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London, Wednesday, April 17.

Edward Blake at Westminster.

The parliamentary leader writer of that brilliant and influential newspaper, the London (England) Daily Chronicle, gives an interesting account of the debate in the House of Commons, which sprang up in connection with a small measure called the Demise of the Crown Bill. According to statute, any member of Parliament, accepting office from the crown, is compelled to vacate his seat, and the question raised was, whether Ministers, on the demise of the Crown, are not equally called upon to vacate their seats, and seek re-election, on reappointment to their offices. The question was introduced, in the first place, rather humorously, by Mr. Labouchere, the wag and wit of the House, who, with admirably affected gravity, called attention to a question of privilege. Basing his contention on the law above cited, he affirmed that he saw "strangers" within the bar. In this dignified style, yet with a twinkling eye, he pointed out Mr. Balfour, the Conservative leader in the Commons, as the offending "stranger."

The interposition of Mr. Labouchere was humorous in manner, but it was soon recognized that an important constitutional question had been raised. A few hours later it reappeared in the form of a second reading for the Demise of the Crown Bill. This bill provides, that in future the holding of offices shall not be affected by the demise of the Crown, and therefore it will not be necessary for members to submit themselves for re-election. Several of the lawyers continued the discussion. Mr. Labouchere, as a layman, reiterated the point that Ministers have accepted office under the King, and according to statute, they ought to have vacated their seats. This bill proposed to retain them in the House; that, he contended, was an evasion of the constitution, which ordains that the only way of entrance to the House of Commons is by popular vote.

Among the speakers of importance, apart from Mr. Labouchere, was the Hon. Edward Blake, respecting whose address we take the following from the London Chronicle:

"The only other noteworthy speech was made by Mr. Edward Blake. Mr. Blake sits among the Irish members, a quarter from which one does not expect constitutional lawyers to arise, but before he joined the Nationalist party Mr. Blake was a considerable statesman in Canada and the leader of the Liberal party. He has brought to his present sphere a store of constitutional knowledge, and he likes to interfere in debates of this kind where points of law or procedure are discussed. He disagreed with the view that the custom of re-electing Ministers was an absurd one. It gives the constituencies the opportunity of passing judgment on the conduct of their members in accepting office, and it might be of very great use, if a member who had been elected to support one party accepted office under another one. Mr. Blake's chief argument, however, was the same as Mr. Labouchere's. The law relating to the acceptance of office under the Crown makes it necessary for Ministers to seek re-election, and in order that the ancient rule of election should not be broken the Ministers ought not to have made the bill retrospective. According to law they are no longer members of the House, and the bill will really have the effect of giving them fresh entrance to Parliament, a right which lies only in the hands of the people. Mr. Blake endorsed his argument with logic and zeal. I think it was by far the finest speech he has made this session."

To have a parliamentary speech by Edward Blake so described by one of the leading newspapers of the world, will cause no surprise to those who have heard him in Canada, whether in or out of the House. One cannot help thinking it a thousand pities his services should have been transferred from Canada to another, even if a greater, forum. In some respects, as being disconnected with both of the great parties of the state, Mr. Blake's abilities have not obtained their full opportunity of recognition in the House and in the reports of the debates in the newspapers. Were he, for example, member for some Liberal constituency in Great Britain, though still adhering to his opinions in regard to home rule for Ireland, he would have instantly to be reckoned with by the strongest men on either side as one of the half dozen members in the House who are the most powerful. Mr. Blake's intellectual abilities tower as pre-eminently as his high character and unbending integrity. We do not think it too much to say that in the domain of keen intellectual perception, Edward Blake has few superiors in the world.

