

till at last the pebbles were taken for just so much a barrow-full, as they fetch in the gravel-pit at present. And paper prices in the same way would rise, till the notes passed for what they were worth as dirty paper.

It is a pity that all our European telegrams have to come by way of the United States, for the ordinary American mind is inventive by the nature of it, but the newspaper men have a genius in that line. They have discovered that it saves time and money to write out news which had its origin in their own imagination. We were thrown into a state of excited alarm the other day over the supposed effort of our Queen to exhibit a bit of real Imperialism, and visions were conjured up of civil strife and other horrid scenes. The Marquis of Hartington was publicly slighted at Windsor—having to walk to and from the Castle in a tremendous storm and drenching rain; the Queen's messengers were flying about on all sorts of Imperial errands; Mr. Gladstone would not take a bribe, and the Queen would not take Mr. Gladstone, and the Liberal party would not yield to the royal whim, and great excitement prevailed, when lo! all the affair was over, and the truth came out that the Queen had, in strict accord with constitutional right and usage, sent for the nominal leader of the Liberal party; that he at once suggested Mr. Gladstone as the fit and proper person; that the Queen expressed a preference for one not quite so pronounced as to Radicalism and offered the great orator a peerage, but on finding that the Liberals had determined on their Premier, after as well as at the polls, sent for the right man, received him gracefully, committed to him the duty of forming a Cabinet, and gave the people one more reason to sing "God Save the Queen."

Strange rumours have gone abroad as to what the new Government will do. Very many take it for granted that because Mr. Gladstone is the trusted leader of the radical wing of the Liberal party he will introduce some revolutionary measures and try to force them through Parliament. I believe that nothing of the sort will happen. To begin with, the English Radicals in Parliament are anything but the reckless, communistic, revolutionary people they are popularly supposed to be. They have the real interests of England at heart just as thoroughly as the most rabid Tory. The Conservative party is made up of the two social extremes,—the great landed-proprietors, and the lower classes of working men. The Liberal party is made up, mainly, of the great middle class,—the men who look for reforms tending to material prosperity, and not to violent revolutions which must always be uncertain as to results. The Whigs, the Conservative-Liberals, constitute an important factor along with them, in the party, without whom the Radicals can do nothing. The timid are crying out that the land-laws will be tampered with, perhaps abrogated; that the Church will be disestablished, and the foreign policy totally reversed. But what grounds do history and likelihood afford for these alarming presentiments? Simply none at all.

It is quite possible that the law of primogeniture will be re-cast, for it has long been felt that as it now stands it perpetrates an injustice which was born of barbarism; but to imagine that Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and Lord Granville will in any way meddle with the present system of land proprietorship is to dream a very foolish dream. Mr. Gladstone will not entertain the question of Church disestablishment, since it involves disendowment, the practicability of which he has more than once emphatically denounced; and as to the matter of foreign policy, he will have to take things as they are and do the best he can with them. Many people seem to imagine that he will take a clean sheet of paper and begin to write history, but he cannot do that. The last six years cannot be ignored: Lord Beaconsfield and his doings cannot be obliterated; compacts must be carried out; treaties must be observed; faith must be kept, and the nation has to be supported, not destroyed. Mr. Gladstone has never yet shown himself as a reckless innovator and political iconoclast. On the contrary, he has always been outdone in radicalism by his great opponent, Lord Beaconsfield.

Truth has a good suggestion:—

"We do not want Cyprus, and the Turks do not want it. Lord Beaconsfield has always spoken of this spot as an Island of the Blest. Would it not be possible to hand over its sovereignty to him? As Benjamin I., Duke of

Cyprus, he might reign in peace without the slightest chance of anyone seeking to divest him of his territories, whilst, as they would be surrounded by the sea, there would be no possibility of his getting into trouble by any itching for scientific frontiers."

EDITOR.

TORONTO AND ABOUT.

There is great anxiety felt over the illness and relapse of the man who was once the chief Senator of the Dominion, and great indignation is expressed against the would-be assassin. Comment runs high upon the political hiatus his decease would make. Should the Hon. Geo. Brown survive, his palmy days are over, and his death, so far as the political aspect of Canada is concerned, would scarcely be felt.

I have as yet heard no word of approbation on the quarto appearance of the *Globe*. I do not dislike the quarto, but the printing is bad, and, as was suggested in the *SPECTATOR* last week, the news and advertisements are ignominiously mixed.

The *Mail* must assuredly expect a remarkable increase in circulation to make the erection of such a monstrous establishment as the Company is engaged in expedient. The character of the building is not too substantial, and takes after the style of the *Tribune* block of New York, only it is about one-fourth the size. The *Globe* will find itself far afield one of these days.

So the Ontario surplus is to be thrown away on new Parliament buildings after all. The time is coming when the means of drawing our revenue will be more limited than at present; the surplus should be more wisely expended than in erecting a costly Legislative Hall. Ontario will yet repent the headlong precipitancy which suggested this extravagant toy. Operations have commenced on the excavations.

There is something very mysterious about the Huron-Ontario Canal business. Why do not our influential papers discuss the scheme? If the thing is at all practicable or necessary, why is the matter kept so quiet? The patent lift-lock, by which the hilly country between Ontario and Lake Simcoe is to be made a mole hill, is on exhibition at the Parliament buildings. I have seen its action, and as it appears to have answered the purpose in England, there is no reason why it should not be adopted in Canada. I attended a public meeting last summer in the St. Lawrence Hall, convened for the purpose of discussing the advisability of attempting the construction of the canal, and there were not fifty men of public spirit enough in Toronto to take sufficient interest to attend the meeting, although the Engineer and Mr. Capreol, the moving spirit, were there to explain fully everything connected with it. Prof. Goldwin Smith appeared to throw cold water on the affair. I am of opinion that there will be time enough twenty years hence to discuss this subject. A canal between Ontario and Lake Huron or Georgian Bay is hardly to be thought of just now.

So the Toronto, Grey & Bruce Railway Co. bondholders have decided to shut down on the road if the municipalities do not come to their aid. The dodge is a good one; the Company desire to procure new rolling stock, and they need it badly enough; they also desire to change the gauge of the line, for which purpose they have issued a circular to their employees to the effect, that if they do not receive aid in the way of bonuses before the first of June, they have no other resource but to close the road. This reads very prettily, and as a scare is well worded, and ought to squeeze a few dollars out of the villages along the line.

The city of Toronto is very badly drained. The main sewer of Yonge Street, the principal street, is only four and a-half feet in height—far too small. This street was torn up and an excavation made for the whole length of the street, two miles, and this new drain put down. The complaints are frequent. Sherbourne Street has a creek running constantly through its entire length; and though when the creek is small this may be an advantage, yet when the thaws of spring come, or a heavy shower descends, it is found to be anything but