

MR. BLAKE'S SPEECH.

(From an occasional correspondent).

The new opposition leader has made a set, elaborate and brilliant speech in Montreal. Mr. Blake evidently intended to strike the key note of his programme and the commercial metropolis was not an unfitting place for this. The banquet at which this speech was made was given to him by a club of young Reformers of this city; and it may be noticed, *en passant*, that clubs of this kind, both Conservative and Liberal appear to have become a feature of our political parties.

Mr. Blake commenced by telling his hearers that party organization was the one thing necessary for the triumph of the principles of the Liberal cause in Canada; and then referring to the Pacific Syndicate measure, on which he dwelt at some length, he described it as a "great public misfortune," in fact "a great public crime." This is, at the least, very strong language; and at the best, a mere using of wild words at random, which is not a sign of good omen from a man on whom rests the responsibilities of leadership. But Mr. Blake went further, and he said he did not speak without having weighed his words when he stated that his belief was, that there was at one time "not merely outside the House of Commons, but also within its walls, a preponderance of opinion adverse to the contract;" and he asked: "By what means? Under what circumstances? By what pressure? I don't accuse any one of baseness; I don't accuse any one of impropriety, but there was a rallying to the support of the Government which deliberately chose to pledge itself to the carrying of that contract. What that preponderating influence may have been, it is not for me to state; it is for the country to judge." Now there can be no mistaking the meaning of this insinuation; and we have to say first, that it would have been more manly and much more respectable to have taken the responsibility of saying outright that he believed the majority of the House was corrupt; or that the very large and unbroken majority which voted for the Pacific Contract, changed their opinions for corrupt reasons. If this were true it would be very shocking and demoralizing. But the insinuation is not one which ought to have been lightly made or without sufficient proof, for the reason that it would be something as demoralizing to our political discussions as the alleged offence itself would be criminal. We ourselves noticed that there were many members who were at first staggered and taken aback by the bold confident denunciation with which the measure was assailed; but whose views in favor of it became fixed as the argument proceeded and the country in various ways was heard from. It does not seem to have occurred to the glowing and confident gentleman who held forth before the audience of young Reformers at the Windsor on Tuesday evening, that the arguments for the measure were a great deal stronger and more convincing than those against it, and that it would require far different words than any of which he appears to be the master, to make the people of this country believe that it is not an extremely advantageous bargain for the Dominion to obtain the building of the Through Pacific Railway for twenty-five millions of acres of land and thirty-two million dollars of money. It is certain that this measure has relieved the Government of this country from the depressing effect of possibly unknown burdens; while on the other hand, the carrying out of the works projected by the Syndicate will bring an undreamt of prosperity, against which, Montreal of all other places, should not indulge in the folly of declaiming.

Mr. Blake in the next place dwelt upon the public debt of Canada, and the tariff of customs duties. Neither of these subjects is his forte, and neither has fallen within the special line of his studies. As respects the public debt, he took a position which can not be maintained. It is very light when compared with that of the United States; or those of the colonies of the Empire. And it is moreover, represented by public works to which Canada owes its prosperity; and not the waste of war. With respect to the tariff, Mr. Blake avowed himself to be a free trader, and he indulged the young gentleman of the Liberal club with some very elementary arguments in support of his position. Few educated men pretend to call in question the positions which he stated. But there are special and governing facts which affect the tariff relations of nations; and there is much reason to doubt now whether the one-sided arrangement which has been made in England for the last thirty years is favorable, or can be very much longer maintained. As respects the particular tariff of Canada, moreover, it must be borne in mind, that while it is called a National Policy Tariff, it is still a commercial one. This is proved by the increasing revenue which Mr. Blake's friends in Parliament ventured to prophesy would not come. The Canadian tariff, moreover, is only about half as high, or in other words, levies only about half the taxation of that of the United States. We did not, however, understand Mr. Blake's speech to mean, that he is set in favor of reversing Sir Leonard Tilley's tariff policy; on the contrary we gathered the reverse, despite the elementary propositions he stated, and it is a well known fact that many of the Liberals of the Province of Quebec are not willing to pin their faith to the rigid propounding of tariff doctrines which were made so iron a rule under the Government of Mr. Mackenzie. In truth this is the only substantial *raison d'être* for the substitution of Mr. Blake as leader for

Mr. Mackenzie. The change does afford an opportunity to him which the retention of Mr. Mackenzie would not have done.