With a mental force and ability so outstanding, it is sometimes asked why Mr. Blake did not succeed in overthrowing, and overthrowing permanently, the Canadian political party against which he fought so strenuously and well. We believe the true answer to be that the conditions were such that, during a considerable portion of Sir John Macdonald's period of power, the Conservative leader could hardly have been dislodged by an angel from heaven. When one considers what it meant, in a new country,

to have the profuse expenditures of the C. P. R. in progress, creating an artificial prosperity; when one recalls how Liberals were bound, hand and foot, by the iniquitous franchise act, and by the still more iniquitous gerrymander act, whereby it was deliberately arranged that a majority of representatives in Parliament should be elected by a minority of the votes of the electorate; and when to this, one adds the almost supernatural knowledge of the most effective ways of getting at the weaknesses of individuals, which was possessed by that wily, Walpolean politician, Sir John A. Macdonald; we say the conditions in Canada were for a long time such as to make any headway against the Conservative Government for the time practically impossible. In Canada, it may then be said, owing to certain conditions utterly beyond his control, Edward Blake's lot as a Liberal leader was fated to have been cast in a time when he did not have a fair chance to show what he could have done on even conditions, and to have been cast in circumstances under which no one else could have done better than himself, nor, for that matter, nearly as well. He has now his opportunity in the greatest parliamentary arena of the world. He has become accustomed to its atmosphere and usages, and can bring into debate, especially on constitutional questions, a wealth of knowledge unrivaled even at Westminster.

Herbert Gladstone, M.P., who is thought likely some day to be premier of Great Britain, says the Liberals would refuse to accept office unless the King first pledged himself to create a number of peers sufficient to swamp any opposition in the House of Lords to Liberal measures. The chances afforded the House of Lords for obstructing and mutilating Liberal legislation is something that Canadian Reformers can understand through their experience with a partisan Senate.

The London, Aylmer and North Shore Electric Railway.

Time changes all things, and even railways must change with every new invention. In fact, there is no line of life on which is written in more plain, bold letters "prepare for changes," even the statutes declaring that the best known apparatus of its kind shall be used. This stimulates invention, and the air of railway life is not a sleepy one, but one of constant improvement and change.

It has been predicted that within ten years we will see the Great Western division of the Grand Trunk run by electricity, generated by the power of Niagara Falls. Certain it is that that great power will be more and more used, even if to a certain extent it diminishes the glory of this one of the seven wonders of the world. Considerations of this kind make us more ready to welcome our new visitor, "The London, Aylmer and North Shore Electric Railway." It increases the importance of London as a railway center, and will be a direct benefit to the district through which it runs by bringing that district in closer touch with London, and in a manner different from that now enjoyed. Are electric railways going to play as important a part in the affairs of the Province as steam railways now do? Will steam be discarded and all railways be operated by the power of electricity?

There are many advocates of free charters to any railway company, and we speak now of steam railways. There are many who would place no restrictions whatever, but let as many railways as choose to do so, parallel each other. There is a consideration which becomes very important if steam railways are to be superseded by electricity, or even if electric railways are to become numerous and operated as they are at present. Steam railways avoid highways, electric railways seek them.

We have recently had a wholesome lesson taught us by the bargain made by the Ontario Government with the Manitoulin and North Shore Railway Company in which, by conditions, some of which are new, the interests in the future of the public are protected. How should the interests of the public be protected in electric railways?

As we have pointed out, steam railways shun the highways, electric railways seek them. This no doubt grew out of the fact that electric cars took the place of horse cars, which were almost entirely confined to city streets. Then enterprise took a hand in, and still using the street, stretched out to the suburbs, and then from city to city. Has the public safety been properly protected, or have we, like the horses, become used to the street cars? Have we given sufficient thought to the possibilities of development of electricity as the most likely if not the only motive power to be used within a few years. If the Great Western was run by electricity, of course the cars and all its equipments would be on a first-class scale. If the new railway about to be built to Port Burwell is run and equipped on the same magnitude, what, then, of the prudence of granting the highway? The horse that does not take fright at the present electric cars in the city streets may not relish the sight of a car four times its size, or a dozen of them at once, rushing past at 40 or 50 miles an hour.

