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CURRENT TOPICS.

The exact results of the Provincial plebiscite on Prohibition cannot be known at the time we go to press, but enough is known to make it clear that the majority in favor of Prohibition is very large. Some of the surprises of the vote are that every city in the Province should have cast a decided majority for Prohibition, and that in Toronto that majority should number more than 2,500. Nor can this result be accounted for on the ground of general indifference or of inactivity, on the part of the opposing forces, for the total vote was unprecedentedly large. It is evident that the majority of the people in the Province of Ontario, as in several of the smaller Provinces, are determined that Prohibition on a provincial if not on a national scale, shall have a trial. It now remains for the Dominion and the

Ontario Governments to lose no time in obtaining an authoritative decision on the question of jurisdiction involved. Should it appear that Ontario has the right under the constitution to prohibit—a decision which we can hardly conceive possible—Sir Oliver Mowat and his colleagues will have no option but to set about preparing to enact a prohibitory law as soon as possible. Should it be found, on the other hand, that the power inheres solely in the Dominion Parliament, the situation will be less embarrassing for the Ottawa Administration, since Quebec will have to be consulted, and the issue in that Province would be very doubtful. The decision of the Supreme Court will be the next event in the series, to be awaited with interest and anxiety.

“Behold how great a forest is kindled by how small a fire!” The continued payment of an annuity of \$50,000 a year to the Duke of Edinburgh, out of the vast resources of the British treasury, may seem to many a very small matter, yet, in the hands of the Radicals it is being made to assume really serious proportions, and there is no knowing at present to what issues it may lead. The wonder is that the pride, to say nothing of the sense of justice, of a member of the Royal Family could permit the Duke to retain the annuity, upon a technicality, for one hour after he had ceased, to all intents and purposes, to be a British subject, having accepted the position of a German Prince. And if the pride of a descendant of Britain's Queen was not sufficient to determine the Duke to be no longer a pensioner of the British tax-payer, one would have supposed that that of a German Prince would have been equal to the occasion. The declaration of a leading Berlin journal that for a German Prince to accept a foreign pension is repugnant to German feeling, seems so natural that one wonders how the new Prince could place the German people in such a position. It is difficult to say whether it would be more humiliating to the Prince's German subjects, to admit that he needs the British annuity, or to know that he retains it without needing it. It is to be hoped that as a Prince the Duke may be constrained by the vehemence of opposing sentiment to reconsider the question, renounce the annuity and rely for his support upon the country to which he has transferred his loyalty and his allegiance.

Dr. Ryerson, M.P.P., is perseveringly following up, in some of the city papers, the

record of Sir Oliver Mowat and his Government in the matter of appointments. Though his information has not always proved accurate, the facts he has brought to light with reference to the practice of Nepotism are, as we have before intimated, unpleasantly suggestive. Why should the relatives of a Premier or a Cabinet Minister have so much better chance than others of obtaining a place in the public service? A still more objectionable practice is shown to be that of appointing members of the Legislature, or those who have been such, to lucrative positions in the public service. The *Globe* apologizes for the practice by saying that the fact of one's having served the Province in the Assembly should not permanently disqualify him for office. Very true, but let any one calculate the chances of an ex-member receiving such an appointment in the ordinary course, and compare the result with the number of such members who have actually been appointed within a term of years, and draw his own conclusions. The true corrective of all such abuses is the adoption of a regular scheme of appointment and promotion based on merit alone. Had Sir Oliver and his Ministers been the genuine Reformers they claim to be, such a system would have been in vogue years since, rendering both Nepotism and partisan appointments impossible. The fee system, under which a son of the Attorney-General receives a higher salary than any public functionary in the Dominion, except the Governor-General, is deservedly attacked by Dr. Ryerson. Under a thorough-going Liberal Administration, both the appointment and the method and amount of payment would have been impossible.

President Cleveland's “policy” has certainly failed to effect its main object in the Hawaiian affair, so far as that object was the restoration of the *statum quo* in Honolulu. Nevertheless it was well that it was in his heart to undo the effects of an unrighteous interference with the affairs of a petty foreign state by the Minister and the marines of the United States. His proposal to restore the Queen, or rather to give her people an opportunity to restore her, has been permanently baffled, partly by the vindictiveness, or perhaps timidity of the Queen herself, in refusing to promise an amnesty to the members of the Provisional Government and others who took part in her overthrow; partly by the evident helplessness if not indifference of the natives, in view of the superior prowess of the revolutionizing foreigners. It is