FRANCE AND AUSTRIA.

From the Continental Review.

There can be no question but that the probability of Austria and France coming into speedy collision on the plains of Lombardy becomes every day greater.---There are numerous stories current to show how open the seperation between the two countries has become, and the Emperor, rarely as he allows his policy to be divined from his personal conduct, is said to have been much more explicit than usual when addressing Baron Hubner, the Austrian Minister at Paris. But it is not by the diplomatic differences of Emperors and Ministers that the chances of an impending war are really to be calculated. The state of Italy is such that some explosion is sure to take place before long. The upper classes of the Lombards are now in a state of open disaffection, and numberless signs are given that the breach between them and their masters is not to be bridged over, and that they are preparing to try once more the issue of a struggle. Austria answers their attacks with increased severity on her part, and the daily life of the two nations in Italy has become one unending series of petty skirmishes. The Italians have given up their favorite luxury of smoking, lest the tobacco duty should swell the Austrian revenue. The Arch Duke could not give a ball on Christmas day, because no one would go. Directly he appeared in his box at the opera, the audience would have retired *en masse* had not the police prevented them from quitting the theatre. On the other hand, Madame Lestori has been refused her passports for Naples because she is supposed, in the character of Judith, to have appealed to the patriotism of the Italians. The University of Pava has been practically broken up, because the students were suspected of revolutionary designs. Everything is ripe for an outbreak, and the most serious of all symptoms is, that those who have most influence with the Italians promise their supporters that if they will but avoid partial and unconnected insurrectionists in the winter they shall be rewarded with a great war in the spring. There is a definite time fixed, until which the Lombards are asked to wait, and it will not be easy to hold them in any longer if the spring comes, and they find themselves disappointed.

But we must not look only to the Lombards. The Italians might revolt and be crushed. Austria is not weaker than she was, and she has often come out the conqueror from Italian revolt.—But we must add to the interests of Italy the interests of France. There is nothing which Louis Napoleon could do which would hold out so great a promise of advantage to him, as to quarrel with Austria, and assert himself to be the champion of Italian independence. It would give occupation to his army; it would take off the attention of the French public from the great difficulties under which the empire is laboring; it would give him popularity with the nation that is most prolific of the assassins whom he dreads; and it would help to throw over the empire that air of mock liberalism which it is one of his greatest wishes to impart to the system with which his name is connected. It is also tolerably certain that Austria expects war. A military council has lately been held at Venice, and it is supposed that this can have had no other object than to provide for the military defence of the country. The Archduke has retired to the fortress of Mantua, and every possible means is taken to enable Austria to take the field with advantage. She has even taken the strong measure of compelling the Italian municipalities to buy the government buildings in the larger towns—a measure which can have no other object than that of ensuring the safety of these buildings in an insurrection, by making them the property of the insurrectionists. It is possible that the Austrians might be driven out of those towns, and then return to them if the tide of fortune turned. In this case they would find the advantage of a precaution by which all the public buildings were kept safe for them.

It must also be added that Austria refuses all concessions. She has only very lately created new feelings of bitterness in Lombardy by an increased severity in the laws of conscription. And generally throughout the Peninsula she will not permit any change in her own policy nor in the policy of those to whom she sets an example. This is more visible perhaps, in the Papal States than elsewhere. The Papal government is as bad as a government can be. It does not protect life or property; it allows bandits to pillage the population openly; it squanders money; it represses all life, hope, and thought; it subjects all families of respectability to a constant, petty, tyrannical interference; it makes life a burthen to all who are fitted by nature, by sentiment, and education to turn life to useful and honorable ends. This state of things is maintained solely by the presence of foreign troops. It is said that France has recently offered to withdraw from the occupation, and to insist on some concession being made to the just demands of the unhappy inhabitants of the States of the Church. But Austria would not agree; the French may go away if they please, but she will stay there and keep things as they are. Austria, in fact, has no answer to any demand or entreaty, but that she will not yield or alter, and that if she is attacked she will defend herself.—And if this is thought a dangerous and short sighted policy, it must be remembered that it is not very easy for a nation like Austria to make the change that is required. She is bound up with the extreme catholic party. To support clerical government, or even clerical misgovernment is not only regarded as part of a traditionary policy, but as a private religious duty, by those who govern Austria. They would be yielding to the Evil One, favoring heretics, infidels, and all the wickedness of the world, if they allow laymen to govern priests, and revolutionists to beard authorities. Englishmen are so entirely without these feelings, they so utterly disbelieve in the claims on which clerical usurpation rests, they are so accustomed to speak their mind freely, that they hardly make due allowance for the sincerity and earnestness with which the dominant party in Austria cling to its belief. Even when we look merely to the secular policy of Austria we may see how dangerous any manifestation of vacillation must be to her; her empire rests on success. There is nothing to bind her heterogeneous elements together except the consciousness of each of them that she is their stern, unalterable, unconquerable mistress. In 1848 the Sclaves saved the empire because they thought it was a great thing and worth saving, a source of glory to them and to their race. But if the Italians were humored, they would be supposed to be dreaded; and if the empire was afraid, it would sink in the estimation of its supporters.

