

OTTAWA LETTER.

The meetings of the Conference proceed from day to day. The fact that the meetings are held with closed doors, precludes the public from becoming acquainted with all the circumstances that have led up to the development of any given policy which may be the outcome of the Conference, in that there is an element of disappointment, especially to those who cater to public opinion.

There is, however, much to be said in defence of the resolution the Conference has come to in regard to not making public its proceedings until the ideas of the delegates have been thrashed out. They have come together utter strangers to one another, ignorant of the exact principles with which they may be called upon to deal, and they no doubt desire to find some common standing ground from which they can launch their barques upon the ocean of public opinion before setting their sails to the testing breezes.

The delegates are all distinguished men of large political experience in the spheres from which they have come, and they are headed by the Earl of Jersey, who has gained his experience as a statesman of Great Britain as well as a Colonial Governor, and they are all of that calibre that justified the sympathetic note sent by the British Premier, Lord Rosebery, to the President of the Conference, the Hon. Mr. Bowell, upon its opening proceedings.

The mail service and the telegraph must be the precursors to any extended trade relations that we can initiate with our antipodean fellow subjects, and if nothing more resulted from the Hon. Mr. Bowell's cosmopolitan Conference than laying the foundation for a connection across the Pacific, which would ultimately extend to the Japan Islands and the Chinese Empire, he would fill a niche in the temple of fame of the British Empire that would gratify the ambitions of a much more ambitious man than the honorable leader of the Senate.

The British would, however, appear to be willing to accord a much greater measure of power to the assembled delegates, if in their wisdom they can prepare a resolution upon the trade question upon which the component parts of the British Empire can construct a trade policy, at the same time leaving each country free to dovetail in as necessities permit.

The opening of the Conference by His Excellency the Governor-General in the Senate Chamber, was imposing and went off without a hitch, and the banquet that succeeded it in the evening was attended by between three and four hundred persons, and was also very successfully managed.

It is to be regretted that the Hon. Mr. Foster's health has been such that he has been precluded from taking his place in the preliminary deliberations. He is suffering from the severe strain that he put upon himself by undertaking to deal with nine hundred tariff items, and at the same time please everybody in what is irreverently termed tariff tinkering.

Since your last issue the result of the elections in Ontario have become a matter of history, the effect of the result has still to be realized. The Hon. Mr. Mowat is no longer an autocrat with a solid phalanx of five and twenty party men behind him. The Patrons of Industry have stepped out into the public arena and have divided with the Conservative party the honour of occupying the Opposition seats in the Legisla-

ture of Ontario. They have risen phoenix-like from the ashes of monopoly's funeral pyre, and have asserted their right as representatives of the great agricultural interests of Ontario to guide the ship of State. They have on the first political trial of their forces elected eighteen Patrons of Industry and have thus divided with the Conservative party the honours of the Opposition, and they are no novices in the art of government. For nearly 100 years, since they first began to hew the forest down and convert the face of the country into the most charming scenes of rural scenery and agricultural life, they have been initiated into the principles of self-government; they have never attempted as a distinct organization to go beyond the municipal and county councils, but in that limited sphere there has been a self-education handed down from father to son in the principles of political economy, which has become an inheritance of knowledge of great value to the welfare of the country. In the management of public works, in the management of schools, in the management of gaols and public offices they have little to learn—that is the class which has asserted itself as a distinct power in the recent elections. They know neither Catholic nor Protestant, temperance or liquor man, they know only one creed, the government of the soil; its varying degrees and the distribution of the profits of labour accruing from it through the economy of government. If guided with wisdom at the outset they will contribute their share to the statesmen of the future to the great advantage and security of the country generally.

Senator Boulton has given notice of a motion in the Senate to discuss the provisions of the French treaty—how far under the clauses of the treaty Canada can enter into trade relations with the sister colonies without according the same benefits to all those countries with which we have most favored nation treatment.

Dominion Day was celebrated as a holiday on Monday, which the city enjoyed to the utmost, so far as variety of entertainment is concerned. The heat somewhat detracted from the fullest enjoyment, but it did not seem to lessen the zest.

Toronto beat Ottawa at cricket, and Ottawa beat Toronto at lacrosse. A fair exchange is no robbery.

Lady Tupper, Mrs. Daly and Mrs. Ives had an at-home on the cricket ground which was numerously attended.

The Canadian Government has issued cards of invitation to an at-home on Parliament Hill, to meet the colonial delegates, the patronesses being Lady Thompson, assisted by the wives of the Ministers. Parliament Hill is a charming spot for an *al fresco*

VIVANDIER.

Ottawa, July 3rd, 1894.

Technical journals from time to time discuss gravely various projects for making crude petroleum into bricks, to be burned like coal. One of the latest of these is ridiculed by an English journal, which points out that it calls for about one-third of its weight of caustic soda—an expensive chemical. The inventor suggests that the addition of 20 per cent. of clay or sand would make the bricks both cheaper and more solid, to which the journal in question rejoins with a sarcastic suggestion that ordinary coal be cheapened by a similar addition.

THE LATE GEORGE J. ROMANES.

ONE OF CANADA'S DISTINGUISHED SONS.

About half a century ago, there lived and worked in a quiet country charge, near what was then the backwoods village of Smith's Falls, one of the pioneer Scottish clergymen, who did much to lay the foundations of genuine religion and sound morals in a newly settled Canada. He was a man of vigorous intellect, sound common-sense, and considerable literary attainments, with a simplicity of nature which enabled him to adapt himself easily to new and strange conditions of life, exile from the traditions and associations of his native land,—the rude prose of "clearings," and "corduroy bridges" and even to the log-house, the only attainable dwelling at that time and place, for either the minister or his farming parishioner. Here he "lived laborious days," thinking out his closely reasoned sermons with their solid basis of theology and their "logic, linked and strong," as Scottish sermons were expected to be. But though he was by no means ill content with his secluded sphere, despite its disadvantages for his young family, it was well known among his ministerial brethren, at least, that his classical attainments and his ability to impart them to others were of no mean order; and when the classical chair of the recently founded Queen's University was left vacant by the return to Scotland of its first occupant, afterwards Principal Campbell, of King's College, Aberdeen, this country minister, the Rev. George Romanes, M.A., was the man considered most competent to fill it. And fill it ably he did, for some years delighting his students by the brilliancy of his prelections, and especially by the fine and spirited translations which he occasionally read to them, apparently unconscious of their fine literary quality, and the genuine poetry of feeling which inspired them; and which his old students were wont to recall years after with enthusiastic appreciation. During the residence of Professor Romanes in Kingston, there was born, on the 20th of May, 1848, his youngest child, a son who was named George John Romanes, a name now well-known to the world. And thus it came to pass that the eminent biologist, whose sudden and, as we say, "premature" death, has awakened the regret of all interested in science, was a native of the little city of Kingston, and may, so far as his birth was concerned, be classed among "eminent Canadians."

But the embryo biologist, with his endowment of hereditary talent, and an important work before him, was not destined to be left to such scant opportunities for scientific training as Canada could then afford to a gifted son. While he was still an infant, the death of a relative placed his father in possession of a handsome fortune, and thereafter he resigned his professorship and removed with his family to the Old World, taking up his headquarters for some years in the vicinity of London, chiefly at Richmond. Some years later they took up their residence in Germany, travelling widely, from time to time, through the finest scenery of Italy, Switzerland, the Riviera, etc. After seeing Europe in this charming way, they finally settled down at Regent's Park, London, with the Botanical and Zoological Gardens close by. At the latter, especially, George Romanes, as a boy of fifteen or sixteen, used to delight to spend his holidays, and