

HON. FRANCIS EVANTUREL,
PRESIDENT OF THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURE.

We have few facts to communicate concerning the President of the Bureau of Agriculture. He is a Lower Canadian and has represented the county of Quebec since 1854. Though new to official life, he has had considerable experience in Parliament and gives evidence of ability. As a speaker he is fluent and commands the attention of the House. It is yet too soon to venture an opinion as to his capacity to fulfill the duties of the office of which he is the head. We sincerely hope that he will earn for himself the reputation of an able and efficient public servant.

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THE CANADIAN Illustrated News.

HAMILTON, MARCH 14, 1863.

MINISTERIAL POSITION.

THE position of the Upper Canadian members of the present ministry—with the exception of the premier—was the staple subject of the late debate on the address. So far as we have observed however no very clear *expose* of the situation was given, nor indeed is the task an easy one, even to minds less warped by party pre-possessions than those of members of Parliament usually are.

The theory of our constitution requires that the ministry should be—in outwards appearance at least—a unit on all questions before the country.

It seems pretty evident that if anomalies are to be avoided this arbitrary principle will need modification. There may be no difficulty in its working while a broad easily traceable line of demarcation separates the House into two parties, each with a traditional policy too clearly defined to admit of admixture with the other. The thinking at the same time being done by a few leaders whom the rank and file blindly obey.

But if our politicians are to be anything else than legislative automatons, if their opinions are to be the result of their own brainwork instead of somebody's else the difficulty of obtaining an united cabinet must be apparent.

In connection with this let it be noted that a Parliamentary Opposition are powerless, so far as carrying out any positive policy is concerned. They may by their vigilance prevent many abuses, they may even compel a weak government to adopt some of their measures. But they can only give practical effect to their principles by crossing from the Opposition to the Ministerial benches.—Let us suppose then a Government in power whose policy is disapproved by the majority of the House, but this majority is composed of men who, united in their opposition to the Government, and perhaps on most of the leading questions of the day, yet differ on many points.—In such case what is to be done, clearly one of three things:

1st, That the Opposition should still tolerate the government, notwithstanding their disapproval of it, owing to their own inability to form one according to constitutional etiquette.

2d, That compromises should be made, sufficient to enable them to form a cabinet with at least the outward semblance of unity, or,

3d, That they should unite on such questions as they are already agreed upon, leaving members free to advocate their own peculiar views of questions on which the Cabinet cannot unite.

The first of these courses scarcely call for remark. It must be evident, that if an Opposition are to be excluded from office, on account of individual differences of opinion among them, politicians will be very shy of committing themselves to so-called impracticable measures, however wise and just these measures may be.

All great reforms are the work of time and persistent advocacy.

If then, it is a clearly understood principle, that the advocates of a reform are to be excluded from office until they can obtain a majority in favor of their measure, none but the most honest and upright, and consequently most desirable men to entrust with power, will make the sacrifice.

The second course pointed out, viz: That of compromise, seems to have been the one adopted by the present Ministry. Perhaps with our present ideas about an united Cabinet, it was the only course possible for them to pursue. It cannot be denied, however, that this course opens the door to a political latitudinarianism greatly to be deprecated. However honest in purpose the present Ministers may be, it is always repugnant to the broad moral sense of the community to find men voting against a measure which they once supported. We think it would have been far more satisfactory if Constitutional usage had permitted Ministers, if they could not agree upon representation by population, to have sacrificed the external appearance of unity, and to have allowed each member to vote for and advocate that measure as before.

PROVINCIAL NORMAL SCHOOL, TORONTO, AND CHIEF SUPERINTEN- DENT OF EDUCATION.

The Rev. Dr. Egerton Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Education, was born at Charlotteville, county of Norfolk, Canada West, in 1803. His father was Col. Joseph Ryerson of New Jersey, one of the United Empire Loyalists. At the time of the American revolution he went to New Brunswick, and in 1793 removed to the county of Norfolk, Upper Canada. In 1825, Egerton Ryerson was licensed to preach as a Wesleyan Minister. In 1829, the 'Christian Guardian,' literary organ of the Wesleyans, was established, of which he became editor and manager. He was appointed Principal of Victoria College, at Cobourg, Canada West, in 1841.

