

CURRENT EVENTS.

THE House of Commons was a little disappointing in the choice of a Speaker. The name which occurred to most persons, in connection with the chair, was that of Mr. Holton. He has given unusual attention to the study of forms and procedure, and is well versed in parliamentary law and precedent. To these qualifications he adds long experience, a good presence, and as much impartiality as is commonly found in a party politician. His sole defect is an occasional—very rare—liability to a slight gust of temper; but as this defect was never brought out but in the heat of debate, there would have been no danger of its disturbing that equanimity which is among the first and most essential qualifications of the occupant of the Speaker's chair. Mr. Holton's position is one of which he alone seems to guard the secret. Why he is not a member of the Cabinet has never been explained; why he was passed over when the Speaker's chair required a new occupant is a question on which patent facts enable us to give conjecture something like character of certainty. Mr. Timothy Warren Anglin had been left out of the Government—such is the inconvenience of mortal cabinets being limited in point of space—and he had the great advantage in his favour of representing a Church with a grievance, on which prominent public men on his side of the House had bestowed some party patronage. Such a mine any person in Mr. Anglin's position, and skilful in the rhetoric art, could work to immense profit. Mr. Costigan was comparatively harmless; but Mr. Anglin, double-voiced, through tongue and press, became omnipotent when backed by the thunders of a Church whose ecclesiastics made it a matter of conscience not to pay rates for the support of Common Schools, all godless as they paint them. It is not impossible that it was in the light of these facts that Mr. Anglin's qualifications for the Speakership were discovered. There is enough in them to prevent any surprise which the selection might otherwise have occasioned. Though the selection was evidently dictated by party necessity, we are not to assume that it will prove a very bad one. To start with, the best man of the ministerial party was evidently passed over; but so imperative are the exigencies of party, as things go under the actual system of patronage, that the instances are rare indeed in which the best man can be selected for any post. Mr. Holton has very handsomely brought his long experience and great parliamentary knowledge to the aid of the new Speaker, to whom he can render very valuable assistance. Mr. Anglin will learn the duties perhaps as readily as any one with his limited experience could; but the kind of knowledge requisite in the Speaker of the House of Commons cannot be rapidly acquired; its acquisition requires personal experience, extending over a considerable period of time, connected with the study of special cases which admit of something like classification and generalization. But there is a pre-requisite without which no man can ever become a good Speaker: a judicial tone of mind and a will inflexible in maintaining the right against the claims and the interests of party. We shall not do Mr. Anglin the injustice of denying him the possession of these qualities; though—and the same remark would apply to any strong partisan—their development had to be looked for after the appointment was made. The