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TORONTO, FEBRUARY 4, 1886.

THE prayer of the Council of the Canadian Institute to the Ontario Government asking for an annual appropriation for the purpose of establishing a permanent archaeological museum and for other cognate purposes, is one that ought to receive the best attention of the Premier and his colleagues. Those to whom are entrusted the administration of a nation's affairs should never become so engrossed in its present material prosperity as to be careless of its future or indifferent to its past. The materials for constructing a trustworthy account of the aboriginal inhabitants and early occupants of our country are fast dissipating under natural causes, or are being carried off to enrich the collections that are made by the governments of the New England and Middle States, or by the enterprising Historical Societies of Massachusetts and New York. And it is a sad reflection upon us that the most valuable histories of the early periods of our country have been written by aliens. All this evidences on our part a lack of interest in what intimately concerns our land and our people. The present movement is intended to arouse and stimulate such interest, and to offer it an objective point towards which

its action may be directed. Toronto is the intellectual capital of the Dominion, and our Ontario authorities ought to recognize this and take speedy steps to make permanent in this city, and under the protection of the most capable scientific society of our Province, an institution (the proposed archaeological museum) which will be resorted to by scholars for all time to come as likely to contain everything of interest or value illustrative of our history.

IN our remarks concerning the Blair Bill, or the proposition to apportion \$77,000,000 of national funds among the several States of the Union on the basis of illiteracy, the amounts received to be appropriated to the support of education in such ways as the several States may deem best, we stated that the opposition to it was based on constitutional grounds, and was by no means a party affair. This is evident from the complexion of the vote respecting it in the Senate last year—Republicans and Democrats uniting both to support it and to oppose it. The constitutional objections are founded upon the fact that the work of education is a duty which naturally and by the federal compact belongs to the individual States. If the national government interferes with it, even with the best intentions and for the best of purposes, it will establish a bad precedent. No state right will henceforward be secure, and never afterwards can the limitations of the national authority be considered as determined, if in so well established a principle as that it is the duty of each commonwealth to provide for the education of its own citizens, an exception be made. The demand for this aid was first made in behalf of the Southern States; to meet the objections of unconstitutionality *all* the States were included in the bill, though on the basis of illiteracy the Southern States will of course receive most benefit.

THERE can be no doubt that the proposed measure is unconstitutional, and any attempt to deny this is futile, the plausible scheme of including all the States within the scope of the bill to the contrary notwithstanding. But the mere fact that it is unconstitutional does not justify the national legislature in refusing to adopt it at so grave a crisis. So backward are many States in the commonest elements of education that nearly 50 per cent. of their voters, black and white, are unable to read the ballots they are empowered

to cast at every election, local, state, and national. The national legislature violated state rights, and did away with slavery, at a great national crisis. The national legislature interfered with the federal compact and forced amendments to the constitution upon unwilling States, when in the interests of national justice and morality they seemed necessary. So now there is no valid reason why, when so much of the South is not only unwilling but *unable* to do anything in the support of education, the national legislature should not act strongly, and save itself from the misrule which may at any time be forced upon it by its millions of ignorant voters, who must for years remain in ignorance if it refuses to come to their rescue.

THE only other argument which is directed against the bill is that it will be injurious to the independence and self-reliance of the South to receive aid from the national treasury. Each commonwealth will be stronger in the future, more self-respecting, more fit to discharge its part as an independent state, if it refuses the offered help and relies entirely upon itself. The Southern States are making rapid progress now; and this progress will be sounder and more stable if it be not accelerated by outside interference. We do not attach much importance to this argument. We believe that the quickest cure is the best. In a hundred years from now South Carolina, for example, may by its own efforts reduce to a minimum its percentage of illiteracy, (at present, 70 per cent. for the negro population, 12 per cent. for the white population,) but if, by the help the State will obtain from the passing of the Blair Bill, this alarming percentage can be minimized in fifteen or twenty years, it will be infinitely better for the State and for the whole nation.

IT is satisfactory to know that the opposition to the Blair Bill comes, not from the Northern people, who are disposed to be generous in the matter and are desirous that the South should enjoy such educational privileges as they themselves possess, but from the South itself—from those who view, with some dismay it is true, the apathy of the illiterate class and their unwillingness to help themselves, but who think it would be far worse for the South to acknowledge its poverty and its inability, and come as a mendicant to the national treasury, far worse so to abase itself, than to endure, for a generation or two longer, the evils which may accrue by reason of the illiteracy of its people.