In 1844, he was appointed Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada.—In that year and the following he traveled through Britain, Ireland and on the continent of Europe, investigating and deriving information about the different systems of popular schools. After his return to Canada, he founded and brought into practical order the present system of school government and instruction in the years from 1846 to 1850. Nothing else, in the various institutions of Canada, bears a clearer and deeper impress of the mind of a statesman than do the Educational institutions as planned and matured by Dr. Ryerson. This strong expression, let it be remarked, is written by one who knows him not personally, and who is never likely to know him; but who, traveling through Canada purposely to observe its institutions, has noted the Common and Grammar Schools, and the modes of tuition practised by that extensive corps of teachers educated to the art of teaching at the Toronto Normal School.

Annual meetings for the election of School Trustees, are as by law directed, held in all the villages, towns, cities and townships of Upper Canada, on the second Wednesday in January, in each year. The constituents are the assessed rate-payers. Municipal corporations as directed by the trustees, levy school rates, and build school houses. The trustees appoint teachers and pay salaries under approval of the Chief Superintendent of Education.

All clergymen recognized by law, of whatever denomination, judges, members of the Legislature, magistrates, members of County Councils, and Aldermen, are school visitors in the townships, cities, towns or villages, where they respectively reside; but magistrates holding commissions of the peace, in counties only, are not visitors of schools in towns and cities; and clergymen only act in townships where they have a congregational charge. Visitors, according to legal regulations, examine into the management

of the schools, and give advice if they think it required, to teachers and pupils. The visitors at meetings which may be called by any two of their number, besides the educational supervision, promote the establishment of libraries, and the diffusion of useful knowledge, generally.

The Chief Superintendent is appointed by the Governor-General, through his responsible ministers. He is assisted by clerks, and apportioned grants of public money to the school sections. He reports all such apportionments to the Minister of Finance. He prepares forms, and gives necessary instructions for the officials charged with carrying out the various school acts; sees that the grants of money are duly applied, and appoints deputy-inspectors to assist him.

He has the general superintendance of the Normal School, and decides on the character of the books, and educational apparatus to be used throughout Upper Canada, subject to the approval of the Council of Public Instruction. These are nine persons of eminence in the Province, of various religious denominations, appointed by the Governor-General, under advice of his Executive Ministers.

The Chief Superintendent also promotes the establishment of school libraries for general reading in the several counties, townships, cities, towns, and villages; provides suitable plans for school-houses with the proper furniture and appendages. He is required by law to collect and diffuse information on the subject of education generally, among the people of Upper Canada.

He is by law required to make annually to the Governor-General, on or before the first day of July, a report of the actual state of the Normal, Grammar and Common Schools throughout Upper Canada, showing the amount of moneys expended in connection with each, and from what sources derived, with such statements and directions for improving the Common Schools and the Common School Laws, and promoting education generally, as he shall deem expedient.

The council of Public Instruction, of whom the Chief Superintendent is one, three of the nine members being a quorum for business, make from time to time, the rules and regulations for the management of the Normal School. They prescribe the terms and conditions on which students are admitted and instructed, and grant certificates of degrees in competence.

In August, 1858, the council of Public Instruction, adopted the following regulations as regarded the duration of sessions, and the mode of admitting and instructing students in that Institution. Since then the standard of education required, previous to admission, has been somewhat elevated, but the exact items of alteration are not, while we write, within reach.

The Winter Session commences 8th of January; closes 22nd of June. Autumn Session commences 8th of August; closes 22nd of December. Each Session is concluded by an examination conducted by written questions and answers. No male student is admitted under eighteen years of age; nor female under sixteen. Those admitted to produce certificates of good moral character, dated within at least three months of their presentation, and signed by the clergyman or minister of the religious persuasion with which they are connected.

Candidates for the Junior Division must read with ease and fluency; parse any common prose sentence according to any recognized authority; write legibly, readily and correctly; give the definitions of Geography; have a general knowledge of the relative positions of the principal countries with their Capitals; the oceans, seas, rivers and islands of the world; be acquainted with the fundamental rules of arithmetic, common or vulgar fractions, and simple proportion.

They must sign a declaration of their intention to devote themselves to the profession of school teaching, and state that their object in coming to the Normal School is to qualify themselves better for the important duties of that profession.