If war breaks out in Italy, what is England to do? We think her course is plain. She could not think for a moment of actively aiding Austria, so long as the only question at issue was the freedom of Italy. As little could she think of taking a part in the war as an ally of France. We have had quite enough of alliance in which France reaps the glory, and we have to find the money and do the hard work.—The notion, also, of England and France joining together to promote liberty is a chimera. If liberty in France means the empire, we cannot help to spread abroad a liberty so unlike what we mean by liberty. Nor can we again join France as champions of international law and of the rights of nations. Louis Napoleon has chosen to trample on international law, and to violate the first rights of independent nations, by his conduct towards Portugal.---What England must do is to stand strictly neutral. If the Austrians, as is possible, provided they are not threatened by Russia in their rear, succeed in holding their own in Italy, we shall pity the Italians most sincerely, but we shall have no call to intervene. If the Austrians are driven out of Italy, then will be the time for England to come on the stage, and to insist, in conjunction with Prussia, that the war shall not be carried into Germany, and also that Italy shall be left to her own princes and governments according to her unfettered choice, and that she shall not merely change her masters and become the tool of France instead of the slave of Austria. We most heartily wish that the struggle between Austria and the Italians could be delayed until France is free. We dread the effect of Imperialism on the Italians after they have assumed a nominal independence. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that it is hard for desperate men to wait with the patience of a long-sighted policy. The struggle may come sooner than the best friends of Italy could wish. If it does come it will be the part of those friends to counteract the evil effects of this precipitation to the utmost of their power.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

No Communication of a purely personal character, and having no bearing on the general interests of the community, will be published in this paper. Communications, however, on all interesting subjects will be thankfully received and willingly inserted. To insure attention, Correspondents must send their names and write in a legiable hand. Let each communication be as brief as the nature of the object will allow.

York Commonwealth

RICHMOND HILL, FEB. 4, 1859.

TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We beg to remind our numerous readers that our Journal has nearly completed three months issue. We stated at commencing that our charge for the paper was only $1 50cts. per annum, if paid within three months, but all beyond that period would be charged at the rate of $2 per annum.—We hope, however, that each subscriber will see it to be for his own interest, as well as ours, to pay up as soon as possible.

OUR BILL OF FARE.

At last our senators have met in solemn conclave, to discuss the wants of this growing colony.—The Governor General on Saturday last proceeded amid the roar of artillery and excellent music, to the house of Parliament, and announced to the assembly the why, and the wherefore they were gathered together. He also, as is usual, gave some brief outline of the work which they were expected to do; and we must in justice add that if this is all that is to be done, the session will be as his Excellency wishes it should be,—a very brief one: But we think that our readers will agree with us when we state that the address contains sins, both of omission and commission, clothed though it be with the usual amount of undefinable generalities. We need not give quotations to justify our remarks, as we have printed the address in full in another column.

Let us now briefly glance at its main points. We are glad to learn that the commission for the settlement of the Seignorial Tenure will shortly close its labors; and that a measure is preparing to improve the Municipal law of Lower Canada. We are sure a good measure for that purpose is much wanted. The subject of a Federal Union of the Provinces has also received attention, correspondence having taken place on that subject which will be laid before Parliament, as also questions "affecting the Hudson's Bay Company, and on the subject of the Inter-colonial Railway." The address also states that "an arrangement respecting the debt due to the Imperial Government, and the sinking fund in connection with it, of a character highly advantageous to the Province, has been effected in England."

