

is no reason why this crisis should not have the happiest results. The great difficulty on occasions like the present is naturally that of selecting the best man, not only on his own merits, but as against the storm of party feeling and partisanship, which is perhaps carried to its utmost limits in this country. The public press has very faithfully represented the feeling of the Dominion respecting each possible candidate for the Premiership, but those living in the Capital realized, more than others could possibly do, the strength of individual opinion and the animus displayed as one or other of the Ministers seemed to be "the favourite." From the very first, the chance that Sir Hector Langevin would be asked to construct a Cabinet seemed so remote as not to be worth discussing. The Minister of Public Works has lived under the shadow and support of the late Premier, and no one can refuse him a measure of sympathy under the doubly unhappy circumstances of his present position. And, although many an eloquent tribute was paid in some of the leading journals, and by men of undoubted wisdom, to Sir Charles Tupper's fitness for the post, yet public opinion in Ottawa seemed to be tolerably evenly divided between Sir John Thompson and the Hon. Mr. Abbott. It was positively amusing to note the eager glances that followed either of them if they ventured out to take the air, especially if their route lay in the direction of the Government buildings.

Probably the most satisfactory, or rather the least unsatisfactory, solution of the difficulty has been given by His Excellency in sending first for Sir John Thompson and then, on his advice, for Mr. Abbott, who has found no difficulty in forming an Administration. This, it can scarcely be doubted, is only a provisional arrangement, necessary at a time when it is best to avoid exciting personal feeling or sectional prejudice. In more than one quarter there was undoubtedly a strong desire for an immediate reconstruction of the Cabinet, regardless of the possible consequences of "swapping horses when crossing a stream"; but the divergency of opinions and strong personal interests, which Sir John Macdonald balanced so dexterously, became immediately so apparent as to enforce the more prudent counsels of older members of the party, and to show the necessity of taking time for that thorough and compact organization which only can hope to face successfully the *sturm und drang* period that must come sooner or later, and for which the Opposition is steadily gathering its forces. Mr. Abbott, an old experienced politician, the trusted adviser of his late chief in all delicate and difficult matters, the man who has been described as "the brains of the early stages of the Canadian Pacific Railway," with his cool judgment, shrewd insight into men and things, tactfulness and resource, his quiet conciliatory manner, free from obtrusive personality, but strength of will when occasion demands, has, from his own choice, been less prominent to the eye of the public than was due to his importance as a factor in the counsels of his party, but from the beginning of this crisis it was quite evident to anyone knowing and studying the undercurrents that he would be "the man of the occasion." Personally he is a man of the simplest tastes, refined, scholarly and the pleasantest of companions to both young and old. At his age, the proverbial three score and ten, after a life of incessant professional and public activity, though in spite of one of those illnesses that come to brain-workers as a warning to do less, he is vigorous and hale, he might very reasonably have expected a period of rest and quiet. It is quite well known that such would have been his own wish, that the *nolo episcopari* in this instance was genuine. That he has consented to undertake the great labour and responsibility of the Premiership is an act of real devotion, rendered as quietly and unostentatiously as the rest of the long list of his public services. He has gone to work very expeditiously, and with the exception of Mr. Chapleau, who according to some of the interviewers seized the opportunity to advance his claims to the portfolio of Railways and Canals, had all his former colleagues enrolled under him by Saturday night.

The announcement made in the House of Commons this (Tuesday) afternoon was characteristic of Mr. Abbott's quiet, complete and succinct method. It gives Sir John Thompson the credit that is justly due him of having been the first called to His Excellency's advice, emphasizes the unity existing as to the course pursued and minimizes Mr. Abbott's own share. That Sir Hector Langevin made the announcement is taken to indicate his continuance in the leadership in the Lower House. The Railways and Canals Department is to be administered temporarily by one of the Cabinet not named as yet. Mr. Abbott takes the Presidency of the Privy Council, and in accordance with several British precedents, in fact as in the present case of Lord Salisbury, remains in the Upper Chamber. The whole thing was a matter of a few minutes. There was not a word from the Opposition leaders, and the crowd in the galleries had very little to compensate them for the pushing and struggling they underwent on this intensely hot day, for the attendance of Mr. Michael Connolly at the bar of the House, to answer a charge of contumacy in refusing to submit his account-books to examination by the Tarte-McGreevy Committee, was equally brief. Mr. Connolly did not seem dismayed at the awful prospect of committal to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms. After respectful protest, his counsel, Mr. Ferguson, announced in effect that if the books had to be given up they would be given up, since Parliament can theoretically order anything it likes to be done, and it was too hot to argue about it. And so Mr. Connolly departed to his hotel, instead of

