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Our Ottawa Letter.

Even in these democratic times, dinners and other varieties of state functions appear to be inseparable to the proper carrying on of national and international business, and it is curious to notice the importance that has come to be attached to these occasions through the practice of public men of making them the occasion for momentous utterances. The Lord Mayor dinner has come to be looked upon, not only in England and in the Empire, but throughout the world, as the occasion upon which weighty secrets of state are likely to be revealed and Imperial policies unfolded; the great Liberal party of the premier province of the Dominion, anxious to give timely expression to the high esteem felt towards their leader, entertained the Attorney General at a banquet which is described by friend and foe alike as almost without parallel in magnificence and historic importance; and the Commissioners of the Joint High International Commission now reassembled in Washington prepare for the resumption of their arduous deliberations by participating in a banquet.

A UNIVERSAL FAVORITE.

While no speeches of importance were made at this latter function, other public gatherings are being arranged, apparently for the purpose of allowing the American people to become better acquainted with our Canadian representatives, and as one correspondent has remarked, "If he remains much longer in Washington, Sir Wilfrid Laurier will become as great a favorite as he was in England during the Jubilee. Wherever he goes he is received with the greatest enthusiasm." Everybody across the line to-day is a more thorough-going Britisher than Canadians themselves were a few years ago. Incredible though it may appear the pro-British feeling has developed to such a degree that at one important banquet in Boston a few days ago the health of the queen was enthusiastically drunk before that of the President of the United States was honored. With the opportunity of permanently disposing of many serious and complicated international difficulties, which is offered by the meeting of the Commission, and with the splendid prospects which at this moment exist, through the mutually conciliatory policy of the British and American Commissioners alike, this intense and steadily increasing feeling of reciprocal consideration is most opportune, satisfactory and gratifying.

ALL DEPENDS ON THE POINT OF VIEW.

Strange how differently the same thing strikes different observers. Some little time ago the London (Eng.) Daily Chronicle, one of the foremost of the big journals of the Empire, writing editorially of the Quebec Conference remarked, "Men like Lord Herschell and Sir Wilfrid Laurier represent a singularly powerful equipment of statesmanship."

Speaking in Toronto a few days ago Mr. E. B. Osler, the Federal member for West Toronto remarked, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier was not a leader. It was notorious that, instead of being the head, he was the tail of the Cabinet. Few will deny that the London Daily Chronicle is fully qualified to form an estimate as to what constitutes a statesman, and as the Premier, "a singularly powerful statesman," is "the tail of the cabinet," we have the voluntary testimony of a leading Federal Conservative as to the general standard of the present Government. No wonder that the Government's own supporters have grown into the way of thinking that Canada to-day has the strongest Administration she ever had. Mr. Osler also observed that, "The Government had half a dozen leaders all striving for the supremacy." How forcibly that remark recalls "the nest of traitors" incident of the spring of 1896 when seven Ministers of the Crown, and members of the then Conservative Cabinet, rebelled against Sir Mackenzie Bowell, their leader, each one apparently feeling that he was personally better qualified for the position.

THE NEW POSTAL NOTES.

Few innovations have been more quickly taken hold of by the general public than the new postal notes that were placed in circulation some three months ago. It always takes a little time for any new system or mode of procedure to be understood and appreciated, and in proportion to the need that exists does the appreciation develop. August was the first month in which the notes were issued; in that month 2,773 were purchased; in September the total rose to 11,990, and in October no less than 15,146 were issued. In the cities and other centres of population and business the traffic in the notes is already assuming considerable proportions and as the community generally becomes better acquainted with its advantages it will prove just as popular here as in the old country. The denominations so

far issued are 25 cents, 40 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents, \$1, \$1.50, \$2, \$2.50 and \$5, and seven other denominations are to be added to these, viz., 20 cents, 30 cents, 60 cents, 80 cents, 90 cents, \$3 and \$4. There appears still to be considerable ignorance of the fact that the government will no longer redeem postage stamps, and firms whose methods of business have led to the accumulation of stamps in large quantities will therefore welcome the new postal notes as a great convenience. To some the reform may not seem a great matter, but it is another instance of the practical intelligence with which the affairs of the country are now being administered.

A COUPLE OF GOOD STORIES.

The rapid approach of Christmas, the great gift season of the year, once more brings into the range of practical politics the question of what to buy, while a thousand and one tempting suggestions present themselves. Often the simplest way out of the difficulty is to select some entertaining work of fiction, though here again the choice is so vast, and the task of selecting wisely, not easy. Two of the best of recent novels, however, are "Tekla," the latest romance from the pen of the Canadian author, Robert Barr, and "The Uncalled" by the colored author, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, who has so recently made an almost sensational appearance in the literary world. Both of these volumes are of the highest class of fiction and would establish the reputation of any writer.

OUR NEW GOVERNOR.

The new Governor-General has safely arrived and has been installed at Government House. So far he has been mercifully permitted to attend to his personal affairs, but already a lengthy list of public functions are being arranged for him, beginning with the official civic reception. The Earl and Countess of Minto start their gubernatorial term with the distinct advantage of having come amongst a people to whom they are well and favorably known, and the outlook for their term of office is exceptionally bright.

