

HIS LATEST UTTERANCE.

The people of the Dominion were told by the Grit organs that Mr. Laurier would, when he made his great speech in St. Johns, let them know clearly and distinctly what was going to be the policy of his Government. Well, that speech has been delivered, and what announcements have been made? What has Mr. Laurier said that has not been heard a hundred times before? About the most important subject with which the new Government is to deal the Premier said absolutely nothing. To the thousands who are anxiously waiting to hear what course the Government propose to take with respect to the tariff, Mr. Laurier has not said one word. He leaves them in the state of uncertainty in which they have been since the result of the election was declared. What is the meaning of this ominous silence? Have the Government not yet decided what their trade policy is to be; or have they determined to pursue a course which they know will not be popular where they by-elections are to be held, and is the Leader instructed to be silent on the subject of the tariff until the members of the new Government are firmly settled in their seats? Is the policy of reticence and concealment to be followed a while longer? Has the demon of indecision by which the Leader of the Government according to the Montreal Star is possessed not yet been exorcised? It would seem so; for on the other question in which the people of all sections of the Dominion are interested the Leader's utterances are as misty and unsatisfactory as ever. Mr. Laurier did at St. Johns say something about the school question. He donned the mantle of the prophet and confined himself strictly to prophecy. Even on this most important topic he did not speak spontaneously. He said to the St. John's deputation: "In your address you spoke about the school question. I thank you for having drawn my attention to a question which has embittered public opinion for six years." The plain inference is that if the St. Johns people had not reminded him of the existence of the school question he would have said nothing about it. And then, instead of frankly telling his hearers what he proposed to do regarding it, he became oracular. He wanted only six months to settle the question without exciting the prejudices of anybody, and at the same time rendering justice where justice was due. As to how he was going to bring about this wonderful result he said nothing that the people had not heard before. "Conciliation" is the word to be used. Conciliation means to conjure with when Mr. Laurier was in opposition, and was not bound, as he himself said, to teach the Government how to get over the Manitoba difficulty. He has not that motive for being oracular now. The Tories cannot now use his methods or steal his secret. Why, then, is he not more open? Why does he not take the people into his confidence? Has he really nothing to say? Has he formed no plan that will bear the light of day for conciliating the obdurate Manitobans? If Mr. Laurier remains owl-like much longer, people will suspect that he has the owl's reason for being inarticulate. Perhaps the good people of St. Johns were pleased at what Mr. Laurier said. The very significant way in which he reminded them that the people of the Province of Quebec are on top may have been quite enough to satisfy them. They, no doubt, felt flattered to hear that Quebec "holds the reins of power" and that she will use her position with justice and moderation. The exordium of his speech, even as it is reported by telegraph, was most skillfully constructed, and was calculated to put his hearers in such good humor with themselves that it did not matter much what he said afterwards. That clever appeal to their vanity made Tarte's election sure, if there had up to that time been grave doubts as to his being returned.

AN UNCONSCIOUS JOKER.

The Toronto Globe is very solicitous about the welfare of the Conservative party. It is so kind and considerate as to select a leader for it. Sir Charles Tupper is so very unfortunate as not to meet the approval of the Globe as leader of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition. He is not the kind of man that it wants to see leading the Opposition against Mr. Laurier. He is not pleasant and genial enough to suit the fastidious organ of the Government. His ways are too rough and his methods too uncompromising to meet with the Globe's approbation. A softer, kinder, more companionable and a less austere leader is wanted in this latter end of the Nineteenth Century as leader of the Conservatives.

The gentleman who has the honor of being chosen by the Grit organ as the leader of the Conservatives of the Dominion is Mr. Hugh John Macdonald. Of "Mr. Macdonald's popularity," says the Globe with a seriousness that is most edifying, "there can be no doubt. He possesses a decidedly amiable disposition and gets the personal regard of all with whom he comes in contact. He is not mixed up in past squabbles and past misdeeds. He is not only the son of his father, but inherits his features

and his mannerisms in a remarkable degree. Whether he possesses his father's indomitable will and his genius for politics remains to be seen. He certainly does not inherit his father's taste for the noble game, for there can be no doubt that he is what he is in public life against his will."

Mr. Macdonald must feel highly flattered with the portrait which the Globe draws of him, and must be delighted with the honor done him by the chief organ of Mr. Laurier's Government, or, as is much more likely, being gifted with a keen sense of humor, he regards the Globe's article as a huge joke. The reader of the Globe who does not see what a fool it was making of itself when it chooses as leader for the Conservative party a man who had inherited his father's nose, but not his genius, must be the most dull-witted of mortals. Besides, he must see that the unutterably silly attempt of the organ to discredit Sir Charles Tupper among Conservatives is the highest compliment it could have paid him. It shows that he and the Grits generally have a wholesome dread of the Conservative leader, and that they would rejoice to see him deposed and a weaker man and a less experienced politician put in his place. But the Conservative party has not the slightest idea of displacing Sir Charles Tupper because the Globe and the Globe's crowd are afraid of him, and would rather see him anywhere else than at the head of the Conservative party.

