

employés, a system of heating by steam from the locomotive, and lighting by electricity, is being introduced into the passenger car stock, of which 102 cars are now fitted with appliances for steam heating and 81 for electric lighting." The steam heating is said to work admirably, but the electric light is less satisfactory, being not only very expensive but also liable to get out of order on the journey, thus often compelling a resort to the old system of lamps. Seeing the wonderful progress that has been made in the matter of electric lighting within a very few years, it can scarcely be doubted that the removal of these objections is but a question of time. The car stove is no doubt a far greater menace to the safety of travellers than the car lamp, and the practicability of steam-heating, at least, is surely sufficiently proven to warrant Parliament in compelling all railway companies to substitute it for the stoves which have so often been the cause of unnecessary and frightful suffering and loss of life in railway accidents. We should have been glad to see that the Government road was also taking the initiative in the introduction of safer modes of car-coupling, guarding of frogs and in other ways protecting railway employés from the dangers which now beset them and result in so dreadful a harvest of maiming and death. Will not some member of Parliament again urge the subject upon the attention of the Government and House, during the current session?

THE outcome of the difficulty in which the U. S. Government finds itself involved in its endeavour to fulfil the duties of neutrality in regard to Chili is being looked for with a good deal of interest. The conduct of the captain of the *Itata* in calmly steaming out of San Diego harbour with the U. S. Deputy Marshal on board was decidedly cool, and yet was what might perhaps have been expected from the master of an insurgent vessel belonging to no recognized nationality, who consequently had everything to gain and nothing to lose by making his escape. The discovery, if it should prove to be a valid one, that international law gives the United States the right, under such circumstances, to capture the *Itata* on the high seas, if she can find her there, will have been a surprise to many. The latest accounts seem, however, to make it probable that the fugitive steamer will not be found until, at least, her cargo shall have been safely landed, or that if she should be found the U. S. warship finding her may have to reckon not only with her armament, whatever that may be, but with that of another insurgent warship as well. The singularly indefinite instructions which, according to the N. Y. *Tribune*, were given to the officers of the three U. S. men-of-war sent in pursuit, must add not a little to the difficulty and responsibility of those officers. They were ordered, the *Tribune* says, to take the *Itata*, provided it could be done without "manifest injury" to their own ships. Should anyone of these commanders succeed in overtaking the offending vessel, either alone or with a more powerful escort, and should he sagely conclude on inspection that he could not capture her without danger of "manifest injury" to his own ship, and consequently suffer her to go on her way without molestation, the affair would take on a somewhat ludicrous phase. It is possible that both the Department and the pursuing officers, whose sympathies may very likely be with the Congressional Party, will be just as well pleased should the *Itata* escape them, especially as the probabilities seem rather in favour of the ultimate success of the insurgents, in which case the present Chilean Government would no longer exist, and the revolutionary one could hardly lay a claim for damages.

AFTER-DINNER speeches do not always show the wisdom of orators and statesmen, to say nothing of common people, at its best, and recent events in Germany would seem to show that even Emperors are not always perfectly happy in their deliverances on such occasions. To whatever impulse or exhilaration the extraordinary arrogance of some of Emperor William's recent utterances was due, it is no wonder that it should have aroused resentment among some of the princes of the older self-governing states of Germany. Indeed to one accustomed to the democratic air of this western world, or even of modern England, it is difficult to see how the humblest subject in the realm, to say nothing of the statesmen and other men of mark who were present at the banquet, could listen to such words without some feeling of rising indignation. A Russian peasant, trained from childhood in the schools to reverence the Czar as the incarnation of Divine as well as human authority, might listen with

servile meekness to such declarations from the lips of majesty. But how the educated, self-reliant, and in their own estimation, as we had supposed, free people of Germany could listen with complacency to words even from their Emperor, which relegate them seemingly to the position of serfs of an autocratic lord, rather than subjects of a constitutional king, it is hard to understand. It is often observed that the man who is conscious of power to enforce his authority when necessary, and who is truly worthy to command, is usually the man who avoids most carefully any harsh or arbitrary assertion of his authority. Such men were the father and grandfather of the present monarch of Germany. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this modest avoidance of any unnecessary show of superiority had much to do with winning the confidence and affection of the people. It remains to be seen whether and to what extent such coarse self-assertion in masterful speech and despotic bearing will, if continued, be accepted with complacency by a people of high intelligence and spirit, accustomed to gentler and more modest methods.

