

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The opening of the Imperial Parliament by His Majesty, King Edward VII., in person, was an event of historic importance. The event was, practically, the introduction of the King to the political duties which, under the British constitution, devolve upon the Sovereign. Owing to the shadow upon the Throne caused by the death of Prince Albert, the Queen had greatly moderated the splendour which had become associated with Her proceeding in State to open Parliament, and Her advancing years had still more reduced the ceremonial display. King Edward made the occasion of opening His first Parliament one in which all the old-time magnificence of a State procession through London, and reception in the House of Lords, were revived. Few of those who witnessed the scenes in the streets or in the House had ever witnessed such a display on a like occasion. Indeed, it is said that never before had the House of Lords been so resplendent. There was great dissatisfaction felt by many of the nobles who were crowded out of the Chamber by the ladies of the aristocracy, who are described as having literally taken possession of the floor and many of the peers' benches. We do not wonder at their eagerness to see the ceremony, nor at their exuberant loyalty in being present to do all honour to the King and his beautiful and beloved Queen Alexandra, whose virtues as a wife and mother add brilliance and stability to the Throne. The King's speech was short, as is usual; he made a pathetic allusion to the Queen's death, declared his intention to tread in her footsteps, and announced the intention of the Heir Apparent to visit Australia and Canada. After this outburst of State display, London and society relapsed into the soberness of mourning.

Toronto took the lead in voting \$10,000 towards the cost of giving a loyal reception to the Duke of Cornwall. The same amount will be voted by this city. In whatever places in Canada the Prince may visit, there will be a most impressive display of the enthusiastic loyalty prevalent in this Dominion. It is early yet to be arranging for the reception, but the affair should be placed in the hands of a Committee of leading citizens, including representative members of the City Council, the Board of Trade and other city organizations, with the Mayor as president. The aim should be to render the demonstration of welcome and of honour as popular as possible, to be indeed a citizens' display, worthy of this, the commercial metropolis of Canada.

The combination of the Carnegie iron and steel interests and several other large concerns of a like nature have made a great sensation, both in the States, in Great Britain and Europe. The consolidated capital amounts to \$812,000,000, a sum the magnitude of which cannot be readily grasped. The new company will control the output of over nineteen millions

of tons of iron ore, and will have a production of iron and steel more than one-half the total capacity of the furnaces and mills in the United States. In Great Britain the formation of this vast organization has nearly created a panic. It is denounced as a menace to the iron and steel trade of the world. Sir Richard Tangye, the distinguished Birmingham manufacturer, has denounced the amalgamation as a conspiracy of capitalists to aggrandize themselves at the cost of all the other producers of iron and steel, as an attempt to establish such a monopoly of this industry, as will be disastrous to the most important branch of manufacturing, and a serious injury to every trade and enterprise whose operations call for the use of iron and steel goods. Prices have already advanced under the influence of the consolidation. The Sydney furnaces and mills are declared to be capable of withstanding the threatened competition. It is time enough to bid the Devil, 'Good morning,' when you meet him," says the proverb; we do not anticipate mischief being done to Canadian interests by the Carnegie-Morgan combine, but it cannot be regarded without some anxiety.

When the Montreal Belt Line Railway was being established, there were fears expressed that there was more in view by the promoters than a mere enterprise to facilitate passenger traffic to and from suburban places which are agreeable to summer visitors. There were indications that a design was being worked out to give some railway an entrance into the heart of the city, to give it, indeed, a location in the harbour, or closely adjacent thereto. For some time past the Belt Line managers have been fighting for the privilege of laying their tracks from La Salle avenue, on the eastern border of the city, through various streets westward to the centre of the city and thence to Bonsecours Market, and round back to place of starting. Recent developments show that "the pipes have been laid," as Americans say, for handing over the Belt Line plant and privileges to the Northern Railway, so that this line would have a direct entrance to the water front of the city, to have, in fact, a depot close to the heart of the harbour. Before conceding any such right of way through the streets of the city the Council should pause to consider what effect these new lines would have on the business of the city. Already the Street Railway system gives abundant facilities for passenger traffic to all sections of the city. There is not a house in Montreal which cannot be reached easily by the cars. To achieve this result many streets have been rendered almost useless to private vehicles. The public convenience has been so very fully provided for, that any more tracks would be little short of a public nuisance, certainly they would supply nothing which the public convenience needs for either business or pleasure. The effect on the harbour would be to obstruct the transportation of goods and the movements of passengers.