THE SITUATION IN THE STATES.

The political situation in the United States is serious. Bryan has succeeded in getting the Populist nomination in St. Louis. The opposition to him at the Populist convention was considerable, but it was by no means formidable. It may be safely taken for granted that Bryan will get the united support of the Populist party in every part of the Union. Although the Democratic party is hopelessly divided, the Republicans are not acting in such a way as to attract to their side the sound money Democrats. They appear to be convinced that McKinley will, unaided, be able to carry all before him. But in this they may be sadly mistaken. The silver craze is spreading. It has long been known that it has almost complete possession of the South and the West. It is now seen that it is getting a firm hold in the Eastern, the Northern and the Middle States. The idea of getting cheap money and plenty of it is peculiarly agreeable to the farming population of many States. It was among the farmers of the East as well as the West that the greenback heresy gained the greatest number of converts, and men who have had the opportunity of observing say that free silver has more advocates in the East than ever the greenbacks had. Even so hard-headed and so unimpressible a man as Mr. Whitney views with alarm the reception which free silver is getting in the Eastern States. The people seem to be in that state of mind that of a few speeches from a magnetic orator like Bryan will have the effect of indefinitely increasing the free silver vote in States that have been hitherto considered safe for sound money.

Some of the leading Republicans still insist on giving protection the first place in the platform of their party. This antagonizes a large number of gold Democrats who could by a little good management on the part of the McKinleyites be induced to vote for the Republican ticket. It was thought at one time that the sound money Democrats would hold a convention and nominate a candidate of their own. But that project, which was never popular among the Democrats, has been given up. The hope of the truly patriotic and level-headed American electors is that the men who hold sound views on the currency, who are determined at all risks to maintain the credit and the honor of the country, will unite to give Mr. McKinley such an overwhelming majority as will completely discourage currency cranks of all parties and all sections of the country. This a few weeks ago was considered quite feasible, but it is now beginning to be thought that McKinley will have to fight hard for a bare majority. The free silver men are every day becoming more confident of victory. They now loudly predict that the Republican nominee will be soundly beaten, and this prediction, frequently and confidently repeated, will go far to bring about its own fulfillment.

PHENOMENAL MISMANAGEMENT.

The mismanagement of the City Council with respect to bridge accommodation for the citizens is a specimen of their way of doing business. After the dreadful Point Ellice Bridge catastrophe, instead of going to work energetically and reopening communication with Victoria West and Esquimalt, they did nothing. They appeared to be completely paralyzed, and instead of making the best of a bad job, they made bad worse. When they obtained Mr. Dunsmuir's consent to use the railway bridge for ordinary traffic they did not at once avail themselves of his permission. They dawdled and delayed until the citizens were completely out of patience with them. Then they were galvanized into action and instead of putting the railway bridge into a condition to bear the city's traf-

fic they resolved to build a temporary bridge alongside the one that had been wrecked. They did not go about that foolishly, they got the consent of the Dominion Government to build the new bridge, and now, instead of being able to go on, with the bridge they have a lawsuit on their hands, and if rumor is to be depended upon they are likely to get into more trouble. Time has been lost and money has been wasted and nothing has been done that could not have been done within a week or so after the bridge disaster. A more pitiable exhibition of incompetency and short-sightedness than the City Council has displayed in this bridge business it would be difficult to imagine.

THE PENALTY OF FAILURE.

Dr. Jameson, Sir John Willoughby, Captain Conroy, Colonel Gray and Colonel White have been wasted and nothing has been done that could not have been done within a week or so after the bridge disaster. A more pitiable exhibition of incompetency and short-sightedness than the City Council has displayed in this bridge business it would be difficult to imagine.

This appears hard, but nothing else was to have been expected. It is right that the men who take up arms against the lawful Government of a country, and who prevail upon others to join them in the insurrection, should, let their cause be ever so good, be reasonably sure of success before they commit the first overt act. There can be no greater crime than to persuade men to risk their lives and all they possess in a hopeless struggle with constituted authority. Good intentions and patriotic motives cannot be urged in palliation of such an offence. Dr. Jameson and his associates knew that they risked both life and liberty when they engaged in their rash enterprise. They entered upon it knowing well the penalty of failure. They failed, and we have no doubt they are prepared to suffer the consequences like brave men. The law of England in their case has been administered impartially. The judge and the jury did their duty. They were not influenced by their own feelings or by the sympathy felt for the accused men by millions. Justice has been done and there is no more to be said.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE.

Mr. Thomas Bulmer, whom the Liberals regarded as a convert from Conservatism, appears to have gone back to his old love, if he ever deserted her. He is not an admirer of Mr. Laurier's Finance Minister, the late Premier of Nova Scotia, Mr. Fielding. This is what Mr. Bulmer says about that gentleman as a financier and a politician:

That his first act of statesmanship was to give away to the Dominion government a railroad with a clear loss to Nova Scotia of at least a half million dollars; that in his second performance he plunged the country into a repeal agitation much as a gambler, picks up his hand, not from a moral conviction of which he has very little to show, and that he has all the time been the leader of a government imbedded in an ooze of helpless inaction.