PARTY PROSPECTS IN PROVINCIAL POLITICS.

IT is early for the quidnuncs to be discussing Mr. Mowat's chances at the next general election for Ontario, but we see they are at it. This is one of the results of the Federal Opposition's rapid development of opinions that were formerly believed to be favoured by an insignificant minority of the whole people. The question is, what effect will this change have on the fortunes of the Provincial Cabinet, whose series of triumphs were all gained under the old conditions?

In June, 1890, the Ottawa Outs had not distinctly accepted Mr. Goldwin Smith's doctrines touching Canada's relations with the United States. Again, Mr. Blake's conciliatory counsels in respect of Canadian race and creed disputes then dominated his party. Further, there would then have been little absurdity in allegations that George Brown's wish to perpetuate Confederation and British connection had been closely adhered to by his successors in journalism and politics. It was commonly believed that Mr. Mowat could be depended on in all imaginable circumstances, not only to withhold countenance from an annexationist propaganda, but to take the platform against, instead of for, any combination of disruptionists. An important percentage of the electors, regarding both Premiers as essentially Conservative, had been long accustomed to back Sir John in Federal and Mr. Mowat in Provincial affairs. Finally, the Irish element, undeniably compact and powerful, whether for good or evil need not be here discussed, was then all the more true to Mr. Mowat because he had never appeared to league with politicians differing from Mr. Blake on matters of prime importance. So much for points of interconnection between the Provincial Ins and the Federal Outs.

But the face of purely Provincial politics is swiftly changing, too, in consequence of the exhaustion of interest in the long race and creed wrangle that began with the Saskatchewan troubles, culminated with the Jesuit Estates Act agitation, and included the French schools' and Separate schools' outcry. The excitement in Ontario had important effects which are not likely to be forgotten by those most interested. Under the pressure of men and journals then opposed by and now plainly dominant over the party that no longer includes Mr. Blake, the Provincial Cabinet conceded pretty much everything seriously demanded by the opponents of the powerful Roman Catholic element. It is not improbable, we are assured on fair authority, that Mr. Frazer will fail in controlling his co-religionists next time, unless a much larger share of the patronage that is not sought by messengers and charwomen be placed at his disposal. Archbishops, Bishops, Vicars-General and Parish Priests are, after all, human like the rest of us, and the natural man bitterly resents being shorn by those to whom he has given many triumphs in confidence that they would secure his interests.

But these considerations no more warrant prophecies that Mr. Mowat will next time be defeated than contrary prophecies that he will not suffer from the remarkable change in conditions. There is, as Disraeli remarked, no gambling like politics. Unexpected changes may come over the scene. We may however safely hazard the assertion that Mr. Mowat's skill and popularity will be regarded as altogether transcendent should he, after holding office for over twenty years as the staunchest friend of Confeder-

ation and British connection, survive four years' close fraternization with gentlemen who, to say the least, are not exactly champions of either.

OTTAWA LETTER.

THE blissful state of a nation "that has no history" ought to find its parallel in the Dominion Parliament just now. There is absolutely little or nothing to chronicle about the proceedings of that august assembly, and the only activity displayed as yet has been in arranging schemes of recreation to counteract the effects of severe mental strain anticipated by the members. In view of their future efforts they are prudently abstaining at present from the wear and tear of brain tissue; indeed were it not for the fact that "spring has set in with its usual severity," and that the air bites shrewdly round Parliament Hill, one might expect to see the legislators on the lawns in flannels, dreaming of a land "where it was always afternoon"—without the sittings!

