

always grateful to legislators as well as to the public.

The speech delivered by his Excellency last month was of the average type. Parliament was informed of a number of things it knew before, and some bills, all of a useful and practical, that is of a non-sensational, character were foreshadowed. Sir John Macdonald was facetious as usual over the poverty of the programme, but he need not have spoken of 'Lenten fare,' at least until *Mardi gras* had come and gone. The visit of their Excellencies to British Columbia properly occupied the first place in the speech, although, considering the unusual character of the excursion, and its importance politically and otherwise, we think a little more space, as well as a little of his Excellency's force and vigour of expression might have been spent upon it.

Mr. Blake's achievements in England were referred to with becoming modesty, yet they were by no means of slight value. The Minister of Justice spent his vacation industriously and profitably, and readers of the blue-book, just published, will observe that on all the four topics of conference with Downing street, the honorable gentleman was successful. The State papers submitted to Lord Carnarvon's consideration are models of clear and exhaustive statement, as well as of cogent reasoning. With the United States the Government has not been able to do so well—indeed, to do anything. Notwithstanding that the Americans have, for years, enjoyed the Canadian fisheries, Mr. Fish has not taken the first step towards fulfilling treaty obligations. The English Commissioner has crossed the ocean twice in vain; Sir Alexander Galt has been kept waiting to do his duty as the Canadian representative; counsel have been retained and feed in vain. The Americans display the same Punic faith Mr. Mackenzie so vigorously assailed, and yet, after coolly retaining millions of English money, contrary to the award of the Geneva Commission, they neglect to take the first step towards paying the price of privileges they have enjoyed for the last five years. Great Britain and Canada have certainly been cheated on every hand, from the arbitration downwards.

There is a plethora of blue-books just now, but as it is likely that they are as little to the taste of our readers as to our own, we shall not attempt to give even a meagre

notion of their contents. As was to have been expected, there has been a serious falling off in the customs and other sources of revenue—in the first of these there is a decrease of about two millions and a half, and altogether of more than eight millions. This has been, of course, owing to the serious depression of trade, and was partly, though not adequately, anticipated by the Finance Minister. The prospect for the year 1876-7, is not by any means too bright, and preparation may perhaps be necessary for a further diminution in the receipts. Trade shows some signs of revival, yet they are not by any means clear and certain enough to build a fabric of hope upon; besides eight months of the fiscal year have already passed. The estimated expenditure on the other hand is to be in excess of last year's, though not to any great extent. As the *Globe* justly remarks, there is an actual decrease in ordinary Governmental expenditure, the extra items being 'Indian grants under treaties, Mounted Police, and aid to settlers in Manitoba.'

Mr. Cartwright's remedy for the growth of expenditure and the falling off of revenue is retrenchment; and he appears to have applied the pruning-hook with an unsparing hand. Still, there is a limit to a policy of this description. In the next financial year, the present state of affairs may possibly be aggravated on both sides of the Dominion balance-sheet and it would then become a serious question whether the expenditure can be materially reduced without impairing the efficiency of the public service. It is at all times unwise, not to say unjust, to starve the employees of the Crown, and it is peculiarly so at a time when every necessity of life, indeed everything purchasable by money, is exceptionally high. It must be remembered that if the financial depression weighs heavily upon the Treasury, it tells much more severely on these, who are not paid over-handsomely at the best of times.

It may be convenient to notice briefly here the financial statement lately made by the Minister of Finance. Presuming the reader to be already acquainted with its salient points, it may be remarked that Mr. Cartwright takes a more sanguine view of the immediate future than most business people here are disposed to take. He starts out with a gratifying forecast of the Domi-