



The gravest beast is the Ass; the gravest bird is the Owl;
The gravest fish is the Oyster; the gravest man is the Fool.

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COMMENTS ON THE CARTOONS.



AN URGENT CALL—
The *Globe* intimates that the rumors of Mr. Edward Blake's probable return to public life at an early date are without foundation. The announcement has an air of "inspiration" about it, and is calculated to "cast a gloom over the country." The desire to see our great commoner once more at the front, and especially in the capacity of an independent, is strong throughout the

country, and has been voiced by many of the public journals. Among others, the *Montreal Witness*, which speaks for a large and intelligent constituency, earnestly presses the matter upon Mr. Blake's consideration. If the *Globe's* announcement is made by the special authorization of Mr. Blake, we hope he will shortly see his way to a reversal of his present determination. We know of no sufficient reason why a man endowed as Mr. Blake is, and (according to those who know him well) full of ambition for a public career, should decide to retire at his comparatively early age and in possession of good health, as we are glad to hear the honorable gentleman now is. If ever a man's country called for him in loud, earnest and unmistakeable terms, Canada calls for Edward Blake at the present moment.

FAITH OR SIGHT.—Sir John Thompson expressed his astonishment, in the debate on the address, that the leader of the Opposition doubted the statement in the Speech from the Throne, that the Dominion is just now enjoying prosperity. Still, the subject is one upon which Sir John should not dogmatize. He has, perhaps, read the story of the Chameleon, which goes to illustrate the mysteries of vision, and he may recall the moral attached:

Admit the fact, whate'er your view,
That others see as well as you;
Nor wonder if you find that none
Prefers your eyesight to his own.

Mr. Laurier says he not only fails to see any signs of prosperity, but on the contrary, the census returns—a stubborn array of facts placed before him by the Government itself,—tells an exactly opposite story. Sir John, no doubt, in turn, sees everything through the rosy medium of office, and we may easily believe the vision is lovely. So far as we have as yet learned, there has really been no great distress among that class of our population known as Cabinet Ministers.



EW will venture to charge Mr. John Hallam with entertaining any feeling toward the Toronto Public Library but that of the affection of a father toward his first born. So when the worthy alderman feels called upon to protest against the too lavish expenditure of the Library Board, it cannot be supposed that he has any wish to impair the efficiency of the institution. Mr. Hallam has advised the council to apply to the Legislation for power to restrict the expenditure of the Board to one-quarter of

a mill on the dollar of the city taxation, and he further suggests that the Libraries Act be amended, so far as the Toronto library is concerned, by clauses prohibiting the Board from indulging in expenditure for alterations of the building, etc., without consent of the City Council. The step is certainly called for, as our library managers seem prone to extravagance. The expenditure for 1891 was rather startling, but they propose to surpass it by a considerable amount this year. Mr. Hallam's suggestion that the library estimates, giving full particulars of the contemplated expenditures, should be submitted to the Council not later than March 1st each year, is marked by John's customary good sense.

EX-MAYOR CLARKE is to be presented with the civic chair which he so ably occupied for four consecutive terms. The piece of furniture is to be handed to him, not so much for its intrinsic value as from its sacred associations in his mind—and because it is pretty well used up, anyway. Ald. Leslie, the originator of this sentimental idea, rather put his foot in it when he undertook to back up his motion with a speech. "We have a new, clean mayor," said he, "and he ought to have a new, clean chair." His complimentary references to Mr. Clarke, as a chief magistrate, could hardly overcome the unintentional nastiness of the inference to be drawn from such a sentence as this. The idea, *per se*, is a good and graceful one, and no doubt Mr. Clarke will appreciate the present. He may find a difficulty, however, in providing house-room for the white elephant, and in that case he can get storage for it in the new library museum.

OVER which proposed institution, by the way, there is some kicking. The intention seems to be to make it a regular Musee show containing all sorts of odds and ends, many of which simply pander to a morbid curiosity. This sort of thing might very well be left to the professional showmen, and the space at the disposal of the Library Board filled with objects having some bearing on the history or geology of the country—something in other