These are considerations of great importance. We have seen Bathurst street in this city, from Burwell to Wellington street, rendered useless and un-

safe. Will country roads be rendered unsafe to such an extent that roads with electric cars on them will be avoided? We have seen millions spent in the city of Rochester to rid it of the danger of the railways running down its streets on the level. We should not look at this question from the present condition and uses of electric railways, but rather from the standpoint of what they are likely to become.

The consideration we have given to the matter would cause us to change the law so that whatever powers are considered prudent to be granted shall be so granted, not by each municipality, but by the Legislature. This would secure uniformity and give to each municipality the benefit of the judgment of the members from all over the Province.

We do not wish to stifle enterprise; far from it. We wish to secure uniformity of conditions. As at present, each municipality would make its own terms, and these terms might vary in each instance. The importance of the question is certainly provincial, and it is emphatically a case in which it is wise first to be sure you are right before you go ahead. County and township councilors, as a rule, are good men, and members of the Legislature with wider ranges of experience should deal safely with these questions, and would doubtless look as far into the future as they could. By removing the conditions to be imposed from the municipal council to the Legislature, the benefit of the judgment of both the municipal councilor and the legislator is secured, and each municipality has the benefit of the experience of every other one. Let us have electric railways in abundance. Let us welcome cordially the new comer. Let us in securing advantages avoid dangers, and do that which is in the best interests of the public.

The principle, of the duty of the state to supply free education to its coming citizens, is rapidly spreading in the United States, twenty-four States of the Union having free textbook laws. The argument is, if there is to be a free public school system at all, nothing should be left undone to make it as perfect as possible. The community should bear all the expense of education, says the Chicago Journal, for it is for the benefit of the State that children are educated, and the furnishing of textbooks is a part of that expense.

Wants to Be a Province.

That was a very good speech in the budget debate, by Walter Scott, M.P. for West Assiniboia, on the position of the Northwest Territories. As in the United States, the position of a territory is less full, and complete; and self-governing, than that of a State or Province. Mr. Scott's contention is that the time has come when the financial arrangements with the Northwest Territories should be rearranged; and that the Territories should become a Province, or perhaps more than one Province. Mr. Scott seems to The Advertiser to have made out a good case in his able and interesting address. The member for West Assiniboia is one of London's "Old Boys"—though by no means old, after all, in years, being one of the youngest men in the House.

"The wicked flee when no man pursueth." Our contemporary, the Free Press, fears Premier Ross may imitate his political opponents of a former time of the Dominion arena, by the introduction of a Provincial gerrymander bill next session. Our contemporary can again relapse into sleep, balmy sleep. Mr. Ross has not the slightest intention of introducing anything that could by the wildest stretch of imagination be denominated a gerrymander.

British Judicial Committee.

The Ottawa Citizen of a recent date contains the following editorial comments on a matter that will greatly interest Advertiser readers:

"The British Government proposes to reorganize the judicial committee of the Privy Council, in order that it may more effectively deal with matters pertaining to the colonies. Apparently it is the intention of the Imperial Government to assemble a commission on which the colonies are to be represented to draft a sort of constitution, or rather to outline the scope of the duties of the judicial committee on broader lines, in view of the confederation of the Australian colonies and probable confederation in the future of the South African colonies. It is a movement of much importance to the colonies, because the work of the committee in connection with Canadian affairs in the past has not been altogether satisfactory."

"Canada has been asked to nominate a representative to the commission, and as one of the most distinguished authorities on Canadian constitutional law, Hon. David Mills will likely be chosen to go to England for that purpose, though the selection has not yet been made. The special study which the honorable gentleman has made of the needs of Canada in connection with the work of such a judicial tribunal will render his assistance of great value to the Empire in the accomplishment of an undertaking so important to the future of the colonial dependencies."

Central Public Square.