This is not the kind of man that a Government pledged up to the handle to prudence and economy and everything that is good in money matters needs as its finance minister.

AN AMATEUR JOURNALIST.

Professor Goldwin Smith has, we see, bought a new plaything. The professor's amusements are expensive, but that is no one's business but his own. He has purchased an interest in a newspaper, the Farmer's Sun, hitherto the organ of the Ontario Patrons. But Mr. Smith, we presume, does not propose to run it in the interest of that order. He, no doubt, has a better use for it, and intends to open up for it a wider sphere. Mr. Smith's journalistic ventures have not been successful in a pecuniary sense, but they have been interesting, and have, no doubt, done good. The readers of the Bystander and the Week, though perhaps they were not converted to Mr. Smith's theories, were interested and improved by reading the polished and the vigorous articles they contained. The Professor has somehow never been in touch with the Canadian public. Canadians admire him as a writer, but his politics and his philosophy do not suit them. He may be more successful now. His articles in the Farmer's Sun may be more in accordance with Canadian ideas and more agreeable to the Canadian taste than were

those in the Bystander and the Week. But success, in the ordinary journalistic sense of the term, is most likely not what Mr. Smith is aiming at. His object may be rather to improve the readers of his paper than to please them.

POPULIST PRINCIPLES.

Although much is said in Canada about the Populists of the United States, very little appears to be known about the party, except that it is in favor of the unlimited coinage of silver in the ratio of 16 to 1. But the Populist platform contains other planks, and some of them are very important, besides the free silver one. The St. Louis platform shows that the Populists believe that the United States is in a very bad way, and that exceedingly drastic measures are needed to put the republic in anything like a healthy condition. They say in the preamble to the platform:

We realize that while we have political independence, our financial and industrial independence is yet to be obtained by restoring to our country the constitutional control and exercise of the functions necessary to a people's government, which functions have been basely surrendered by our public servants to corporate monopolies. The influence of European money-changers has been more potent in shaping legislation than the voice of the American people. Executive power and patronage have been used to corrupt our Legislatures and defeat the will of the people, and plutocracy has thereby been enthroned upon the ruins of Democracy. We would restore the government intended by our fathers, and for the welfare and prosperity of this and future generations we demand the establishment of an economic and financial system which shall make us the masters of our own affairs and independent of European control.

If the Populists really believe that the United States is in this dreadful condition it is not surprising that they are loud and urgent in their demand for reform. They are quite convinced that the changes they advocate are reforms, and that they will operate as a sure cure for the ills with which the Great Republic is afflicted. As is becoming, their financial scheme of reform occupies the foremost and the most important place in the platform. Here it is in full:

Finance.—First—We demand a national money, safe and sound, issued by the general government only, without the intervention of banks of issue, to be a full legal tender for all debts, private and public, a just, equitable and efficient means of distribution direct to the people and through the lawful disbursements of the Government.

Second—We demand the free and unrestricted coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1 with- out waiting for the consent of foreign nations.

Third—We demand the volume of circulating medium be speedily increased to an amount sufficient to meet the demands of the business and the population of this country and to restore the just level of prices and labor and production.

Fourth—We denounce the sale of bonds and the increase of the public interest-bearing debt made by the present administration as unnecessary and without authority of law, and we demand that no more bonds be issued except by specific act of Congress.

Fifth—We demand such legislation as will prevent the demonetization of the lawful money of the United States by private contract.

Sixth—We demand that the Government, in payment of its obligations, shall use its option as to the kind of lawful money in which they are to be paid, and we denounce the present and pending administration for surrendering this option to the holders of Government obligation securities.

Seventh—We demand a graduated income tax, to the end that aggregated wealth shall bear its just proportion of taxation, and we regard the recent decision of the Supreme Court relative to the income tax law as a misinterpretation of the Constitution, and an invasion of the rightful powers of Congress over the subject of taxation.

Eighth—We demand that postal savings banks be established by the Government for the safe deposit of the savings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

There are very many men, wise, disinterested and patriotic in the best sense of the word, who believe and who declare that the Populist remedy for the ills of the body politic is very much worse than the disease. They say that it means a vicious monetary system and a debased currency. More than this, they declare that it means not only business confusion and ruin to private citizens who have been guilty of no wrong against the commonweal, but repudiation, loss of national honor, and by consequence national disgrace. They say that the men who have drawn up this part of the platform were either ignorant of the very first principles of national finance or recklessly pandered to the prejudices of ignorant and misguided men who have not the remotest idea of what must be the consequences of attempting to carry their crude notions and their impracticable schemes into effect. The railroad system of the United States is denounced in very strong terms in the platform and the necessity of Government's owning and operating the railroads is insisted upon. It condemns the policy of granting land to railroad corporations and insists upon the Government taking proceedings to recover the debts due it by railway companies.

It asserts that the telegraphs of the country as well as the railways should be public property and worked by the Government.

The Populists hold that the public lands should be reserved for the use of bona fide settlers only, and that they

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