THE ALIEN LABOR LAW.

The old cry has been raised again this week, that the government is not enforcing the Alien Labor Law, but is allowing the importations of American artisans under contract to work in Canadian shops and factories. The fact is that there was an explicit understanding between the two governments at Ottawa and Washington that the law in both countries should be held in abeyance until the whole question has been dealt with by the Joint High Commission, and the Canadian Government has faithfully honored this undertaking. If the complaints are well founded that the United States officials are breaking their side of the compact representations to that effect will be made at once and in regular form to Washington.

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York County Council.

The by-law appointing nominating officers for the nine electoral divisions of the county received its third reading, the blanks being filled in with the following names: No. 1, Scarborough, Thomas Crawford; No. 2, York, W. A. Clarke; No. 3, Etobicoke, J. K. Keefer; No. 4, Richmond Centre, J. McClure; No. 5, Markham, H. B. Crosby; No. 6, King, Charles Patterson; No. 7, Hartman, S. H. Lundy; No. 8, Sharon, F. J. Kitching; No. 9, Simcoe, Donald Ego.

The special committee re Scarborough railway reported that they had located the track for an extension of the line along the Kingston Road. The special committee in regard to the Metropolitan Railway reported the track located as far as Newmarket.

The County Solicitor gave it as his opinion that, with the exception of lands in York, Scarborough, Etobicoke, Weston and East Toronto, the lands now advertised cannot be legally sold.

On Thursday the Council heard a deputation from the City Hall re the dispute over the pavement in front of the Adelaide St. Court House. The county's share they said would be \$206.77 for ten years.

The report of the Commissioners of the Newmarket Industrial Home was presented. The Home was shown to be in good order. The crops in the land belonging to the home had been quite satisfactory.

A deputation from North Toronto waited on the Council re a grant for a bridge. On motion the request was granted, the repair of the bridge at Anderson's Hollow amounting to \$475.18.

It was decided to memorialize the Ontario Legislature to pass such legis-

lation as would compel the county in which a crime had been committed to bear the expense of trial when a change of venue had been obtained.

The special committee on the Markham bridge over the 8th concession line presented their report.

The Council held its annual banquet at the Clyde Hotel on Thursday evening. County Councillor Evans occupied the chair, and Warden High, the guest of the evening sat on his right. An enjoyable time was spent, the spread being one of the best. The usual toast list followed, The Queen being the first number. W. F. McLean, M. P., and W. J. Hill, M. P., responded on behalf of the Dominion Parliament and Local Legislature. The guest of the evening was next toasted, and the chairman in a complimentary speech presented the Warden with a gold-headed cane on behalf of the Council. Warden High made an appropriate reply, and J. W. Moyes, Manager of the Metropolitan Railway, being called upon, made a happy speech. Other toasts were as follows:—County Officials and Learned Professors, by C. C. Robinson; Dr. Wasley and H. H. Shaver; The Wardens of 1899, Councillors Woodcock, Reesor, Baker, Chester and Hall.

On Friday the commissioners of County property presented their report. They announced the completion of the York Mills bridge at a cost of \$12,815, of which the county's share was \$10,771. Repairs had been made on the Eagle Bridge at Weston costing \$103,70, on the Scarlet bridge costing \$8 and also small repairs on the Wadsworth bridge and the Rountree bridge. On the Lampton Mills bridge repairs costing \$242.34 had been made. The new steel superstructure at Summerville was being built at an expense of \$1,150, and a stone abutment on the east end of this bridge had been completed at a cost of \$932.44. A new stone abutment at the Islington bridge had been completed at a cost of \$1,250. The bridge on Yonge Street at Holland Landing had been thoroughly repaired. A new steel superstructure was about completed at Sutton. The bridge on the town-line between Markham and Scarborough had been replanked at a cost of \$75. The bridge over Wilcoit Creek between Markham and Scarborough had also been replaced at a cost of \$12,04. A room in the Court house had been leased to Peter Ellis, J. P., at \$1 a month.

The Education Committee's report contained the following recommendations:—grant to North York Teachers' Association \$25; South York Teachers \$25; Woodbridge continuation class \$100.

A special committee was appointed and empowered to determine the amount annually payable by the town of North Toronto to the County for expenses of administration of justice, erection and repairs of registry office, &c.

Before concluding its business on Saturday the Council made a grant of \$25 to the Poultry Association Exhibition, to be held in January. The report of the special committee re Kingston Road in Pickering township was presented and adopted. It stated that although the deputation from each side had presented their case to the Government, no decision had yet been given by the latter. A deputation from the Prisoners Aid Association waited upon the Council.

The Council adjourned sine die.

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THE LIBERAL and Toronto Evening News, (Daily), one year, \$2.00

THE LIBERAL and Toronto World, one year, \$2.75.

THE LIBERAL and Morning Globe, one year, \$4.50.

THE LIBERAL and Weekly Sun to Jan'y 1, 1900, \$1.50.

THE LIBERAL and Weekly Witness of Montreal, \$1.75.