So far so good,—with this part of the address we find no fault. The great sin of commission lies here:

"It is my duty on the present occasion, to call your attention to th question of the Seat of Government of Canada.

"The Legislature of Canada having resolved that a fixed Seat of Government should be selected, solicited Our Gracious Queen, by an address of either House, to exercise Her prerogative in making such selection.

"An Act, moreover, was passed, adopting beforehand the decision of Her Majesty, and appropriating the necessary funds.

"This Act of the Canadian Parliament and the decision of the Queen, are binding on the Executive Government of the Province, and it will be their duty to carry out the understanding which existed at the time when the reference was made, by which the Government will be transferred to Quebec for a fixed period, until the necessary arrangements shall have been completed.

"The Correspondence with Her Majesty's Government will be laid before you, and I cannot doubt that you will recognize a selection made by Her Majesty at your own request, and that you will duly acknowledge Her gracious compliance with the Addresses which you yourselves caused to be presented to Her."

The question of the Seat of Government we admit is a very difficult one under the present circumstances, for it is evident to the most obtuse understanding that we have committed one act of egregious folly, viz,—the referring to Her Majesty's decision what we had far better have decided ourselves; but still, because we have taken one wrong step is no reason why we should take a second. To our mind the great question before us is not shall we abide, or not with Her Majesty's decision, but which is the best place for a permanent Seat of Government. It may be very unpleasant, we grant you, to make such fools of ourselves as to set aside the decision we implored; but the only persons in this case who ought to wear the fools cap, are those who on beaded knee to her Majesty placed us in this false position; but great as has been our folly, it would be far greater did we abide by a decision that would in time become an unbearable grievance, and the subject of a renewed and more bitter warfare. We think that we want the Seat of Government to be permanent—and the decision now given ought to be final, which we think cannot be if Ottawa is selected.

In the address before us, there is another recommendation made, which we think, is preposterous and absurd,—that is to transfer the Government to Quebec "for a fixed period, until the necessary arrangements are made to remove to Ottawa," or whatever place is fixed upon by our wise men.

We advise the attentive perusal by our readers of the following remarks which were made upon the above subject in the *Globe* of Monday last, with which we thoroughly agree, and doubt not our readers will also:

"Under the existing system, the perambulating process, costly though it may be, presents some advantages. While other questions are pending, much might be alleged to warrant it temporary continuance. But with the verdict of Parliament against alteration on the record, and with an expressed determination to carry out that verdict, who could palliate the expenditure of $800,000 for a removal to Quebec, with a prospect of a like expenditure, by and by, to cover cost of removal to Ottawa? The empty purses and depressed industry and trade, of the people, are unanswerable arguments against the waste of that sum in the manner proposed. According to the speech, $800,000 are to be expended this year in the transfer to Quebec and the buildings there; $900,000 in the construction of buildings at Ottawa; and eighteen months hence, $400,000 more in the second removal. Could extravagance go further?"

But oh, cry some, but there was an understanding "at the time the reference was made that we should go to Quebec." We really think that no one but the Quebecians have this understanding, for it seems to us incredible that any set of men could have promised anything so absurd; but even be it so, know you not there is an old and truthful proverb runs thus:—'There are some promises made which are far more creditable to break than perform." We really think that if ever promise was honored in the breach, this is one. Trade and commerce are languishing in our midst. Taxes are nearly unbearably high. Hundreds of mechanics and laborers are walking our streets, without work, and dependent upon cold, cold charity. Our credit is well nigh ruined; as a Province, there is the loudest possible demand for reduction of expenditure. Yet in spite of all this the Government ask for enormous sums of money, to be expended in a useless and absurd removal to Quebec. No wonder that many staunch *Conservatives* are crying out, whoever may *succeed* them, turn the present Government out at all *hazards*. This is the cry we are *continually hearing throughout this Riding*: for it is a fact all but universally admitted, that the *present Ministers* are not the men for the *present emergency*.

