

where they are opposed to the common good and the safety of the Government. His opponents, could they be heard, would no doubt tell a different story. It is very suggestive that the contest in Brazil, like that in Chili, is between the President with the army, on the one side, and Congress and the people on the other. Unfortunately for the latter, the President in this case has probably control of the navy as well. When, on the abdication of the Emperor, Dom Pedro, General Fonseca was chosen by Congress as provisional head of the Republic, it was no doubt the intention that the arrangement should be but temporary. There is evidently a fascination in the exercise of great power, and General Fonseca seems to have felt it and to have decided to retain the position as long as possible. While he complains that his administration was constantly embarrassed by the reactionary projects of Congress, the latter, on the other hand, accuses him of having used the veto power in a way which prevented the inauguration of governmental and financial reforms. The result was that his measures were voted down, in retaliation, and he finally deprived of the veto power. Of the two stories, that of his opponents has certainly the more verisimilitude. There is great reason to fear that the country is on the eve of a prolonged and bloody conflict, the issue of which may be seriously complicated by the presence and influence of those, probably not few in number, who would be glad to see Dom Pedro brought back and the monarchy restored. Much depends upon the extent to which the President can count upon the loyalty of the army and navy, but if the struggle comes, and it is not easy just now to see how it can be avoided, it is not unlikely that the forces on the side of freedom and constitutional government may triumph in the end, for at the first tokens of success the popular sympathies are pretty sure to gravitate in this direction.

WE had occasion to refer last week to an important obligation which interferes to some extent, or should do so, with the freedom of the Canadian Government to make "purely domestic regulations," in the shape of differential tolls on her canals. The English papers which came to hand last week deal with a situation in some respects analogous—if we may compare small things with great—in their discussions of the passage in Mr. Gladstone's Newcastle speech referring to the Egyptian occupation. The whole tenor of the discussion is changed according as that passage is or is not interpreted in the light of the pledge given by the British Government at the time of the bombardment of Alexandria, ten years ago, that the occupation should be but temporary. The *Times*, *St. James' Gazette* and other influential Tory journals dwell eloquently upon the great and undeniable blessings which a decade of British justice, humanity and energy have brought upon that previously ill-fated land. Says the *Gazette*:—

They (the few score of quiet Englishmen, who are the virtual rulers of Egypt) have pushed back barbarism into its deserts, and kept it there; they have lightened the taxes of a people ground down for centuries by the infamous Eastern revenue system; they have abolished the slavery of the *corvée*; they have made the life and property of the peasant secure, have irrigated his fields and drained his towns, and fought the cholera-fiend for him, and are saving his handful of grain for him from the pasha, and his pittance of salt from the tax-collector. He is no longer cut to pieces by the Kourbash; no longer plundered by a greedy gang of officials and left to rot among the unimaginable horrors of an Eastern gaol, if he does not pay. He enjoys such peace and safety as perhaps he has not known since the days of the Pharaohs. We are treating him like a man and making a man of him. If all this is not literally true, there is at least so much truth in it that no genuine Englishman would consent, if it were possible to refuse without perpetrating a greater wrong, or bringing a greater evil, to have the British troops withdrawn from Egypt without ample security being had against possibility of relapse into barbarism. But not even all this would excuse a sacrifice of the national honour, or the adoption of any course which could justify the epithet "perfidious," which her enemies have so often striven to attach to the name of Albion. In view of all that English occupation has done and is doing for Egypt, it surely should not be difficult to reach some agreement with the Great Powers for securing the continuance of the work of reform and progress before the final evacuation of the country. It is not impossible that a statesmanlike agreement for its permanent occupation, or annexation, might be reached. But, when one recalls the solemn obligation of the pledge, and the growing resentment of France, it does not strike one that there was anything so very startling in Mr. Gladstone's expres-

sion of a hope that Lord Salisbury, before he dissolves Parliament, may be able to make arrangements for a final withdrawal of the British troops. In view of Mr. Gladstone's general support of Lord Salisbury's foreign policy, it is by no means impossible that the latter may have seen in the words, as the *Daily News* suggests, an offer of contingent support in an effort to find some solution for a very grave problem, involving the national honour. Nor can we refrain from the thought that great as are the blessings conferred upon the Egyptians by British rule, the ultimate test of their value must be the raising of the natives to a position in which they will be capable of continuing the system, and thus perpetuating the blessing for themselves. That would be a vastly greater boon than permanent occupation.