Upon these conditions candidates are admitted to the advantages of the institution without any charge, either for tuition, the use of the library, or for the books required in the School.

These teachers in training, are required to board and lodge in the city in such houses and under such regulations as are approved by the Council of Public Instruction.

A sum at the rate of five shillings per week, payable at the end of the Session, is allowed to each teacher in training, who, at the end of the first or second session, is entitled to either a first or second class Provincial certificate. But none receive aid for a period exceeding two sessions, nor unless a higher class (not grade) of Provincial certificate be obtained. Candidates pre-

sent themselves during the first week of the session. The scholastic attainments requisite to obtain the several degrees of Certificate are too numerous to be quoted here.—The following are leading heads: English, Writing, Geography, History, Education and the Art of Teaching, Music, Drawing, Book-keeping, Arithmetic and Mensuration, Algebra, Euclid, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Latin, Geology and Astronomy.

The number of applicants admitted to the Normal School in the year 1861 (the report of 1862 not being due until July 1863) was, first session 161; second 148. The number of Provincial certificates given at close of the first Session 89; at the second 102.

The whole number of educational institutions of every kind in Upper Canada in 1861 (as far as returns could be obtained) was 4,459; increase in the year 80. The whole number of students and pupils attending them was 344,118. The whole amount available for educational purposes was one million, six hundred and seventy thousand, and twenty-three dollars.

The foundation stone of the Normal School, at Toronto, was laid by the Earl of Elgin, Governor-General, on the 2d of July, 1851. The building is situated upon the centre of an open square of seven and a half acres, distant from the bay about three-quarters of a mile. The situation is elevated and beautiful, commanding a fine view of the Bay, Island and Lake Ontario.

SUMMARY.

Our Legislators are busy. There is no lack of work and it would be impossible for us to name even, in our limited space what members propose to do.

The Insolvent Bill is one which the whole country has an interest in. It was introduced by Solicitor General Abbott. It seems to have been prepared with great care.—The first section provides that the act shall, in Lower Canada, apply only to those debtors who are engaged in trade, while its operations in Upper Canada will include debtors whether engaged in trade or not.

The state of insolvency is defined in the second section to be 'the continuous stoppage of payment by any debtor;' and any debtor who absconds from the Province, or who secretes his estate or effects or any part thereof, with the intent to defraud his creditors, or who makes an assignment, is also held to be an insolvent within the meaning of the act.

The bill altogether is a lengthy document of thirteen sections, each of which is divided into sub-sections. It is possible, before it becomes law, that it may undergo some change. The following, taken from the 'Leader,' gives the doings of the Legislative Council on Tuesday.

The Legislative Council met at 3 o'clock as usual. Almost all the members were in full dress, and wore a white rosette on the left breast. After prayers, Hon. M. Tessier moved, 'That this being the day appointed for the celebration of the marriage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with Her Royal Highness the Princess Alexandria of Denmark, as a mark of respect to the Heir-apparent, and desirous, with all Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, to record its due appreciation of so auspicious an event, which will so greatly add to Her Gracious Majesty's domestic happiness and tend to perpetuate the succession of her illustrious family—this House do now adjourn.'

In moving the resolution, the Commissioner of Public Works, alluded in very handsome terms, to the event which formed the subject of the resolution. He spoke of the happy effect it would have upon Her Majesty, and the universal satisfaction with which the marriage was received by the people of Great Britain. He dwelt upon the loyalty of Canadians to the Crown; and in fitting terms spoke of the grandeur of the Empire over which His Royal Highness would, in all probability, be some day called to reign.

Sir E. P. Tache, who was dressed in the uniform of a Colonel of Militia, in seconding the resolution, gracefully referred to the urbanity of the Prince of Wales, of which he had a good opportunity of judging, as he (Colonel Tache) had had the honor of attending His Royal Highness during his tour through Canada. He alluded to the Prince's attainments. His Royal Highness, he said has an acquaintance with four modern languages, and was in possession of a good solid foundation of learning, which would make him one of the most accomplished Sovereigns of Europe.

All the speakers were applauded, and spoke in a very dignified style, as became the occasion. The motion having been adopted, the House adjourned.