Mr. Blake devoted another portion of his speech to the discussion of the relations of Canada with the Empire, and there is much that he said on this point which may call for serious reflection. He endeavored to lead the young men of the Liberal Club to what he considered higher aspirations than merely colonial life; yet not to any state apart from connection with the Empire. But the Dominion of Canada is not now a merely colonial state. It is, on the contrary, a self-governing dominion, to use the descriptive term of the act. It acknowledges the sovereignty of the Queen, but not by any tie which carries with it responsibility for the burdens of the Empire. Mr. Blake, however, analysed, and here the tone of his legal mind led him into a most unworthy quibble. He said, with reference to matters of our own foreign policy, that we are not merely subjects of the Queen, but subjects of the Queen's subjects, meaning and saying that it was the Queen's Ministers which decided our common civil treaties for us. But this is only to say that the Sovereign of the Empire is a constitutional one; and instead of doing acts of her own free will, only does them upon the advice of Ministers who are responsible to Parliament—a system which is our boast and pride, as offering the best conditions for freedom and stability which have ever yet been discovered. We cannot agree with all the criticisms we have seen on Mr. Blake's speech on this point. We do not think the last words have yet been said with regard to the relations of the outlying portions of the Empire with the United Kingdom, and there is always something gained by intelligent discussion. We doubt if any change is possible which shall merely rest on a cut and dried paper constitution; at least in the immediate present; but we see events which may arise in the near future which may bring important constitutional changes with them.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

The cartoon upon our front page should by right have appeared in last week's issue, from which an accident alone excluded it. The Breaking up of the Parliament School at Ottawa will be easily understood and the faces of some of the most successful members during the recent session will be recognized amongst the prize winners, while the Opposition crowd discontentedly into the background empty handed.

"The Joys and Miseries of the Little Birds" is the title of a series of charming illustrations by Giacomelli, others of which we expect from time to time to reproduce. The story of it is told by the verses underneath which are from the French of M. Hervilly.

THE LATE CAPT. BRONSON AND HIS "ARK."—One of the most eccentric citizens New York has had for many a day died on the 25th ult., and was quietly buried in Woodlawn Cemetery. The obituary records of the day contained no notice of his demise, and few of those who were familiar with his strange home are even now aware that the occupant has been removed. His name was Lemuel H. Bronson. Born in Litchfield, Conn., some seventy-five years ago, he came to New York when twenty-five years old to engage in oyster-planting. He owned, and his widow still owns, two houses and eight lots in Fordham. But the old captain by brevet said he "didn't want to be smothered in a house," with a contemptuous emphasis on house; so he bought himself a canal-boat that had been in the grain and feed transportation, and had it towed into the Harlem River out of the reach of breakers. Anchor was dropped about thirty years ago into the mud near the mouth of Sherman's Creek, an inlet on the west shore, near what would be West Two Hundred and Sixth Street if that thoroughfare existed. This neighbourhood is now included in Inwood. For thirty years "Pop" Bronson lived there in his cozy boat. He called it "Noah's Ark," and then began to people it. He married three times, and his widow still clings to the ark with her son and daughter. For a year the veteran oysterman was unable to go on deck. Confined to his cabin and his berth by sickness, his view of the world was bounded on four sides by the small window of his stateroom, and confined to the Harlem River and the neighbourhood of Fordham Landing, nearly opposite.

"Noah's Ark," where this interesting old man lived so long, is a most attractive habitation. Without, it looks like any other canal boat which might have drifted ashore there. It has missed painting for a long time; but within, it has advantages which the most elegant or the most commodious house in Fifth Avenue can never possess. Inhabitants of flats will appreciate what it is to have no "dark" rooms and no light shafts. Dwellers anywhere would enjoy the view which this half-floating palace commands. The scenery of the Harlem River is quiet, but it is beautiful, and from the little square windows of his cozy cabin "Pop" Bronson loved to rest his eyes upon the natural vista without and beyond. The interior, too, was a revelation to a stranger entering. The cabin is fitted up in the most comfortable fashion. Paintings and prints are upon the standing walls, and knick-knacks here and there fill in with artistic effect the spaces of the parlour. The galley, or kitchen, where Mrs. Bronson presides, is small, but there are no flights of tiresome stairs up which the coal must be carried for the kitchen fire, which

glows in the tidily kept stove. This apartment is in the stern of the boat. Amidships is the grand saloon, or parlour, while forward are the sleeping rooms. In summers past Mr. Bronson used to take a few boarders who agreed with him in appreciating the beauties of his surroundings and mode of life.

