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THE TIMES.

On the whole the Cabinet at Ottawa has not much pleasure in present condition or future prospects. The Budget speech added no strength, did nothing to bring back those who were wavering in allegiance, or failing in confidence. Mr. Cartwright is a good man, and puts great faith in Providence, and so in a resigned spirit bids the country kick up its heels and wait for the turn of the tide. But Mr. Cartwright has failed so often as a Prophet that we can scarcely be blamed for misdoubting his gifts. When a country is drifting into almost hopeless debt, it scarcely seems good and sound policy to make no effort, but wait for better times. The difficulty has to be met in one of two ways, increased taxation, or cutting down of expenditure. The latter is what we want. Only that way will the Government regain the confidence of the country and secure a return to power at the next election.

Mr. Blake's place is not yet filled up. It is said that Mr. Huntingdon is about to retire from the Cabinet to take a railway contract. But it may be that Mr. Holton will be prevailed upon to accept office. We devoutly hope he will yield, for while it may be, and probably is, distasteful to him and self-sacrificing, he is one of the few men in Parliament whom the people can trust and look up to. He would give strength and respectability to the Cabinet, two things very much needed by said Cabinet.

The Supreme Court is still adjourned *sine die*. Meanwhile our Minister of Justice, Laflamme, retains his seat with an appeal against him, involving disqualification. The Court is charitable to the Minister of Justice, or else, the Minister of Justice is charitable unto himself. But in the administration of law we want justice and not mercy. Judge Strong has ruled strangely in the matter of agency; not at all in accordance with English rulings: and it is said Laflamme would stand but small chance of re-election, in that the fervour of his friends has cooled toward him—but be that as it may we want to see this case settled. It is not pleasant to have doubts as to the right of the Minister of Justice to have a seat in the House—still less pleasant to feel that the Supreme Court stands adjourned in his favour. But that is not the worst aspect of the case. Rumour has it that if the Court remain adjourned until Parliament is prorogued, the Judgeship—which is to be vacant by the retirement of Judge Taschereau—will be filled by Laflamme, and so he will have a voice in his own case. We are a longsuffering people—but surely there is a point beyond which forbearance will not go.

The session of the Ontario Assembly now drawing to its close has not greatly enhanced the reputation of that legislative body. There was work to be done which a professedly liberal and progressive administration might have been expected to take vigorously in hand. There was the great question of Tax Exemptions to be dealt with. The provincial press had discussed the whole matter from every possible view long before the session commenced. The facts were all known, and everybody looked to the Government for action. Yet, the whole question was shelved by reference to a Committee, which took so little interest in the matter that day after day it was adjourned for want of a quorum. And so a gross injustice is allowed to exist from year to year. If a Reform Government with a majority of twenty votes cannot summon up courage to deal with this matter, where is Ontario to look for progressive legislation? It is admitted on all sides that the taxation of public property involves a somewhat complex problem, though even in that matter Great Britain has long ago set an example which might safely be followed throughout the Empire; but that is no reason why the obvious injustice of exempting ecclesiastical incomes and properties from taxation should not be separately dealt with, promptly and decisively.

The Roman Catholic clergy in Ontario are beginning to manifest some uneasiness with regard to the separate schools. It appears that the lay supporters of these institutions scarcely show enough interest in the sectarian education of their young people. There is positively a disposition indicated in some districts to forego their separatist privileges and rest content with the secular education provided by the public schools. At Windsor, for example, and also at Stratford, the separate schools have virtually ceased to exist, being absorbed by their non-sectarian rivals. At other places, and notably at the provincial capital, the Romanist School Board is so rapidly losing influence that its dissolution is to all appearance not far off. If a denominational system is to be permanently maintained side by side with the Free Public Schools of Ontario, it must present a higher standard of efficiency. Yet this, by the nature of the case, is utterly impossible. As soon as a Roman Catholic school teacher displays marked ability, he is either drafted into the ecclesiastical ranks, becoming in due course a parish priest and possible candidate for the episcopate, or else the more liberal salaries offered by the public schools and collegiate institutes draw him over to the phalanx of non-sectarian instructors of youth. As a matter of fact there are at the present time more Romanists employed as teachers in the public schools of Ontario than in the separate schools. So ominous a state of affairs could not fail to arouse the priests to more decisive action. The diocese of Hamilton has taken the lead in devising steps for more permanent organization among supporters of the Roman Catholic schools. A Convention of Separate School Teachers is to be held in the summer for discussion of this subject. The Hamilton clergy also purpose the publication of a monthly journal devoted to the advocacy of denominational education. But all this is only a hopeless effort to stave off the inevitable.

The Quebec Legislature has fallen into trouble. It was expected by those who could see only a little ahead. For the case was complicated; a Lieutenant-Governor, who is a very pronounced Liberal, as that goes in this country: a Government not merely Conservative, but Ultramontane, always making effort to tax the Protestant part of the population, and save the French-Canadian from bearing its share of the burden, and always heedful of any advice the Church might have to give. Still further, the Provincial Government of Quebec declared opposition to the Supreme Government at Ottawa. Then came the passing of unconstitutional measures, such as the new tax and the Railway Bill, and then, the liberal soul of the Lieutenant-Governor being vexed—inspired, or instructed by the powers that be at Ottawa, probably, the bill was vetoed, the Government resigned, and—chaos—which, up to this present, continues. The Press of the country cannot understand things, so questions are put and enquiries are made on every hand. The Liberal papers are mainly anxious to clear the Ottawa Government from any participation in the political mess, while the Conservative papers are loudly calling for law and justice, and the maintenance of that peculiar thing, Constitution. The Montreal *Star* is floundering in the meshes of law's network. It says, "the question will arise whether the Governor had the constitutional right to veto a measure which was already approved by a large majority of the House." Now that is a strange question. If the Governor has any power of veto it can only be exercised when a measure has passed the House. That is just what a veto means, forbidding a measure from becoming law. If it had not been approved by a majority, the veto would not have been needed. And if the Governor has no power of veto, what is he Governor of, or what for? That he had the constitutional right there need be no question; whether he had constitutional or other kind of *reason* is another matter. We think he had not. The whole proceeding looks very like a blunder. The majority in this Province will not be induced to dance to the piping of Mackenzie's party, and this will only give the Church-party another grievance and another cry. The best thing that could happen would be to hitch Montreal on to Ontario, transplant Mayor Beaudry to Quebec as its Mayor, set up De Boucherville again, sending Messrs. Church and Ogilvie to do better work, and let the province go to the—Pope. Better still, if Providence would send some despot to trample out our Governments, all and sundry, and rule us roughly for our good.