most important ones in contemplation. Were it otherwise one could but wonder at the paucity of legislative measures promised in the address of the Governor-General at the opening of Parliament the other day. But there is a convenience and a kind of grace in this avoidance of allusions and sentiments likely to be provocative of party discussion. The old practice of flinging a shower of firebrands at once into the faces of the enemy, and thus precipitating the party conflict, almost before the greetings of ordinary civility have been interchanged, is better honoured in the breach than in the observance. Meanwhile the public will watch the proceedings with interest, not unmingled with anxiety as to the course the Government will take in regard to the Manitoba difficulty and other pressing questions.

THE debate on the Address in the Dominion Commons was not very significant of the courses to be taken by the Government and the Opposition respectively on the great questions of the day. Perhaps its most remarkable feature was the broad contrast in the opinions expressed in regard, not to matters of policy, where it is the business of party leaders to differ, but to a matter of fact, where substantial agreement might be expected. The most opposite opinions were expressed as to the state of the Dominion. The Government speakers, especially the mover of the Address, waxed eloquent in descanting upon the general content and prosperity of the Canadian people. The Opposition speakers described the situation in lugubrious terms as one of unrest and discouragement, and especially of great depression amongst agriculturists. In this, as in most similar cases, the truth probably lies between the extremes. With his usual skill, Sir John A. Macdonald managed to speak at some length on matters in Manitoba without any reference to the question of railway monopoly, in regard to which almost the whole population of the Province is in a state of intense excitement. This excitement a few words from the Premier would have done much to allay.

Now that the full text of the new Washington Treaty is made public, its provisions are found not to differ essentially from the newspaper forecasts.

This may be said of it, however, that it is for Canada probably about the best settlement at present attainable. This is evident from the opposition that is being developed in the United States—an opposition which seriously threatens even its ratification by the Senate. Clearly any measure approximating what the majority of Canadians would think the just and fair could not have been accepted by the American Commissioners, with the certain prospect of rejection by the treaty-making power of the nation. This fact may prove the wisdom of the British and Canadian Commissioners in affixing their signatures to the document, and that of the Canadian Government in recommending it for Parliamentary sanction. It does not necessarily prove the inherent righteousness of the document itself. The origin and grounds of the American opposition have to be taken into account in determining this. If it be found that this opposition originates partly in the selfishly prejudiced views of American fishermen, and partly in the readiness of a set of demagogues to manufacture capital for their party out of national jealousies and race animosities, its moral weight will be very materially lessened. That such is its real origin can scarcely be doubted by any foreign onlooker, and will be freely declared by many of the people of the United States themselves. This view is further confirmed by the nature of the objections urged, which resolve themselves into a complaint that American fishermen are not accorded equal privileges in every respect with Canadian fishermen in Canadian ports and on Canadian coasts.

PERHAPS the most serious objection to the Treaty is that it is quite unlikely to prove what it chiefly purports to be, and what it was specially desirable that it should be—a full settlement of the dispute. There is weight in the contention of our neighbours that the strict enforcement of the Treaty of 1818, or, if they please, the Canadian interpretation of that treaty, in denying ordinary commercial privileges to their fishermen was not in accordance with international comity, or the spirit of the age. That contention, it must be borne in mind, is not confuted by the fact that the refusal of those privileges was the readiest, if not the only means whereby Canada could hope either to guard successfully those inshore fisheries which were indisputably hers or to profit by that advantage in deep sea fishing which belonged to her by virtue of her geographical location. No wrong can be justified on the ground that it is necessary to the protection of a right. But the great defect and danger of the proposed arrangement is that while the duty of guarding her inshore fisheries still devolves upon Canada, the opportunity and the temptation to trespass are greatly increased for the foreigner. Most of the irritation hitherto felt has been engendered in connection with the seizure of United States craft for trespass. If Canada seriously attempts still to protect her coast fisheries these seizures are likely to be not only repeated, but increased in number. And this chief cause of exasperation may be made still more active by attempts at smuggling, for which the new conditions seem to afford special facilities. To what extent the danger of fresh misunderstandings may be reduced by the clearer delimitation of bounds and fixing of penalties remains to be proved. An imaginary line in water will scarcely appeal very forcibly to a fisherman's conscience. Of course, the removal of the duty on fish by Congress, which there may be some reason to hope for, would give a happy issue out of most of these troubles.

IT was almost a matter of necessity that amendments of the Election Law, and the Controverted Election Act should have a place in the programme of the Dominion Government. The differences of opinion in the courts as to the meaning of the clause of the latter Act limiting the time within which a protest can be entered, is surprising and somewhat discreditable either to the ability for clear definition of those who framed and passed the law, or to the consistency of the judges in applying the principles of interpretation in construing the language of a public statute. Worse than that, these conflicting interpretations and verdicts have led to practical injustice. There can be little doubt that a number of members are now occupying seats in the House to which they have no better claim than that of a number of other persons who are no longer members, in consequence of the decisions of the courts; the sole reason why the former are in the House and the latter out being the differences of interpretation of the clause referred to by the courts. Thus it has appeared that the