

THE FRENCH TREATY.

Sir Charles Tupper and the Government have manifestly had a misunderstanding as to the French commercial treaty, that convention as negotiated by Sir Charles Tupper being declared by the Minister of Finance to be not what the Ministry at Ottawa contemplated. Sir Charles says that he did as he was instructed and is very sore on account of the reflections cast upon him and his diplomatic bungling, for that in effect is what Hon. Mr. Foster charges.

There would appear to be a possibility that the Canadian ambassador to the court of St. James may resign and it would, indeed, be a funny thing to see him and Mr. Blake fighting their old battles over again at Westminster. Sir Charles Tupper is reported to be wealthy, and that he is ambitious there is no doubt, so that it may be on the cards that he will abandon the Canadian service and run for the first convenient English or Scotch constituency as an opponent of Home Rule, for it is not likely that he will care to become a follower of Mr. Gladstone—"grand old man," as some people think he is.

FRUIT GROWING.

It is satisfactory to have the opinion expressed by Professor Saunders of the Department of Agriculture, that the collection of fruit trees at the Agassiz Experimental Farm is the largest on the continent and to be assured that the experiments that have been made there will be of the greatest value to the people of this Province. But we want more than verbal opinions and assurances from the officials at Ottawa. We require the Government to see to it that everything possible and that is within their purview be made to work together for our good. Last year a pretence was made of teaching our farmers more about their business than they knew already, by an expert sent out by the Department of Agriculture; but he had not time to complete his task and returned to his headquarters without having accomplished anything.

We ought to be put in possession of the results of years of Governmental experiment and if there is anything to be learned we want to have the full advantage of the teachers towards whose salaries maintenance and travelling expenses we pay more than our due proportion. Most of us know that mixed farming combined with fruit growing is an industry for which we possess exceptional facilities and that there is a home market as well as a demand from our neighbors of the prairie provinces for all the products we can raise. We know too that there are thousands of acres of land on the Island and Mainland, wild and unproductive at the present moment which are admirably adapted for the successful culture of apples, pears, plums, cherries and all the small fruits.

Besides, dairying and poultry raising with the cultivation of fruit form a proper combination for the lands of this island, which generally are not adapted to farming on a large scale, owing to the limited areas of arable land in any one block. The

trouble is that the business is not as well understood as it might be and as teachers are sent out to teach the arts of agriculture and their kindred industry, we claim our full share of their services. We want to know from them not only what is possible of accomplishment, but how the best results can be secured.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

J. R. ARNOLDI, one of the Ottawa official hoodlums, has been fined and sent to gaol for six months for malfeasance in office. So far so good. This week Hon. Thomas McGreevy and the notorious Connolly are to be placed on trial for the frauds which are laid to their charge. We say, "Hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may." Those persons, if guilty of the offences charged, should have all the punishment which the law allows. They grew fat and laughed at law and justice, because they basked in the sunlight of certain official countenances, whose possessors may find themselves in very queer street, if all the evidence said to be obtainable be only forthcoming.

We must confess to some surprise, though we have hitherto said but little on the subject, that, in spite of his Toronto speech, where the Premier and other members of the Cabinet expressed their intention to lop off the mouldering branches of business which have only existed for the benefit alone of those parties who were directly concerned by reason of the existing high protective tariff, those "industries" are to be allowed still longer to feed on the country's vitals, giving in return no beneficial results to the community. Sir John Thompson and Hon. C. H. Tupper are on the other side the Atlantic and the reply *non possumus* is the only response that is given even to the members from British Columbia, upon which tariff iniquities press the most hardly. We are truly long-suffering and slow to anger.

THERE are no less than 55 benevolent societies registered in the Province of Ontario for the transaction of life insurance. The report of the Ontario Inspector of Insurance and Friendly Societies enumerates these 55 concerns with details as to their affairs. Over one half of them have no reserve fund at all. The total of their resources is \$1,162,071, with a membership of 141,048, an average of \$8.00 per head. The *Montreal Trade Review* observes that the policies range from \$500 to \$3,000, so that each death claim for the maximum sum takes the entire reserve of 360 members to meet it. The strongest of these societies in England, which has several millions of invested funds, and a membership of three-fourths of a million, has been pronounced unsound when tested scientifically. There is it would seem no official guarantee that any of these 55 societies are sound.

"MORE power to you, *Colonist!*" for your prediction that "the attempt of Hon. Mackenzie Bowell to manage the salmon fishery of the Fraser River from Ottawa will not be a very brilliant success." Most certainly the men who have been fishing

and canning on that river for years ought to know how to conduct their own business. If canners could have made a profitable use of the offal, they would long ere now have done so. Moreover, it has not been proved that allowing the offal to be consumed in the river by the scavenger fish or carried out to sea by the current is destructive to salmon life or injurious to the health of those who live on the banks of the river. In the persistent striving to regulate an industry so important as the salmon fishing of British Columbia by a number of civil servants thousands of miles from where the salmon are caught, we recognize the hand of Mr. Samuel Wilnot and of that fossilized pedagogue, Deputy Minister Smith, who, at his time of life, and with all his experience, is neither useful nor ornamental.

THE *Victoria Times* is of course "agin" the Government, but in view of the developments that have been made in connection with the French Commercial Treaty it would not appear in view of what has been developed to be so far astray when it says, "There is apparently a nice question to be settled by the minister of finance and the high commissioner. The public will be apt to conclude that both the government and the negotiators went rather stupidly about the work of concluding the treaty. Most people will also be of the opinion that the treaty was not worth all the bother it had caused, as under the most favorable construction it could not have done much for Canadian trade." Canada appears to have been overreached in these negotiations. If Sir Charles Tupper is to blame he ought to be made to sweat; but if the blame attaches elsewhere those responsible should be severely punished for a blunder that in its result may be worse than a crime. This incident should lead our "statesmen" to study more thoroughly the science of diplomacy, for in the past they have not unfrequently been overreached.

BUSINESS men for consuls is, we are satisfied to learn, to be the policy of President Cleveland in making his appointments. Mr. Egan was a bright business man and diplomat whom the Republicans sent to Chili, and there have been other shining lights who have been sent elsewhere to represent "the greatest nation on earth." Vancouver was blessed with a splendid specimen in the person of Jay Ewing, while some other "diplomats" hailing from Washington have been no credit either to their nation or to themselves individually. Now the broad policy is to select men for consuls who have exceptional business qualifications and possess sufficient trade instinct to recognize an outlet for American merchandise and ability to aid in working up the market for the product of American manufacturers and farms. As concerns Great Britain, one of the *sine qua non*s has been that the appointee must be a gentleman, and, in this respect, he frequently furnished a striking contrast to his American confrere. Now, however, that, as far as possible, greater stress is to be laid by our neighbors upon business ability, that qualification will no doubt have greater consideration from the Home Government.