A NAVAL ENGAGEMENT IN CHESTER RIVER.—For several years the State authorities of Maryland have had much trouble with oyster-dredgers working either out of season or within prohibited limits. The swift-sailing schooners generally succeeded in eluding the officials when detected in unlawful dredging. At length the patience of the officers gave out, and a police boat was built expressly to prevent the dredgers from trespassing on grounds forbidden to them under the law, one of the provisions of which is that there shall be no dredging beyond the headlands of the rivers and estuaries of the bay; and another provision of which is that the dredgers must cull their oysters on the natural or legal grounds whereupon they were taken.

In the thick fog of Friday, March 18th, a fleet of oyster-dredging schooners passed inside of the headlands of Chester River, went up the river and there commenced taking oysters on the forbidden grounds. No trouble was experienced until late in the afternoon, when several of the fleet ran down and capsized the tongs who were at work along the stream. The tongs, who are the irreconcilable enemies of the dredgers, saw a chance for revenge, and so sent a delegation of their men across Gray's Inn Neck to the captain of the police boat *Nannie Merriman*, who at once headed for the mouth of the river to lie in wait for the dredgers. The first vessel to arrive was the schooner *Eugene*, Captain John Wilson, owned by Patrick Pendergast, of Baltimore. The captain of the *Nannie* ordered the *Eugene* to drop her jib and lie-to. No answer was returned, and the schooner kept on her course, when the sloop ran up alongside of her and repeated the order. Still it was not heeded, and then the fight commenced. The *Nannie* fired from a swivel-gun, and the *Eugene* replied from several large shotguns in the hands of the captain and crew. For a while the exchange of shots was lively. Captain Wilson stood to his helm until a tin cup on the top of the binnacle was shot away, and then he lashed his helm and dropped under the sail for safety. His vessel was the faster sailor in a light wind, and he soon got out of the way, suffering no greater loss than the cutting away of his sounding-pole by shot from the sloop, and the riddling of his bulwarks. At one time he was so close to the *Nannie* that in jibing his mainsail his boom struck the shrouds of the police sloop and knocked off the starboard light. The *Nannie* did not endeavour to pursue the *Eugene* any further, but turned back to look after the rest of the fleet of illegal dredgers. Shots were exchanged with the schooners *Merrick*, *Cambridge*, *Kite* and *Peter*, as they tried to run the gantlet, but all succeeded in escaping except the *Kite* and *Merrick*, which were captured, and, with their captains and crews, were taken under the escort of the sloop to Charlestown. Notwithstanding the briskness of the firing, it is not known that anybody was hurt beyond a man in the *Peter*, who was slightly wounded in the forearm. The *Eugene* arrived in Baltimore and discharged her cargo. The *Merrick* and the *Kite* belonged to J. Fred Bucheimer, who went to Charlestown and paid the fine of \$100 and costs for each of his vessels.

The contrast between the streets of New York and Paris is sufficiently striking. Some little time since we published in the letter of a Paris correspondent a description of the different manner in which a Parisian and an English lady cross a muddy street, but we fear had his ideal *Parisienne* been condemned to make her way across Broadway in these latter days she would have made almost as bad a job of it as her English rival. In truth the accounts of the condition of the streets is really appalling, but the illustrations we publish from *Hesper's Weekly* might serve as a hint for other places beside our sister metropolis.

We give an illustration this week of the grand ball at Potsdam on the evening of the Berlin Marriage. The ball was opened by a detachment of the Imperial Body Guard, the historic "Blue Boys" of Frederick I. of Prussia. This monarch, albeit an insignificant looking fellow enough (in point of size) himself, or perhaps for that very reason, insisted that every member of his picked body guard should exceed six feet in height, (German measure), or about 6ft. 2 1/2 in. of our own. They still show at Potsdam the measure under which he used to make them, measuring them with his own hands, and for fear of deception not only "in their stockings," but in that condition which a lady of our acquaintance was wont to call *au naturel*. The height and costume of the Guard has been maintained to this day, and a very fine appearance they make in their blue cutaways, white cross belts and leggings and mitre helmets.