No doubt the indisposition of Sir John Macdonald and of the Leader of the Opposition have had something to do with this pause of comparative inaction. The magnetic personal influence of the Premier is felt at once in the House, and it is sincerely to be hoped that a few days more will see him restored to that vigour which has never failed him in any crisis any more than that consummate tact which has ever distinguished him.

In the absence of Mr. Laurier, Sir Richard Cartwright has been to the fore during the brief sittings of the House. His oratorical flights, largely made up of invective, were scarcely calculated to ease the already very strained relations between the parties; and it is certainly pushing matters far beyond the courtesy indispensable between opponents, even in the political arena, for him to uphold the Grit policy of exclusion. The refusal to allow Mr. Corbould to "pair," on an occasion of such urgent necessity, was a distinct mistake in policy and a "maugre" in good feeling that could scarcely be equalled even on the Home Rule benches on "the other side." The members who are just now absent being nearly all Conservatives, the Opposition, no doubt, expect to score should a division be taken this week on Mr. M. C. Cameron's Bill for the repeal of the Franchise Act. *En revanche*, the Government have had the pleasure of welcoming the Premier back to the House. He took his place amid congratulatory cheers, looking particularly bright and cheerful, after a prolonged conference with the Labour Delegates. A brisk debate, *à propos* of the third reading of the "Modus Vivendi" Bill, followed; quite a relief from the lethargy which has hitherto marked the sittings, and in the course of which the Minister of Justice, replying to Mr. Mills, made one of his neat, judicial and crushing speeches. Petitions have been the order of the day, and they are literally pouring in; the number up to date being more than the whole of those received last session. The minds of the "unco guid" are evidently much exercised as to the evil tendencies of the age, for most of these petitions relate to Sunday observance and prohibition. The irony of the situation is probably duly appreciated by the luckless clerks, part of whose Sabbath observances consist in filing and enumerating these valuable documents.

It has been said that "all good things come in threes," and on Dr. G. M. Dawson, Assistant Director of the Geological Survey, whose writings and researches on the geology and mineral resources of Canada are of such great value, three well-deserved distinctions have lately been conferred. The last and greatest entitles him to write the magic letters F. R. S. after his name, and at once gives him a place amongst the most profound scientists of the day. The number of foreign members in the Royal Society of Great Britain is limited to fifty, and of these we now claim two, Sir William Dawson and his son, of whom the Dominion may justly be proud, for are not their names inscribed on the same honourable roll as are those of Sir Isaac Newton and all the chief pioneers of modern science. Dr. Dawson and men like him show that the Dominion of Canada can hold her own with the Mother Country, not only as regards material resources, but as to the intellectual qualifications and patriotic energy of her sons.

The death of Sir Edward Kenny, whose years numbered those of the present century, has removed yet another link with the past history of Canada, he having been a member of the original Cabinet formed after Confederation. Of Irish birth and descent he was ever active in befriending his countryman. From very humble beginnings he pushed his way up, and after attaining success as a merchant entered the political world whilst still young and served his adopted country with zeal and discretion for a number of years. In September, 1870, he was knighted, after resigning his post in the Ministry.

The ball at Government House was in every way a successful function, and their Excellencies being favoured with "Queen's weather," the lawn at Rideau Hall could be utilized as a promenade between the dances. "Full dress" being *de rigueur* for the military and official element among the men. The scene was brighter and more varied than at an ordinary ball, and it was a moot point whether the many charming wearers of charming frocks looked to most advantage in the ball-room, or by the fitful light of hundreds of Chinese lanterns. The dance given by the Hon. Mrs. Herbert last night "to have the honour of meeting their Excellencies, Lord and Lady Stanley of Preston," will be remembered as one of