The Toronto Globe advocates the acquisition by Toronto for public squares of the Upper Canada College grounds, and that part of the block opposite the new city hall, west of and including what used to be Dr. Topp's Church, on Queen street.

The Globe's head is level. No city like Toronto should be so poverty-stricken as it is in the matter of public squares. The whole Province is proud of Toronto and wants it to prosper. It is the financial, legal, educational, legislative and business center of the Province. Why should it not be a model city? and how can any city take the front rank without squares, and parks, and commons? Boston Common, Central Park, New York, Union and Madison Squares all give character to Boston and New York. The Upper Canada College grounds and Knox Church Square would be first-class. The block between the City Hall and Osgoode Hall would have been better; but the Manning building being erected, puts it out of the question. The block opposite Osgoode Hall to the south has very little in it except the school, which could be left. Doubtless there are many other sites well worth considering. A block or two in "The Ward" could be opened up as commons. The Globe refers to the early days of Toronto. These are its early days. Toronto is destined to be a great city, perhaps one of the greatest in America. What it will cost Toronto to get the necessary squares and parks and commons today is very little compared with what it will cost in the future, if now neglected.

We hope the Globe's suggestion will be taken up and become an accomplished fact; and we hope, too, that every other city and town in Canada will see to it that parks and squares and commons are secured, and the beauty of our cities and towns improved; to say nothing of the health inseparably connected with commons and the encouragement of outdoor sports. We have pointed out London's duty often. We are glad to notice the Globe pointing out Toronto's duty in the same direction.

Is the Old Land slow? Well, perhaps, in some things; but it goes it when it gets started. The Old Londoners of the western suburbs are now reveling in their new electric trains, which carry hundreds of thousands of passengers daily.

M. Deschamps recently gave a lecture in Montreal on the History of the French Press. Speaking of the better newspapers of France, he held that they owed their high position to the fact that during the most heated discussions they invariably maintain a courteous tone and are always careful to preserve the literary excellence of their articles, holding that moderation in tone in the discussion of questions is essential to literary style.

UNSUSPECTED SOURCES OF CONTAGION.

As I passed a Dundas street fruit store one day last week, in company with a well-known local physician, a tempting-looking display of dates caught my attention. The fruit, in the shape left by the removal of the sides of the box in which it had been shipped, stood on a small board, and its shining golden-brown richness was an inducement to the passerby to invest and partake of its lusciousness. Just as we passed, a gust of wind raised a choking cloud of dust around us, and as I suddenly thought of how many baptisms of street dust and microscopic filth the fruit I had been admiring was daily subjected to, it lost its attractiveness. I called my medical companion's attention to the circumstance, and asked him what must be the effect upon the human body of the consumption of food which had previously been so exposed to the pollution of flying particles of dirt. He replied: "There are many foodstuffs which should never be exposed in front of shops, especially such fruit as dates, figs, etc., which from the sticky nature of their surface retain any atoms which come in contact with them. Fish, too, should not be exposed, for after they have been so left for days, and sometimes for weeks, they are positively unfit for food. Of course, the germs with which articles so exposed become laden are not so dangerous when taken with food into the stomach as when drawn in to the lungs and air passages from the air. Still, the danger is there, and apart from that, persons of cleanly and refined instincts would hardly like the idea of consuming foods which had been subjected to the contamination which such exposure entails. If people would stop and think about these things, and refuse to buy articles which they knew had been exposed to the myriad forms of filth which fill the air on breezy days, you would soon see a decided change for the better in this respect. As it is, I should think it quite within the province of the board of health to take the matter up and secure such municipal enactments as would stop this source of danger to the public health."

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We are constantly being complimented on our Table Linen values, and justly so. This week we are showing two extra special bargains:

No. 1—Special line pure Irish Damask Table Linen, good width, extra weight. This is worth regularly 40c and 45c. Our price this week..... 29c

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Every thread Linen and worth 33 1/2 per cent more than the price we are selling them at.