So much for the sins of commission. Now let's look a few moments at what is omitted. There is first Representation by Population; not a word about that at present. So we suppose that nothing is intended to be done in that quarter; and yet every one is aware that Upper Canada demands it. Is there to be no reduction of our expenditure? And then the School question. Is it to remain like Mahomets coffin, hanging as it were betwixt heaven and earth? Or are we to accept the silence of ministers as an indication that it is finally settled,—to let it remain intact as it is?—If so, we think that the resolve is an unwise one, for some are for abolishing the separate clauses of our common school system; others who advocate the separate clauses complain that they are a nullity, and wish for them to be extended. Now we candidly confess that we should like to see the somewhat anomalous position in which it is placed settled. We say abolish the separate clauses altogether, and let us have our Common Schools kept up efficiently; but if we are to have Separate Schools, do not word the law so that every popularity hunter may cheat the recipients (of the advantages supposed to accrue from them) of them out of their just rights. It will be seen by referring to our report that the Legislative Council have condemned that part of the address which recommends the removal to Quebec. This is defeat number one, and a crushing one it is. In the House of Assembly the debate is being carried on with energy by both parties.

TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

As will be seen in our advertising columns, the next meeting of the Teachers' Association of this county will be held at Aurora, on Saturday, 19th inst. The chief objects of this Association are, to promote the diffusion of knowledge by the best possible means, and elevate the standard of the teaching profession both morally and intellectually.—It has been in operation for some months, and possesses a written constitution which admits into membership all teachers and other persons friendly to the objects of the Association. It is needless for us to press the claims of this Association upon the public.—Every institution organized, calculated to promote the progress of education and improve the moral and intellectual character of our people, should have the countenance and support of every true christian and patriot. That the Teachers' Association of this county is an organization of this character we have no hesitation in asserting. Any person who attended its last regular meeting held in this place, could not fail to be impressed with its importance; the reading of able and instructive essays, the discussion that ensued on various important topics, and the animated spirit in which all the deliberations of the Association was conducted, were all well calculated to further the ends in view. We do sincerely hope that the local superintendents and teachers, will see the necessity of giving their support to such a praiseworthy object, and that the next meeting will be more numerously attended than any preceeding one.

COUNTY TOWN.

Our readers will see by a report of the proceedings of the Counties' Council, as given in another column, that a very important subject has been brought before the council, namely, the necessity that exists for "the separation of the Counties from the city for judicial purposes."

We think the motion a very important one, for it is a very great inconvenience and not only an inconvenience, but a serious loss of both time and money for jurymen to be under the necessity of travelling to Toronto 4 times a year, and to continue there five or six weeks at a time. We call upon the Inhabitants of Richmond Hill to wake up, for if the counties are separated we see no reason why Richmond Hill should not be the County Town, it is a healthy central spot, and we think we should begin to bestir ourselves and not let other Towns cheat us out of our birthright, for assuredly no better place could be found than Richmond Hill. So let us wake up to our interests, and with a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether; by urging our claims &c., we shall yet be the County Town.

The Rev. J. Hunt will deliver a lecture in the Grammar School, Richmond Hill, on Tuesday next at half past seven p. m. Subject, The common origin of the human race.

The Semi-annual examination of Common School Teachers took place at Richmond Hill on Tuesday, the 1st instant, according to appointment. The Rev. Messrs. Hill, Adams, and Duncan McCallum, Esq., Local Superintendents, and Messrs. Pearce, Bridgford, and J. K. Falconbridge, Esqrs, acted as examiners The Rev. Mr. Boyd assisted in place of the Rev. Mr. Dick, who was unavoidably absent. Nineteen candidates presented themselves, and after furnishing the necessary certificates, were admitted for examination,—two with first-class and seventeen with second-class certificates The certificates to be awarded will be issued on the last Tuesday in March, when the Board meets at Toronto.

RICHMOND HILL FAIR.

On Wednesday, the 2nd inst., the usual Fair was held. There was scarcely anything offering for sale, although several buyers were present, but few sales were effected.

Correspondence.

MARKHAM ASSESSORS.

To the Editor of the York Commonwealth.

