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VICTORIA, TUESDAY, JAN. 12, 1892.

CABINET CHANGES.

Some of the contemplated changes in the Dominion Government are announced. Mr. Oumet is spoken of as Minister of Public Works and Mr. Haggart as the head of the Railway Department. Mr. Oumet is a new member of the Cabinet—a lawyer—without any departmental experience, and, it is believed, merely goes in to keep the place warm for Mr. Chapleau. As for Mr. Haggart, he has had considerable departmental training, and the manner in which he has presided over the postoffice service shows that he is fully competent for the discharge of more responsible functions, if that be possible.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS.

"No man should be permitted to live upon the country, on the pretence of doing honest work, while he is not capable of earning his salt, were he placed outside of the Government buildings." So says a correspondent of the *Monetary Times*, and to this may be added the observation that it should be rendered impossible to fill public positions with strangers, because they come from England, Canada or anywhere else and have influential connections, to the disadvantage of residents who and whose connections are compelled to pay the cost of maintaining these outsiders. Barristers, full-fledged or half-fledged, have, upon more than one occasion, been brought from the Old Country to fill important positions in the department of the Attorney General who, in addition to whatever duties it may have pleased them to discharge, have been ardent votaries and persistent practitioners of cricket, polo and such like old country recreations. They have given tone to the clubs, and, probably this may be regarded by some as sufficient compensation for the outlay. Then a gentleman in high position, himself a member of the Government, not so long since imported a young lady to act as his private (official) correspondent, and, if information be correct, she is drawing a salary which many a local man of family would be only too glad to secure; but he is not a relation of the important dignitary who has made this addition to the public service staff.

IMPATIENT OF DELAY.

It will be remembered how persistently, and upon what flimsy excuses, the American authorities delayed dealing with the

Canadian Commissioners sent to Washington upon important matters, for the discussion of which they had themselves arranged the time of interview; yet now, if reports be true, these same people are grumbling because Sir Julian Pauncefote and the British Government will not agree off hand to their proposals regarding the sealing arbitration. All of a sudden they have got to be in a terrible hurry, and are not slow to impute Lord Salisbury's deliberation to sinister motives. This delay, according to some of the duly corrected and revised, though not officially acknowledged, despatches from Washington, "if it was not intended as such, has undoubtedly resulted in serious loss, financial and otherwise, to the United States. It would be premature, perhaps, to say anything definite at the present time, but measures will not be wanting when required to compel more speedy consideration of the questions at issue on the part of Lord Salisbury." This was the first announcement, but that twist of the lion's tail had no effect, and so the next day demi-semi-official publication was given to the following:—"Unless Lord Salisbury gives his attention to the negotiations, the prospects are favorable for a renewal of the *Modus vivendi*—with all its embarrassing features—which was in force last season, for it is not probable that a rupture will occur between Great Britain and the United States on a matter so unimportant as the personality of the arbitrators."

But suppose none of these things move the British Premier, what will Mr. Blaine say or do? And supposing he should again take sick, what will Mr. President Harrison do? And supposing the *modus vivendi* should not be renewed, will all the bluster that has been indulged in over the seals, in which the people at Washington take almost a paternal interest, end in another announcement that "it is not probable that a rupture will occur between Great Britain and the United States on a matter so unimportant?"—the dispatch says as the personality of the arbitrators.

"Hurry up!" was the cry of the Americans when the *modus vivendi* was devised and brought into force. Either that *modus vivendi* has or has not answered the American purpose. What they think of it ought to be made known and, moreover, it would be as well that the report of the Behring Sea Commissioners should see the light before the arbitrators pass upon it. The people of this province, more than any others, are materially interested in and affected by it. Some light ought to be made to shine before final action is taken.

THE SALMON COMMISSION.

The Fraser River Salmon Commission has at length been formally announced. It consists of Hon. D. W. Higgins, of Victoria, and Sheriff Armstrong, of New Westminster, together with that great and only authority Mr. Samuel Wilmot, of Ottawa, whose report made after a few hours' stay in the province, enabled him to make such an "exhaustive" report upon this vital subject. Had Mr. Wilmot, with his pre-conceived notions, been ignored

and some less self-opinionated official been named, it is certain that the action of the government would have been much more favorably received, while the report that is to be made, whatever its nature may be, would be received with far greater confidence to say nothing of respect. It is, indeed, surprising that, after all that has been said on the subject, Mr. Wilmot should have been imposed on this most important interest, which, when he came here, he not only ignored when he came to investigate, but whose intelligence and business sense he insulted on the document which was officially published and circulated as the conclusions at which he had arrived. Almost, we repeat, any other experienced official in the Fisheries' service would have been satisfactory, but Mr. Wilmot has awakened an amount of lack of confidence and dis-respect that can hardly, if ever, be removed. The government may as well understand, first as last, what are the opinions of the salmon cannery interest on this matter.

RECIPROCITY.

At the last meeting of the British Columbia Board of Trade, held on Friday, Mr. Heisterman gave notice of the following motion:

"That this Board of Trade requests the representatives of Victoria in the Dominion Parliament to support any measure of Reciprocity that may be brought before Parliament by the Dominion Government at its next session, in view of the great importance which reciprocity bears to the development of our natural resources and the isolation of this Province from the markets of Eastern Canada."

Thanks, Mr. Heisterman, neither British Columbia nor any of the other provinces are prepared "to support any measure of reciprocity that may be brought before Parliament by the Dominion Government at its next session." Great as is the confidence of the majority of the people in the Dominion authorities, they cannot and will not go this distance. No measure can be introduced that will meet the divergent interests of all the sections, and whatever may be proposed must necessarily undergo more or less modification, particularly in view of the bearing of such a measure on "the development of our natural resources and the isolation of this Province from the markets of Eastern Canada." The resolution sets forth that ours is a special case. By those very considerations Messrs. Earle and Prior will have to be governed; and therefore their hands must not be tied hard and fast, as Mr. Heisterman proposes.

MR. WILLIAM LITTLE, a gentleman in the province of Quebec, largely interested in lumber, has recently written to the *Montreal Gazette* advocating the removal of the export duty on lumber. He dwells upon the havoc that is being made upon the Canadian forests. He, therefore demands that our lumber interest be protected, so that our people may have every possible benefit that there is to be derived from it. At present, he contends that the Canadian lumberman is handicapped in the East to the extent of \$2 per thousand feet on spruce lumber and in the West to the amount of \$2 per thousand on pine.