Special line All-Linen Crash Toweling, 18 inches wide, heavy weight, worth regularly 10c. Our special price, per yard, 7 1/2c

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Special line All-Linen Bleached Damask Towels, knotted fringed ends, size 23x45, worth regularly 37 1/2c. Our special price, each..... 25c

Special line All-Linen Huck Towels, red border, extra heavy, size 23x46, worth regularly 20c. Our special price, each... 15c

Special line All-Linen Huck Towels, size 18x36, fine quality, hemmed ends. Our special price each..... 12 1/2c

Special line Heavy Bath Towels, size 21x50. These are worth regularly 62 1/2c. Our special price, each..... 45c

White Cotton Special

We place on sale today 1,200 yards of Bleached Cotton, in mill ends of from 5 to 10 yards each, 36 inches wide, worth regularly 6c and 7c.

Our Special Price, 4c Per Yard.

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Repeat orders just to hand of scarce shades in Dress Goods and Silks.

Taffeta Silks at 50c, 65c, 75c, 85c and \$1, in old rose, pastel blue and green, chocolate brown, dark navy, stone blue and turquoise.

Satin Merv, and Britannia Silk at 75c, 85c and \$1, in brown navy, bluet, corn flower, sky, turquoise, castor and pastel green.

Black Taffeta Silk, 36-inch: per yard, \$1 25 (note the width). Black Taffeta, 23-inch, per yard \$1 and \$1 25. Guaranteed.

Black Taffeta Silks, 20 and 23-inch, per yard 60c, 65c, 75c and 85c.

Special Blouse Silk, 35c

About 20 pieces of Fancy Waist Silks, in Taffeta and English Foulards, stripes, checks and fancies; regular 50c and 75c, to clear, per yard 35c.

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About 25 ends of Waist and Dress Silks, in Foulards and Taffeta, stripes, checks and floral designs, regular 75c, 85c and \$1, to clear, per yard 50c.

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New Silk Grenadines, Black..... 75c

44-inch, large check designs..... \$1 00

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44-inch, stripes and checks..... \$1 00 and \$1 25

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Exclusive Dresses in Silk Crepe de Chine, at \$12 to \$15 per dress length.

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48-inch Harris suitings, all wool, excellent finish, special per yard 75c.

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Satin-Finish Broadcloth, 56-inch, light and medium weight, for spring suits, per yard \$1 50, \$1 65, \$1 75, \$2, \$2 50 and \$3.

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SOLE leather, or apology—which?

—Can you tell from appearances?

Good grade of upper leather—shoe fits well,—smart,—stylish!

But how about vitality—flexibility—shape retention—continued satisfaction?

Is the sole of tough, close textured, long fibred leather, which holds the stitches like wax, repels water, bends like buckskin, and wears to the thinness of a wafer without breaking?

Or—is it short grained as linoleum, brittle and stiff like cardboard, without cling to the stitches, and with a chronic thirst for water, like blotting paper?

How do you know which kind of sole leather is in the shoe, under the finish?

How can you hold the Manufacturer responsible for it—or for value,—if the Dealer, not he, regulates the price?

There are shoes made to sell merely, and shoes made to wear. The Slater Shoe Makers dare not rob the covered up sole of The Slater Shoe, to give an extra selling effect to the visible shoe upper, because their brand, and price, pledges certain fixed values, from which there is no hedging.

The limit of the Makers' direct responsibility is clearly stated—viz:—their own prices, \$3.50 and \$5.00—stamped on the soles by themselves.

Every pair Goodyear Welted, and the trade mark is a slate frame.

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London's new water reservoir near Staines will cover 11 square miles. One alone will be as big as Hyde Park.

During the last fourteen years France has grabbed 3,000,000 square miles, against Great Britain's 2,000,000.

Last year the Pacific coast salmon pack reached 3,215,969 cases, the largest pack on record.

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