SIR:—In perusing the *Economist* of the 20th ult., you will find the following paragraph:—

"ASSESSORS.—The appointment of Wm. Nichol to the office of assessor for the west half of the township is a most popular appointment. —We wish we could say as much for the appointment for the east half of the township. The selection of Henry Marr is most unfortunate. We believe that, since the days we were first cursed with partizan assessors, a more decidedly unpopular appointment has not been made. No violent partizan should ever be allowed to fill the office of assessor. There is no more important office in the township, than the office of Assessor. The integrity of our electors in municipal dealings depends more upon this office than any other in the municipality."

The above is not at all adapted to my feelings, in regard to my appointment for Assessor for the east half of this township. Now, sir, Mr. Reesor goes on to say "that never was the Township cursed with such an unpopular appointment" I hope, before I get through with this, I shall be able to show you that Mr. Reesor has been wrong for once.—I shall present your readers with an approval of my appointment, signed by some of the most influential gentlemen of this Township, condemning Mr. Reesor's statements and proving that they have full confidence in me as Assessor. Mr. Reesor again says:—"that no violent partizan should ever fill the office of Assessor." Now, I deny that I am a violent partizan; but, I must say, that I hold different views from Mr. Reesor, and for this reason he wishes to drive me from this earth. I always thought that, in Canada, we could think as we pleased, without being dictated to by any man. I would advise Mr. Reesor to introduce Lynch-law at once into Canada, and hang a man without even giving him a trial.

Hoping you will give this a place in your paper,

I am,

Your obedient Servant,
HENRY MARR.

Markham, Feb. 1, 1859.

We, the Undersigned, being inhabitants of the east half of the Township of Markham, having known Henry Marr for many years, beg to express our implicit confidence in him, and believe that he will discharge the duties of Assessor in a competent, faithful and impartial manner.

A. Barker, J.P.	C. G. Reesor,
Sinclair Holden, J.P.	C. F. Hall,
Christian Reesor, J.P.	Henry Tessman,
Henry Cro-by, J.P.	Thomas Speight,
John Doherty, M.D.	Peter Pike,
George Miller,	James Speigh,
Joseph Byrom,	W. M. Smardon,
H. R. Wales,	William Anderson,
Peter Mustard,	A. F. Whaley,
A. M. Tomlinson,	Cicero Tomlinson,
Alex. Mustard,	Luton Miller,
W. H. Buck,	Alfred Miller,
M. Wilkinson,	Daniel Strickler,
Adam Clendenen,	William Clark,
Thos. A. Milne,	James Robinson.

Markham, Jan. 26, 1859.

SUDDEN DEATH OF DR. FRANCIS RUSSELL.—Intelligence reached the city yesterday that Dr. Francis Russell, for some time a resident of Toronto, had died suddenly at Goderich, while on a professional visit there. Although quite a young man, Dr. Russell had acquired a first rate reputation for skill and attention to his patients. He received a first-class medical education in Edinburgh and London; lived for some time in Montreal, and then removed to this city. From the reports regarding the cause of his death, it did not appear certain whether he died of apoplexy or disease of the heart. His sudden death is much regretted by many friends here.—*Leader*

A respectable farmer named George Wallace, residing in the 8th concession, township of Vaughan, (near the village of Woodbridge,) met with an accident on Wednesday last, which nearly proved fatal. Mr. Wallace was engaged with his team hauling saw logs from the bush. The reins having dropped from his hands, he stepped from the sleigh to recover them. The horses instantly started off, and the sleigh, heavily loaded, passed over his leg breaking the thigh close to the hip. He is slowly recovering.—*Globe.*

Provincial Parliament.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS,

From the Canada Gazette, Extra.

TORONTO, 29th January, 1859.

This day, at Three o'clock P. M., His Excellency the Governor General proceeded in state to the Chamber of the Legislative Council in the Parliament Building. The Members of the Legislative Council being assembled, His Excellency was pleased to command the attendance of the Legislative Assembly, and that House being present, His Excellency was pleased to open the Second Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Province of Canada with the following Speech from the Throne:

SPEECH:

Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council,
Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly.

It is my duty, on the present occasion, to call your attention to the question of the Seat of Government of Canada.

