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## THE TIMES.

Dullness prevails in the Dominion. Politics are positively flat. The end of the Ottawa session is near, and the House moves to it slowly and with seeming reluctance. Parties seem to have spent all their spirit in the first part of it, and now nothing can rouse them. First there was a disgraceful war of words, in which, for violence and roughness of speech, Dr. Tupper and Mr. Jones made themselves conspicuous; the head punching and beard pulling of Messrs. Bunster and Cheval marked the climax, and as the pistol is not now in use among Parliamentarians, nothing more potent was possible. There has been another mild debate on Protection vs. Free Trade, but it led to nothing more than tall talk about a "national policy," "great principles," and a vote that had no significance for the country. The Quebec mess has been shirked by the Opposition and burked by the Government, although there is some promise of talk on the matter. But what can come of it? Nothing at all. The Constitution was in no way involved, for, as an article in last week's SPECTATOR conclusively proved, Mr. Letellier is not so much a Lieutenant-Governor as a Lieutenant-Government. He represents his party, and meant to do them a good turn. The failure arises from a want of wit, and not from a want of will.

The farewell spoken by the Countess of Dufferin at the conclusion of the theatrical entertainment given at Rideau Hall was very beautiful and very tender. The Earl is not only a politician of the first class, a brilliant speaker and a wise Governor; he is a representative of the true English gentleman, easy, frank and generous, a very Peer of the realm. He has identified himself with Canada and all that is Canadian; and the motion made in the House, that a request be sent for his re-appointment, found a warm support in all hearts, from Sarnia to Gaspe. His wife is worthy of the place she holds as representative of the Queen Mother of us all, Victoria. Wherever the pair may go, they will be loved, but none will love them better than the people of Canada. When we say them "farewell" we shall say it sadly.

Unless all signs are deceptive, the coming season will witness a perfect exodus from Ontario and Quebec to the new territories of the North-West. The steamboats on the upper lakes have started on their first trips to Lake Superior with the advance guard, soon to be followed by thousands more who regard the prairies of Manitoba and the Saskatchewan as their true land of promise. It is to be hoped they will not be too rudely undeceived. The North-West, it can scarcely be doubted, has a grand future before it, and in a very few years it may be the home of a population leaving the older provinces far in the rear. But the first colonization of a new territory in so remote a part of the continent cannot fail to be attended with many hardships. Many who are on the point of giving up their comfortable homes for the purpose of taking up land in the north-western prairies would do well to wait another year before taking the decisive step.

In England again there is trouble as to theology. The spirit of contention is abroad. Awhile ago the Leicester Congregational Conference made a stir. There was an attempt to have done with theology as a basis of communion, and to establish as a foundation the Christianity which good men feel. There came a lull; and now Dr. Dale has been preaching a doctrine strange in the ears of many. He condemned the general Church of giving up the teaching as to the forgiveness of sins, which condemnation the general church demurs to. He said also that "intolerable as the doctrine of eternal punishment is, and without any foundation in the New Testament, it is no trifling

matter if the disappearance of that error has carried with it one of the central moral truths of the Christian faith." No indeed, Dr. Dale—no trifling matter, as you are likely to find. The Church is awake to his guilt, and is visiting him for his sin of speech. He deserves it, for he should be careful when dealing with such cherished opinions. New fangled notions are a great trouble to the Church; they should be put down in England and everywhere else. Give us the "good old ways;" because they are old, they must be good.

The political situation in Europe changes week by week, like the colours in a Kaleidoscope. Last week it seemed as if war must come of it—now it looks as if we may hope again for peace without having to walk through battlefields to find it. The main source of hope is in the general desire for a peaceful arrangement of the intricate Eastern question. But that can only be brought about when Russia shall consent to moderate her demands. She will so consent. She has had fighting enough for a time, and even now looks national bankruptcy in the face. If another war should come to her hand it could only leave her shattered and broken. She has a large army but no money, and to create a currency is as bad business for a nation as for a man. Then a grain of comfort may be found in the fact that the astute Prince Bismarck is earnestly exerting himself to prevent conflict. The Prince will get something out of it most likely—that is a way the Prince has—and this time it seems to be an effort to make Austria to repeat the blunder of San Stefano—or to bully Austria into a settlement with Russia, and so get it acknowledged that he is a kind of arbitrator in Europe. Germany, at any rate, will keep out of the mess. In the event of war all England can hope from Germany will be a bare and not benevolent neutrality. The Prince is a genius, and so is the Earl of Beaconsfield, with this advantage—the Earl is "on the side of the angels."

In the House of Lords, this week, the Earl of Beaconsfield moved an address of thanks to the Queen for Her Majesty's message calling out the army reserves. The Earl had a chance to make a war speech, and he made it, and stirred up his party. He criticised the Treaty of San Stefano, drawing much the same conclusion as those stated in Lord Salisbury's despatch. He decided that every article of the Treaty was a deviation from the Treaties of 1856 and 1871, yet he would not call them violations. A subtle distinction, no doubt. He showed that the possession of Bessarabia was a matter of more than local importance, as it involved the independent navigation of the Danube. He pointed out the various ways in which the present situation in the East imperilled the British Empire, that the Egyptians had once threatened Constantinople, and so Russia might march to the Suez Canal. The Earl wound up with one of his happy phrases—the Empire must not only be enjoyed—it must be maintained—Lord Granville but a mild criticism—but Lord Derby struck and spared not. He described the position as a deadlock, neither side being willing to give way for fear of losing dignity. While being unwilling to press matters and increase the irritation, he yet denied the existence of such an emergency as could justify the calling out of the reserves. It seemed to him that the Government had simply taken advantage of the war feeling in the country. He dreaded war, for even an Austrian alliance is doubtful, and all other powers are certain to stand aloof. Lord Cairns stood forth for the army, and the Earl of Carnarvon showed by Lord Salisbury's despatch that if England entered the Congress she would do so with her hand upon the sword.

In the House of Commons much the same course was followed. Sir Stafford Northcote, in proposing the address of thanks to Her Majesty for her proclamation, said the calling out of the reserves was not intended to alarm the country by leading it to suppose that great national dangers existed, but to put the army in a condition of readiness for immediate service. The action was no proof that war was intended, but was taken as a precautionary measure. England's object is to prevent the assembling of a conference which should be only a semblance of the thing. He was moderate in tone, and spoke hopefully of a peaceful solution of the difficulty. Mr. Gladstone offered no opposition to the address, holding that a better opportunity would be afforded when a vote is asked for on the supplementary estimates. But he characterized Lord Salisbury's despatch as being worthy of a pettifogging attorney, and no other.