

PROMINENT TOPICS.

Parliament was opened on 17th inst. at Westminster by King Edward VII. with an imposing splendour of ceremonial display. His Majesty read a speech from the Throne, of which the following is a synopsis. The Venezuelan dispute was about to be adjusted, as also were the questions relating to the boundary of North America and Alaska. There was much anxiety as to the condition of affairs in the European provinces of Turkey in regard to which the urgent need of measures of reform will be pressed on the Sultan and his ministers. The visit of Mr. Chamberlain to South Africa was declared to have been productive of the happiest results, and his personal conferences with Lord Milner and ministers of the self-governing colonies and representatives of all interests and opinions had greatly conduced to a smooth adjustment of many difficult questions and the removal of misunderstandings. The improved conditions of India were dwelt upon and intimations given that the Budget estimates would be large, and that a bill would be introduced dealing with the Irish land question. In regard to this the King said: "It will, I trust, complete the series of measures which already have done much to substitute single ownership for the costly and unsatisfactory conditions still attaching to the tenure of agricultural land over a large portion of Ireland." With this hope the whole Empire is in sympathy.

The situation in eastern Europe is still menacing. As we stated last week the question at issue is really the old quarrel between a semi-barbarous Mohammedan ruler and his more civilized Christian subjects. The political oppression and extortions of the Turkish Government, the savage cruelties of Turkish soldiers are a perpetual provocation to revolt, and every sign of revolt intensifies the brutal treatment of the Sultan's Christian's subjects. For diplomatic considerations certain European powers, Germany especially, desire to keep Turkey as an ally, as a check upon Russia, hence the complacency with which Turkish outrages are viewed by Christian rulers who would make short work of Turkey and its barbarism if they could agree upon some scheme for establishing a civilized government in that Empire. Some day the convulsion will come by the results of which Europe will be relieved of its curse and scandal. But the time is not ripe for a war in which the chief nations of Europe would be engaged.

The Royal Bank of Canada has recently purchased a lot containing 6,000 feet on St. James street, in this city, immediately west of St. Lawrence Hall for which the purchase money paid was

\$130,000. The land is to be the site of a building devoted to the offices of the bank. The location is the centre of the business offices section of the city. The new building, it is expected, will add one more to the group of handsome structures occupied by banks and insurance companies that give such an imposing air of dignity and wealth to Montreal.

The Metropolitan Bank has concluded arrangements with the Guardian Assurance Company by which a building will be erected on the old Guardian site, 181 St. James street, and leased to the Metropolitan Bank for a term of years. Under the agreement the Bank will acquire the entire property at any time within twenty years. The details of the building have not yet been finally arranged, but it is understood that a four or five story structure will be erected with a view to having the ground floor specially adapted for banking purposes. This will be another addition to the many handsome edifices on St. James street, and both the Guardian and the Bank are to be congratulated upon the consummation of an arrangement which cannot fail to be mutually satisfactory.

Judgment has been given the Superior Court that the children of Jews in this city are not legally entitled to the educational privileges afforded in either the Protestant or Roman Catholic public schools. There are 1,300 Jewish children, who, under this decision, might to be refused admission to the city schools. Legislation will have to be obtained to remove this difficulty. No people prize education more generally, or more highly than do the Jews, nor does any class maintain its sick and distressed poor so independently of public aid. Montreal must not be left open to the reproach of discriminating in its provision for popular education against one section of citizens because of their creed.

John Bull is slow in waking up, but when once roused he is so very wide awake and active as to astonish his critics. In adopting electricity the old land has been behind the times until recently. In the last year electric supply companies were formed all over England, Ireland and Scotland. An American Consul in England gives a list of 15 electric supply companies organized, or in course of organization whose aggregate capital is \$71,300,000. Besides these there are numbers of smaller enterprises supplying towns and small communities in the United Kingdom with electric light and power. Great Britain itself is a vast dynamo, which furnishes the financial power that sets and keeps in motion industrial enterprises all over the world.