

PROMINENT TOPICS

Governor Swettenham and Admiral Davis.

A great deal too much fuss has been made about Governor Swettenham's letter to Admiral Davis. While the tone of the letter might have been more diplomatic the Governor's action in requesting the withdrawal of the American armed forces was absolutely right. To permit without protest the landing of armed foreign forces on British soil would be to create a precedent which might embarrass Great Britain at some future time and would be very apt to get a colonial governor into immediate trouble. Even when Canadian and American volunteers are enjoying each other's hospitality international etiquette forbids them crossing the frontier, armed, without permission. The good sense and good relations of the two peoples will prevent any international complications arising out of the incident. Its most important result will probably be to impress the British Government with the weakness and danger of its present naval policy. The people of the United Kingdom generally have an instinctive dread of timidity or cheeseparing in connection with the navy. It is not difficult to conceive of conditions which would have rendered the prompt arrival of a British squadron at Kingston or elsewhere in the West Indies, even more desirable than when Admiral Davis felt impelled to do what should have been done by a British naval officer. All Great Britain's recent wars have been caused by the weakening of British prestige, and nearly all her military reverses have been due to unwise military economies, and a policy of drifting

Pensions for Bank Employees.

The Bank of Hamilton has established a pension fund of \$100,000 for its employees. To this will be added five per cent. of their salaries, equivalent to about \$18,000 a year and the bank will pay five per cent. interest upon the whole amount. The general idea is to make the pensions equal to about half the salaries, when the employees become sixty-two years old. The principle of providing for the old age of the employees of financial institutions, cannot be too highly commended.

The Presidency of the Board of Trade.

The Montreal Board of Trade and the commercial community generally are to be congratulated upon the election by acclamation of Mr. George Caverhill, to the presidency of the Board. We have no doubt that he will make a worthy successor to Mr. F. H. Mathewson, one of the best presidents the Board has ever had and who well deserved the hearty vote of thanks tendered to him by the Council.

Foreign Labour Agitators.

Senator McMullen has introduced an amendment to "The Conciliation Act of 1900," which reads as follows: "Every one is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding \$100, who not being a citizen of Canada and a British subject, in any way intervenes in a difference, whether existing or apprehended, between an employer or any class of employers and workmen, or between different classes of workmen." We agree that the principle of the measure is right, although the law may be found difficult of application and the penalty provided, may turn out to be inadequate to prevent foreign interference in Canada's purely domestic labour troubles. Nevertheless it would be a good thing to have the principle definitely affirmed by parliamentary action. If necessary more rigorous legislation may follow.

Thunderer Champions Canada.

The London "Times" says "the very fact of Mr. Root's visit and his discussion with leading Canadian statesmen, coupled with the belief that the visit is only a prelude to some comprehensive attempt to settle all outstanding diplomatic differences, is in itself a recognition of Canada's status, which American statesmen have not hitherto conceded her. Such a recognition is most satisfactory but it is far more important that recognition should come even more clearly from our side. It is good business for Mr. Root to get into touch with Canadian sentiment. To do so is Lord Ripon's and Sir Edward Grey's imperative duty."

The Scarcity of Labour.

The Council of the Montreal Board of Trade has passed a resolution urging the Dominion Government, in view of the scarcity of labour, to remove the head tax on Chinese at least temporarily. There can be no doubt that the development of Canada especially in the matter of railway construction is being seriously hindered through the scarcity of unskilled labour. The idea that it is in the interests of the Canadian working classes, to prevent this want being supplied, is as erroneous as it is mischievous.

New York Insurance Companies and Canadian Securities.

A bill has been introduced in the New York State Legislature authorizing insurance companies to invest in stocks and bonds outside of the United States. The main object is said to be to permit the companies to invest in Canadian securities. This ought to be a good thing for the companies and also for Canadian securities.