The illustrations on our back page was by error fully described in our last week's issue in which it had been designed to place it, and to which we refer our readers for explanation.

A NEW requiem, composed by Herr Bonawitz, was to be performed for the first time in England on March 11, at St. Matthias Church, West Brimpton. The tenor solos were written for Mr. Faulkner Leigh, with a violin obligato by Herr Joachim, accompanied by a full orchestra and chorus, conducted by the composer.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE surrender of Potchefstroom is confirmed. DANIEL WATERS, the President of Siberia, is dead. SPOTTED typhus has made its appearance in New York. A CANADIAN despatch says Ayoub Khan has been taken prisoner. A LONDON cable announces the death of Admiral C. G. Paley. THE situation of affairs in Tunis is assuming a serious aspect. LORD BEACONSFIELD'S condition is very critical. A WASHINGTON despatch says there will be no extra session of Congress. A MONSTER Democratic meeting held in Madrid last week condemned Cuban slavery. THE Boers are said to be dissatisfied with the terms of peace, and further outbreaks are apprehended. THE Earl of Caithness died at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, last week, from paralysis of the heart. THE murderer of Captain Elliott, killed while crossing the Vaal River in January last, now lies in prison at Heidelberg. A CONSTANTINOPLE despatch says the European Powers have accepted the frontier line proposed by Turkey. THE editor of the *Freiheit*, the Socialist organ in London, has been arrested by the Government. THE new American Protestant Episcopal Church in Paris, the corner stone of which was laid last week, is to cost half a million of dollars.

VARIETIES.

IN a case of assault and robbery at Sheffield recently, one of the witnesses was asked how far he stood from the spot where the deed was done. He answered unhesitatingly, "Sixty-three feet seven inches!" "How, sir," cried the prosecuting lawyer, "how can you possibly pretend to such accuracy?" "Well," replied the man in the box, "you see, I thought some d—d fool would be sure to ask me, and so I measured."

AN IRREPRESSIBLE ORGAN.—In a small church at a village near Brighton, where the congregation could not afford to pay an organist, they bought a self-acting organ, a compact instrument, well suited to the purpose and constructed to play forty different tunes. The sexton had instructions how to set it going and how to stop it, but, unfortunately, he forgot the latter part of his business, and, after singing the first four verses of a hymn previous to the sermon the organ could not be stopped, and it continued playing two verses more; then, just as the clergyman completed the words, "Let us pray," the organ clicked and started a fresh tune. The minister sat it out patiently, and then renewed his introductory words, "Let us pray," when click went the organ again and started off another tune. The sexton and others continued their exertions to find out the spring, but no one could put a stop to it; so they got four of the stoutest men in the church to shoulder the perverse instrument and they carried it down the centre aisle of the Church playing away, into the churchyard, where it continued clicking and playing until the whole forty tunes were finished.

A PHYSICAL WRECK.—A hacking cough saps the physical constitution, not alone because it destroys the tissue of the lungs and develops tubercles which corrode and destroy them, but also because it ruins rest and impairs digestion. How important, therefore, is a resort to judicious medication to stay its ravages. A total physical wreck must inevitably ensue without this. In the choice of a remedy, the pulmonary invalid is sometimes misled by specious representations, to the serious prejudice of his bodily well-being. The only safe resort is a tried and highly sanctioned remedy. The credentials of Northrop & Lyman's Emulsion of Cod Liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda entitle it to the place it occupies, viz., that of the foremost cough medicine and lung invigorant sold on this continent. The testimony of veteran physicians, and a popularity based on merit, combine to give it the prestige of a standard medicine. In cases of asthma, weak chest and lungs, bronchitis, laryngitis and other throat and lung complaints, it may be implicitly relied upon.

PUBLISHERS' NOTICES.

Our agent, Mr. O. Aymong, will visit Ottawa and all places on the O. M. O. & Q. R. to Hochelaga during the next fortnight, for the purpose of collecting subscriptions due to this paper, and obtaining new subscribers. We trust that those who are in arrears will make a special effort to settle with him.

Mr. J. H. Gould is at present on a tour through Ontario in the interests of the NEWS, and is now in Toronto, where we trust that he will meet with a good reception from our friends that are and those that are to be.