

England's troubles in Turkey have passed into a new phase, and the position is worse now than it was before the war which cost Russia so much in treasure and lives. It is worse because whereas then England might have had Russia as an ally in compelling Turkey to carry out the internal reforms so long and so solemnly promised, now it looks as if an understanding has been come to between the late belligerents. That is the reward England has to expect for championing the cause of the rascally Turks. They have never made a promise which there was the slightest intention to keep if it could be helped, for they have never been seriously convinced of the need for reform. Even if the Sultan were disposed to keep faith with Europe, he has no chance against the besotted Pashas with their harems. But what will England do? To coerce Turkey into at least a semblance of submission will be easy if she is allowed to stand alone; but if Russia should give even a secret support at first and wait for developments, the consequences must be most serious. Can it be that Russia will try to play England's game against England?

It is more than half believed among English politicians that the Earl of Beaconsfield intends to make an early appeal to the country. On the 17th, the members of the Cabinet were called together, but for what purpose has not yet transpired. The Earl has nothing to gain by waiting, for the situation becomes more and more complicated, while the Liberals will profit by delay. They have not yet put anything more than the vaguest policy before the country, waiting, probably, for the time when Mr. Gladstone shall clearly and elaborately state it to the electors of Midlothian. If a dissolution were to take place at once therefore, the Liberals would be caught waiting for their opportunity, and the old politician would again steal a march upon his great and earnest antagonist.

The *Toronto Globe* of the 17th published a letter by Mr. F. Watson Griffin on the "National Currency," and in two and a-half columns of editorial put its ponderous foot down in peculiarly solemn manner upon what it was pleased to call the "scheme." If life were not so painfully brief, such jokes would be worth the reading; but as we cannot expect to have more than a hundred years at most in which to read and digest newspaper leaders, the editor of the *Globe* should be careful not to inflict upon his unhappy readers such attenuated witticisms. If the *Globe* wanted to destroy that baby made of a rag, it should have done it outright, and not have picked it to pieces as if the thing was oakum, while hosts were compelled to look on. The office boy might have swept it out of the editor's way. A correspondent seems to hold much the same opinion, and says concerning it:—"Mr. Griffin's effusion contains many a crow and chuckle. For instance, 'Under the present monetary system of Canada, money is the source of labour, instead of labour being, as it should be, the source of money.' In that sentence one can hear the sweet little rag-baby crowing to itself at the labour and worry of which the possession of money is ever an unfailing source, while the childish mind which has as yet no idea of what money is, joyously plays at reducing the results of labour to mere rags. That baby's bump of destructiveness is very large. It wants to tear things to pieces to see how they are made. If it succeeds it will learn but sad experience. And not the *Globe* will be its teacher; the *Globe* soars above its childish mind. Let it play with the toy nurses it gathers round it, till it has thoroughly dissected them and found how very little there is inside."

Mr. Blake has been elected M. P. for West Durham by acclamation, and on the occasion delivered one of his best speeches. The criticisms some of us have offered upon his relation to the party with which he is identified have had some effect, and he declared himself thus:—

"You know that I never at any time invited you so to deal with the question of party; that I have always argued amongst you for a reasonable freedom of action on the part of even a party politician; that I have told you that while in questions simply of party tactics or expediency a man may well and ought to subordinate his individual judgment to that of the majority of his party, that while on questions of principle he ought to pay very great attention and give very great consideration to the views of the majority if they vary from his own, where his own opinion may at the best be doubtful upon such questions, he may not unfairly, if he simply doubts, yield his own inclinations to the general judgment, still, in questions of principle, where his

opinion is clear, it is a violation of principle for him to sacrifice that opinion to those of others, and therefore he ought never to be called upon to make such a sacrifice."

That is entirely satisfactory; and if Mr. Blake will only control himself, and keep to his own programme, he will render good service to his party and to the Dominion.

In the baldest and barest possible manner the Protestant Board of School Commissioners announced that they had resolved to raise the fees in the schools one hundred per cent. It is not too much to say that such an announcement should have been accompanied with full and particular information as to the need and the reasonableness of such a change. After some difficulty I found that the step has been forced upon the Commissioners because this year the expenditure has exceeded the revenue by more than \$7,000, which is due to depreciation in the value of property producing less taxes. The Board has borrowed up to its borrowing powers, and can only increase revenue by raising the rate of fees. But it is a serious step, when all things are considered. For parents to be suddenly called upon to pay double the amount they have hitherto paid for the education of their children is likely to lead to trouble, and the public would have been better satisfied if the Commissioners had given a statement of their difficulties and how they had tried to meet them. It is more than probable that every item of expenditure has been carefully examined, and that all possible curtailment has been made—but we should like to have proof of that. The Board spent \$134,000 last year—no small sum of money it will be confessed—and while most people will be willing to take it for granted that it was spent in exactly the way in which it should have been spent, all people who are interested in the matter of public education would be glad to have more information as to the general proceedings of the Board.

Will the Commissioners tell us why they have only increased the fees of children attending the 1st, and 2nd, primary classes, instead of the whole six classes of the schools? The Commissioners of the Roman Catholic Board have managed to get along without this increase in the fees; have they more borrowing power, or any other power denied to the Protestant Board? The opinion is freely expressed that a change in the mode of electing to the Board would give satisfaction, and that the system here should be made similar to the one they have in Ontario.

Surely matters have got so bad that they can hardly be worse in the matter of reports, or criticisms of singing and acting in the daily press. We have grown accustomed to beforehand puffs of singers and actors; we know perfectly well that the agent walks into the newspaper office with a puff in one hand and an advertisement in the other, and they both go together. We know it so well that we discount such puffs, and the more extravagant they are, the less we believe in them. The "phenomenal" man or woman who promises to take us through some original and delightful experiences, finds an almost empty house; but we still look for something like reliable criticisms of the work done. The puff introductory may pass—for, after all, the press of a city has no absolutely certain grounds for saying that the peculiar name does not belong to a peculiarly-gifted person; but then, we have a right to expect that papers professing to give a criticism for the information and guidance of the public, will report with ordinary ability and fairness. But what have we? Let any one turn to the criticisms of the Emma Abbott Company, and he will see. Evidently, ordinary reporters were sent to the opera who know as much about music as they know about the Greek Kalends, and who could hardly tell the real difference between an aria in *Il Trovatore* and a burst on a hurdy-gurdy. They talked as able critics never did, and never will talk. Such an one, in such a song, "very nearly reached perfection," as if the juvenile writer knew exactly what all great masters have searched after—perfection in music. What talk we had of "graceful modulations," of "exquisite renditions," and such like pompous twaddle. It would be a thousand times better if they would tell the public what pieces were sung or played and give no opinion at all. The kind of criticism we have in the daily papers is a disgrace to journalism.

I am not finding fault with the reporters for this; poor fellows they do their best, and that is quite good enough for the pay they get.