The Legislature of Canada having resolved that a fixed Seat of Government should be selected, solicited Our Gracious Queen, by an address of either House, to exercise Her prerogative in making such selection.

An Act, moreover, was passed adopting beforehand the decision of Her Majesty, and appropriating the necessary funds.

This Act of the Canadian Parliament and the decision of the Queen are binding on the Executive Government of the Province, and it will be their duty to carry out the understanding which existed at the time when the reference was made, by which the Government will be transferred to Quebec for a fixed period, until the necessary arrangements shall have been completed.

The Correspondence with Her Majesty's Government will be laid before you, and I cannot doubt that you will recognize a selection made by Her Majesty at your own request, and that you will duly acknowledge Her gracious compliance with the Addresses which you yourselves caused to be presented to Her.

It affords me much satisfaction to state that the Commission for the settlement of the Seignorial tenure will shortly close its labours, and that a moderate outlay beyond the appropriation of 1854 will satisfy all reasonable expectations on the part of the Canadas.

The Municipal Law of Lower Canada requires revisal and consolidation. A measure for this purpose will be submitted for your consideration.

The possibility of uniting, by some tie of a federal character, the British Colonies in North America, has formed the subject of correspondence, which will be placed in your hands. I will also cause to be submitted to you Despatches from Her Majesty's Secretary of State, in relation to questions affecting the Hudson's Bay Company, and on the subject of the inter-colonial Railway.

Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

The Accounts for the year just expired shall be laid before you as soon as possible. I regret that the financial and commercial depression which has weighed upon us, in common with our neighbors has not wholly passed away.

But it is gratifying to me to state symptoms of amendment have begun to show themselves, and I trust that should Providence bless Canada this year with her usually abundant harvest, she will recover her former prosperous condition. The exercise of a sound and rigid economy in every department of the public service will, I hope, again enable us to bring our whole expenditure within the limits required by our Revenue.

I have the satisfaction to inform you that an arrangement respecting the debt due to the Imperial Government, and the sinking fund connected with it, of a character highly advantageous to the Province has been effected in England. The papers relating to this matter shall be laid before you.

In asking at your hands the supplies for Her Majesty's Service, I desire to assure you that everything will be done with a view to placing the tariff on a satisfactory footing. The principle of *ad valorem* duties will be proposed for your adoption in all cases in which it can be properly and advantageously applied.

Honorable Gentlemen, and Gentlemen:

The important work of the revision of the Statutes is, I am happy to say, nearly completed, and Parliament will soon be required to pass such a measure of consolidation as you may see fit to sanction.

I believe that I have summoned you to meet on the present occasion at the time most convenient to yourselves. So much beneficial legislation on important subjects has been dealt with in the last few Sessions that I shall hope to congratulate you on your release at a time somewhat earlier than usual.

With this hope I now leave you to your Parliamentary Labours.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The contest has at length fairly begun. The Legislative Council met on Tuesday. The Speaker in the chair. Explanations were given as to the reasons of the Hon. Mr. Sicotte's resignation, which, as previously understood, were to the effect that Mr. Sicotte did not consider that the ministry were bound to stand by the decision of the Imperial Government, after the vote given last session. After which the Hon. Mr. ARMAND moved the Address and the Hon. Mr. CRAWFORD seconded it. The Hon. Mr. DESSAULLES supported by the Hon Mr. CHRISTIE, moved an amendment "praying that an Address be forwarded to Her Majesty asking a reconsideration of the late decision on the ground of the unsuitableness of Ottawa as the permanent Seat of Government." After a protracted discussion the Ministry was sustained by a majority, the vote being—Yeas, 12; Nays, 31. The original motion was then put and carried on the same division.

DEFEAT OF THE MINISTRY.