to some unknown mysterious dungeon conveniently near the Restaurant, where, tradition has it, the Sergeant-at-Arms is bound to entertain his prisoners on green turtle and champagne until they purge themselves of their contempt for the dignity of the House. But nobody ever verifies this tradition. Under all the circumstances Mr. Connolly seems to have behaved exceedingly well in not going to the seaside and staying there till the hot weather and the session both ended.

The prevalent idea is that the session will now be hurried through, all but the estimates and the absolutely necessary legislation being dropped. The enquiry into the McGreevy-Langevin charges would be the only obstacle to a speedy close; the Opposition insist upon this being thorough and complete. Indeed there is much strong expression of opinion to the same effect on the Conservative side. It will necessarily take a good while no matter how much it may be expedited by absence of factious action on either part. And at any moment there may be a political storm, so that any forecast of the session is mere guess work. It is quite understood, however, that the Conservative programme is to close the session as quickly and quietly as possible and then reconstruct the Cabinet entirely.

Under any other circumstances than those of last week the concert of the Lotos Glee Club would have been a great musical event for Ottawa, but, coming on the evening of the day of Sir John's funeral, it had not the audience such music deserves. The Theodore Thomas concert was more fortunate and proved an unqualified success. We rarely get a chance here to listen to such works, still more rarely to such perfect orchestration. The exquisite rendering of "Chopin's Funeral March" was made doubly effective by the rising to their feet of the immense audience, who remained spell bound by its sweet and solemn strains and resumed their seats amid that silence which is the best of all applause and which, in this case, was a tribute alike to the music and to the memory it evoked. X.

#### ON THE DEATH OF SIR JOHN MACDONALD.

MOURN, Canada, thy greatest son,  
Hush all thy cruel party strife,  
Let no dissensions break upon  
The last sad scenes of mortal life.

What boots it that in years gone by  
All have not deemed him in the right?  
Who is there, when he came to die,  
But wished him victor in the fight?

A truce to strife of long ago,  
All homage to the dead must pay;  
For warmest friend and fiercest foe  
Alike must grieve this sad, sad day.

His life was thine, and thine was his,  
For he presided at thy birth;  
Thy right and duty then it is,  
O Canada, to own his worth.

Mistakes he made, but who can doubt  
He meant and laboured for the best?  
But all is ended—life gone out—  
The weary worker now has rest.

His task is done, his life-work o'er,  
A nation mourns her trusted chief,  
And all the land from shore to shore  
Is wrapt in universal grief.

And mother England too has wept  
To learn that he has passed away,  
Who safe the trust of Empire kept  
And ever helped her hands to stay.

Nor can mistakes or actions done  
From party zeal amid the strife  
Forbid the honours justly won  
By his long, useful public life.

Grieve, Britain, for thy loss is great,  
And mourn, O Canada, for he  
Was the firm bulwark of thy state  
And laboured first and last for thee.

He needs no marble for his fame,  
Seven states in one Dominion blent  
Shall still add lustre to his name,  
And be his lasting monument.

Pause, critics, pause, the years to come  
May yield a brighter, clearer light;  
Cease ye a while, till o'er his tomb  
History her final verdict write.

A. F. CHAMBERLAIN.

Worcester, Mass., June 8, 1891.

A TELEGRAM just to hand from Simla states the returns of the census just completed show the population of the Indian Empire to be 285,000,000—being an increase of fully 30,000,000 since the last census, taken ten years ago. The manner in which Mr. Bainis, the census officer, accomplished his work is generally commended.