## THE REORGANIZATION OF THE CABINET.

### FIFTH ARTICLE.

THE announcement made at the close of last week that the Chapeau difficulty was at an end lifted the curtain on the Reorganization. *Le Canada*, which certainly often gets very trustworthy information, says Ouimet will become Secretary of State, Chapeau Minister of Agriculture, and Angers, Minister of Railways. It is not unlikely that it was always intended to give Angers the Railways and the Public Works to some Ontario man. Whether Chapeau goes to the Department of Agriculture or not we do not know; but it is clear the three French-Canadian Ministers are to be the men named. It is said Meredith is coming in from Ontario; but the object of these articles is not political gossip, but to discuss the principles on which the reorganization should proceed.

As the *Hamilton Spectator* says, the people expect Mr. Abbott "to strengthen the Cabinet, not to weaken it," and "to call to his Councils the best talent in the party." In forming a Cabinet—(and to reorganize is to form)—the grand aim should be a strong Government. This will depend on the power in the House of Commons and in the country of the men comprising it, and this again will have a strict relation to their integrity and ability. To be more particular—a Minister should be capable of discharging the duty of his Department. This is a truism, and it would be ridiculous to state it, did not the history of administrations in all countries furnish many instances of the grossest official incompetence.

When the Directors of the C.P.R. wanted a head to manage their road they chose a man of experience, of energy, of resource. Unfortunately special knowledge is rarely to be had among the men from whom a Premier must select his Ministers. Yet in most Departments that special knowledge must either be possessed at starting, or must be acquired, if the Minister is to be efficient. It would take at least one year of careful application on the part of a man ignorant of printing before as Secretary of State he could pretend to play the part of head to that function of his Secretariat—the Printing Bureau. A man of energy, capacity for detail, will, can master any Department. If he cannot or will not do this he is simply a figure head, a mockery, a *roi fainéant* and the Deputy head is the real Minister. Fancy Mr. Shaughnessy unable to answer Van Horne on any subject without calling in some subordinate officer. Yet what is the spectacle frequently witnessed when Ministers are putting through their estimates? Those who have presided over the Interior have been men who knew nothing about the North-West and Manitoba, or who were with one exception otherwise incapacitated, and the blunders of that Department it has taken nine years' fighting to rectify, and they are not all gone yet. At the head of the Department of Agriculture for some time was the late John Henry Pope, a man of great native ability who had a good knowledge of farming. But the cares of party management, to some extent, rested on him, and he never gave the full force of his mind to solving the great problem for Canada—how to secure suitable immigrants and enough of them. Besides he was hampered by the imbecility of the Interior closing up the Mile Belt and Southern Manitoba. He was followed by Mr. Carling, who in one important wing of his Department has been singularly successful. But the immigration wing was clipped and paralyzed with a vengeance, until two sessions ago, when under pressure from outside the Government woke to a sense of its desperate shortsightedness and in this particular, treason, to Canada's future. In an architect, or an engineer, who had the political qualifications, we should find the fit man for the Public Works; but for hardly any Department can we get experts. Hence the necessity of minds so trained as to be able to master new subjects; a lawyer, nominal or real, always fills the Justice portfolio.

If a Minister is unfit it is treason to the people of Canada not to dismiss him. In England a premier will let an incompetent colleague drop if he cannot provide for him, and a new leader of a party feels himself in the least bound to the colleagues of his immediate predecessor because of belonging to the same party. In Canada if we have an incompetent Minister, forced or foisted or intrigued, no matter how, into the Ministry, he cannot be got out except by giving him a palace and from \$7,000 to \$10,000 a year for five years, with "pickings," and in his new position at the head of the Provincial Society the

regulation thing is to entertain about once a year and salt down the cash.

But to return. Suppose Van Horne could not employ men on their merits or could not dismiss an incompetent officer unless he could pension him—what a difference there would be in the showing of the C.P.R.! Shaughnessy is a great railway man. No doubt the moment Van Horne's quick, mind-reading glance rested on him, he knew his man. If the principles of politics obtained, before the Manager-President could procure his quick abilities for the road, he would have to consider the tender feelings of some one or other; then what church he attends; then perhaps find out whether he was orthodox on some irrelevant question like—for illustration—the return of the Jews to Palestine. Meanwhile Shaughnessy would be growing old. Good years and good service would be lost, a Department be disgracefully mismanaged, and the hypothetical political Van Horne would have imperilled his immortal soul and fretted himself to a shadow.