On the following day, Wednesday, the consideration of the remaining paragraphs in the Address, was then proceeded with, when the Ministry received their first defeat. The Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL moved an amendment, seconded by the Hon. Mr. DEBALQUIERE, "that there was no arrangement recognized by the Legislature that the Government should go to Quebec, and that the expense of removing at this time would be unwarrantable." The amendment was carried by a majority of ten. This defeat is a very serious one, and is but the precursor of other and more decisive defeats which await them.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

In the House of Assembly Mr. SICOTTE entered at some length into the explanations consequent upon his resignation, at the close of which Mr. DUFRESNE moved, and Mr. BARTON seconded, the reply to the speech from the Throne. The warfare of words then began in good earnest, the seconder of the resolution of course "strove to make the worse appear the better cause," boasted of his loyalty and tried to show that to set aside the Queen's decision was the act of rebels and highly improper. He was followed by Mr. BROWN, whose speech was an explanatory one concerning the policy that he and his colleagues would have pursued had a chance been given them, after which the first paragraph of the address was carried. It was as follows:—"That an humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General, to thank His Excellency for His Gracious Speech at the opening of the present Session of the Provincial Parliament;—further to assure His Excellency,—"

The second paragraph, which was as follows, was next put:—"That we shall give an earnest attention to the question of the Seat of Government of Canada."

Hon. Mr. DRUMMOND, before proceeding to take a vote on that question, wished to be put in possession of the negociations which had taken place relative to the Federal Union of the Provinces.

The Hon. Attorney-General CARTIER said: "the only reason why the despatches relative to the Seat of Government, had been irregularly laid before the House was because that question had to be decided on before His Excellency received an answer to his speech."

In the evening session Mr. MCGEE rose and severely commented upon the charges that had been brought against him by the *Leader*, *Colonist*, and Dr. Ryerson during the recess,—he said "among other names which he had seen given to the Ministry of July last was that of the McGee cabinet. For his part he was not aware till he read it in a Government journal that he had had any hand in the formation of that Government. He was not aware that he had any power that could be used for such a purpose. He never heard by letter or word, in conversation in private or from any single person or number of persons, a proposition, until he had seen it in the *Leader*, that he was to be sent as a commissioner to Ireland."

The House then adjourned.

On Wednesday the debate was resumed and till continues with unabated vigor.

CALAMITOUS FIRE.

SIXTEEN STORES, HOTELS AND SALOONS CONSUMED.

LOSS FROM $3,000 TO 100,000 DOLLARS

From the St. Catherines Journal Extra,

ST. CATHERINES, Jan. 30, 1859.

Another of those disastrous fires which have been so frequent of late years in this town occurred last night, but which in its consequences has been far more calamitous than any previous one that has probably ever visited us. At about half-past 11 o'clock flames were discovered issuing from the St. Catherines House stables, and in a very few moments, although the different fire companies and most of our citizens were on the ground early, and exerted themselves to their utmost, speedily spread to the Hotel itself, and from thence communicated to the stores of Mr. Wm. Barr, dry goods, and Mr. Wm Davis, grocer, on the west, and on the east to the large range of wooden buildings on the corner of Ontario and St. Paul Streets, and down the latter street to the Bank of Upper Canada. The buildings were all of wood, excepting those of Messrs. Barr and Davis, and having been very old erections, as soon as the flames communicated to them they spread with fearful rapidity, utterly defying all efforts to stay their onward progress.

One man was injured by having to jump out of the second story of Mr. Wright's buildings, and another by the falling of some loose timbers, and Willis Stark, a coloured man it is said, was killed or being struck on some vital part by some stones thrown at him by some parties with whom he was quarrelling.

Another fire like that of last night, and St. Catherines would cease to be reckoned among the towns of Canada. One of the most heart-rending and affecting incidents of the fire was the hideous yells and moans that a small dog confined in the St. Catharines House gave forth when the fire reached him.

The origin of the fire is attributed to various causes, but the most prevalent opinion is, that it was the work of an incendiary, this latter opinion being strongly corroborated by the fact that a gentleman who was early at the fire saw a man escaping in very a suspicious manner from the stables in which it was first discovered.

It will be recollected that the Montreal Telegraph Co. and the American Express Co. were burned out in the fire of the 10th inst., and had only temporarily moved into their present premises, pending the completion of their new offices in Brownlee's Block.

A difficulty has arisen between France and Switzerland in consequence of a party of French troops having penetrated into the Swiss territory. The greatest excitement and indignation is said to prevail among the Swiss population, and the press of that country speak in strong terms of the outrage.