#### PARTY GOVERNMENT.

ACCORDING to the *Manitoba Free Press* there is a strong desire that the government of the Province shall cease to be government by party. There are signs that a similar feeling obtains in the older provinces, and its influence extends, though very slightly, to the general politics of the whole Dominion. It is the same all over the world. France can hardly be said to be under party government, so many are the cliques into which its political world is divided, but among even such an effervescent people as the French there is a demand for a "Cabinet of Capables" rather than of nominees. The strong militarism of Germany, too, cannot keep concealed the demand for less interference by political wire-pullers, while in England, where place pensions and peerages are still the rewards for party allegiance and not for public performances, there is a courageous little band working to hasten the time of which it shall be said

Then none was for the party,  
Then all were for the State.

It is in the United States that so wholesome an influence is not yet felt. There, party practices have degenerated politics to its lowest degradation; and this, notwithstanding the appeal of Channing, the nation's most profound divine, and the bequest of Washington, its greatest statesman. In his farewell address to the people of the United States George Washington wrote: "I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State. . . . Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you, in the most solemn manner, against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally." It is strange that a nation that never wearies in its worship of the "name" of one of the most brilliant figures the world has ever seen, should show its lack of appreciation of his policy by so utterly disregarding his last wish, and so entirely neglecting his solemn advice, that they wallow and even revel in the very filth his prescience saw was likely to besmear them.

The change that is coming over politicians almost everywhere, as above indicated, is a hopeful sign. One of the strangest of phenomena of the nineteenth century is the submission of nations to government by party; that is by a body of men whose principal idea is fidelity not to the State, but to a leader of a section. The members of a party follow its leader wherever he goes, and however he goes, even through dishonour to perdition. They pledge themselves to support whatever he proposes. Indeed they surrender all their political independence to his guidance; they do as they are told and speak as they are told, a very good thing for little boys, a very bad thing for grown-up men. Men who scorn the doctrine of "Our country right or wrong," enslave themselves under the dictum "Our leader right or wrong." For this reason it is that men of high principle fight shy of entering Parliament. Its atmosphere is repulsive to them; and the political world becomes the hunting ground for mediocrities of plastic principles and convenient consciences. Parties so formed are very hospitable and entertain conflicting sentiments and contradictory opinions with amazing impartiality—when it suits them to do so.

It is not surprising that the adherents to such a system are ashamed of their position at the same time that they imagine they are proud of it. This may seem paradoxical, but it is true nevertheless. A man will boast of the glorious principles of his party, and with his very next breath will lavish unbounded praise upon a great politician because he is "above party." The excesses of weaker men are excused on the ground of "over-zeal for party." Statesmen, we are told, ought to be "superior to the Shibboleths of party." "There are obligations higher than those of party" is an assurance often put forth. Palmerston and Gladstone, we are reminded, though strong party men, never allowed their party sympathies to blind them to the discharge of their duties to the interests of their country. What can this mean, if it do not mean that the interests of party are not the interests of the nation; that a man's duty to the State is incompatible with his duty to his party; that the party and the people are antagonistic terms. So, too, when politicians (Chamberlain, e.g.) have felt themselves obliged to leave a party, they have immediately congratulated themselves upon being "free," "untrammelled," "unfettered," able to do their duty; the logical conclusion from which is that when they were members of a party they were not free to do their duty, but were trammelled and fettered. We often hear of a man's being "blinded by party," but who ever heard of a man being blinded by conscientious convictions; from which it follows again that party practices have nothing to do with political principles.

The conduct of politicians towards the great questions that agitate a nation, too, emphasize the fallacy and the folly of government by party. In the face of a great crisis party government not only breaks down, but it is expected to break down. "In a crisis like this," says the Opposition, "we must sink party differences and support the Government." This means that one of the great parties in the State must send all its principles to the winds—principles on which they have declared the safety of the country depends—simply because the unexpected has happened. "In the face of common danger," it is said, "we must rise above party, we must unite and act as one nation." That is to say: "the Government we oppose having got the country into a muddle, as we said it would, we must discard all our principles, break all the promises that bamboozled our friends to vote for us, and