

only as information, and by maintaining an independent and unconstrained attitude, and studiously refraining from becoming subject to political bias or influence, we hope to interest men of independent minds in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the land they live in. The debt of the Dominion ought to be of interest to every tax-payer, and we invite the attention of our readers to the article and table published in this issue, and to preceding tables with explanatory observations already published in our pages.

The statement of revenue and expenditure of the Dominion for 1897-98 is now under review by the country, and as seen from an independent standpoint it is highly satisfactory. The expenditure is somewhat in excess of that of last year; but the revenue shows a far more than corresponding increase. Altogether, with a very substantial addition to the revenue, derived from the post office, public works, and railways departments, the Minister of Finance fully deserves the congratulations of the country."

**The Colonial Secretary.** To say that Mr. Chamberlain is wanting in discretion would be, in the opinion of those who do not admire the exceedingly clever Colonial Secretary, and to adopt the language of the leading spirit of Sousa's new opera, *The Charlatan*,

*"Putting it quite mild."*

Again and again, the newspapers have credited Mr. Chamberlain with apparently hasty, heedless, injudicious comments on current events, or have accused him of some peculiar turn of speech provoking the query, "what phrase is this?" Parliamentary gossip has even frequently hinted that Lord Salisbury has been rendered uneasy by the Colonial Secretary's proneness to talk when the typical British statesman would remain silent, especially when approached on such delicate ground as the foreign policy of his country. But scarcely has the explanation of some particular passage in a speech pacified the enquiring public, or the interpretation of a reference to some contract or treaty cleared it from obscurity, than by some new word or deed the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain will set all the world agog and agape by a fresh deviation from the beaten paths of diplomacy and discretion. The London papers are now expressing amazement at the so-called frankness of Mr. Chamberlain, when interviewed in New York. So great was the surprise created by the statement that he had called the Czar a dreamer, that, in reply to a cablegram, regarding the authenticity of the interview, he replied that no report thereof was verbally accurate. Mr. Chamberlain also added that he had not said that the Anglo-German treaty had been signed. He had only said that he knew negotiations were in progress, and that he hoped they would lead to a better understanding.

To what may be attributed the "frankness" of the Colonial Secretary? Does it proceed from a natural boldness, or dislike of self-restraint? It is said that a frank man is not frank to all, nor on all occasions; he is frank to his friends, or he is frank in his dealings with others. But Mr. Chamberlain lets himself out like a running stream to all who choose to listen, and communicates trivial or important matters with equal eagerness—if his interviewers can be believed. There must be some way of accounting for an indulgence by this British statesman, in season and out of season, in such candid, artless, plain, unrestrained speech, and many of his critics seem to think the "frankness" of Mr. Chamberlain is attributable to the influence of his American wife. The suggestion is often put forth that, to acquire a rapid and thorough knowledge of the French language, one should marry a daughter of France. Surely, if there is a country in the world where absolute freedom of speech and the open criticism of public men and public events prevails, it is in the independent States of America, and 'tis quite possible that, all unconscious of the change, Mr. Chamberlain has acquired by marriage the frankness at which the London papers are now so frequently expressing amazement.

The enquiry from London as to the accuracy of the statement that the Colonial Secretary of Great Britain, when interviewed in New York, had called the Czar a dreamer, (which might be interpreted as a fanciful man; a visionary; one lost in vain schemes or wild imagination), must serve to recall attention to a very recent speech, in which he (Mr. Chamberlain) said with reference to the Czar that he who supped with the devil needed a long spoon. In commenting upon this injudicious utterance, the *N. Y. Evening Post*, in merry mockery of such a bad break on the part of a Britisher, said:—

"This was an instance of "shirt-sleeves diplomacy," which might be pardoned in an American statesman, but which in the Foreign Offices of Europe could not fail to give deadly offence. Such language is looked on there not as due to ignorance of the conventionalities of diplomacy, but as the deliberate expression of hostile feeling. That the Czar should have personally resented it would be entirely natural, and, however malapropos Mr. Chamberlain may be as a statesman, the government of which he is a member is bound by his utterances.

"Sir William Harcourt, in a recent speech, made some sarcastic references to this "solidarity" of the Unionist cabinet, which he explained as due to a judicious agreement that neither of them shall read each other's speeches, an arrangement "essential to mutual toleration."

Altogether, the undeniable clever, bold, pushful, and brilliant Colonial Secretary seems to be regarded as *rara avis*, among diplomats on both sides of the Atlantic.