A Minister should be able to explain what is going on in his Department. He ought to be able to defend it. Better still, he should so run it that it would be above defence. He should be a strength on general questions in and out of Parliament. He ought to be able to evolve some fruitful idea—read the history of administrations—from how many Ministers has one new idea, one wise plan, ever emanated? Sir Francis Hincks has been lauded to the skies for a little contrivance by which he drove lightweight Yankee silver out of the country. He deserved praise. But he is responsible for a superannuation act by which the people of Canada now pay nearly a quarter of a million annually and receive about \$60,000 a year! Those who have vested rights should not be touched. But is it not time that a good actuary were called in and this matter placed on a sound basis? One of the great achievements of nearly every new Minister, Grit or Tory, has been the billeting of new clerks in his Department, generally relatives, sometimes not relatives and yet curiously related.

To have a strong Government you must have, to use the language of the theatre, a strong caste. Laughter from pit, boxes and gallery is invited when "supers" play leading parts. Nothing stamps Sir Robert Peel more truly as a great man than the band of Peelites, with Gladstone at their head, he left behind him.

At the present moment that part of the power of the late leader which no ability can seize, and the loss of which must be provided for, should be remembered. When Pitt resigned in 1801, Mr. Addington took into his Cabinet some of his predecessor's men. But he did not feel bound to take all who would come in—an instance of a certain strength of character. Yet, being a man essentially mediocre, he never realized the enormous gap the absence of Pitt's personality and eloquence made. Anyway, he utterly failed to fill or minimize it. With a Titanic strife going forward in Europe, and Napoleon preparing to invade England, he entrusted the War Office to Mr. Yorke, and the Navy to the feeble hands of Earl St. Vincent. He was well supported by Pitt's Parliament, and, on going to the country in 1802, he secured a House of Commons in which he was sustained by an overwhelming majority. Yet the weakness of the Government in talent was so palpable that large votes could not hold public confidence, and the majority went down to fifty, then to thirty-seven, and the Ministry, feeling that the heart of the country had turned against it, ignominiously pronounced its own demise. It faded away before the wide-spread perception of its debility, and this deep sense of its weakness was mainly caused by having a blockhead, like Lord St. Vincent, at the head of the Admiralty—the Admiralty being equal in importance, relatively speaking, to one of our great Departments. What may be done by ability in a Government and in a Department was shown by the contrast between the vigour and decision of Mr. Pitt and the helplessness of Addington, by the rapidity with which Lord Melville restored the Navy from decrepitude and decay to such efficiency that, at the close of the first session, the King was able to congratulate Parliament on England's high state of preparedness for war. Had Pitt acted on Canadian principles he would have kept Earl St. Vincent at the Admiralty, let the Navy go to the deuce, and the Corsican vulture redder his beak in the blood of Liberty. Pitt took some of Addington's men, among them Lord Eldon. Take another Tory reorganization, not without in some respects a parallel, we hope, of happy omen to the crisis of a few months ago, which calls for reorganization with us to-day. On Mr. Percival's death in 1812 Lord Liverpool formed an administration, retaining a large number of the former Ministry, among them being Palmerston (Secretary at War), Marquis Wellesley, Lord Eldon, Castlereagh. But look at the men with whom he reinforced his Cabinet—Mr. Robert Peel (afterwards Sir Robert, the great leader and Parliamentarian), George Canning, one of the greatest of orators and statesmen, Viscount Melville, F. J. Robinson, W. Huskisson, Mr. Plunkett.

Again, on the death of Mr. Canning, in 1827, Lord Goderich took the reins of government. Mr. Huskisson was to lead in the Commons. But difficulties arose and Goderich resigned without meeting Parliament. "He took with him from office," says a competent critic, "a high and honourable character, but he left neither his king nor his country impressed with any high idea of his energy and decision, or of his power and skill to grapple with difficulties or control jarring spirits." In the band of adventurers who placed Louis Napoleon on the throne of France many were able and his earlier Ministers were character-