

# CURRENT COMMENT

The visit of Sir Charles Tupper to Canada in connection with the subsidizing of a fast Atlantic mail service between this country and England calls attention to the progressive policy adopted by England's new Colonial Secretary.

By reason of his energy and capacity Mr. Chamberlain appears to be the most conspicuous figure in the *personnel* of the English Cabinet. The *London Times*, commenting on the fact, says: "He dwarfs everybody else, and seems to be the one to whom every vexed question naturally turns for settlement." On all sides it is admitted that the affairs of the Colonial office have not been so capably administered for years.

The activity shown by Mr. Chamberlain is but a sequel to the energetic measures inaugurated by him when first elected to the mayoralty of Birmingham, 1873. Under his guidance, an important measure of rebuilding was initiated, by which many acres of the vilest slums were converted into handsome business blocks, and Birmingham transformed from an unsightly provincial town into a splendid and substantial city.

Under the supervision of Mr. Chamberlain, the affairs of the Colonial office are likewise undergoing a complete overhauling, and the policy of energy and progress is rapidly superseding that of inanition and delay. As a member of a Conservative government he has undertaken some of the most radical changes that any Colonial Secretary has dared to engage in for many years. The important circular sent the Governors of the Colonies, at his instance, asking why British exports are undersold and displaced, and what Colonial products might be disposed of advantageously in the Imperial market is looked upon as a move in favor of preferential trade with the colonies. In view of Lord Salis-

bury's recent utterances as to the hopeless outlook for protection measures in England, Mr. Chamberlain's policy is most conspicuous.

With Lord Rosebery at the head of the Liberal party, and Mr. Chamberlain as the coming leader of the Unionists, the prospect of a British Zollverein is not, perhaps, so enigmatical as England's Premier would have us believe.

The policy of the Colonial office, as it affects Canada, is of utmost import. The taking hold of the question of a fast Atlantic service by Mr. Chamberlain stamps it as being of practical concern, and one likely to be consummated at no very distant date. Leaving out the question as to the expediency for such an expenditure as the inauguration of the system would call for, there seems to be no doubt as to the material benefits that would accrue to this country from the adoption of such a service.

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No greater curse blisters upon the brow of the nineteenth century than those horrifying atrocities that are being committed in Armenia. When will the yoke be lifted off these already overburdened people? How long will the real oppressors be permitted to shelter themselves behind the Kurds? We who are living in a peaceful country can have but a very faint conception of the worse than horrors that are being perpetrated night and day in the Ottoman empire. The beasts of the fields have a far happier lot than these poor persecuted Armenians, bound down by unjust laws and oppressed by lawless Kurds. How long shall relief for them be delayed? Shall it wait and wait until the already threatened war cloud, that is just spreading over the entire horizon of the nations, becomes so dark as to exasperate the nations, who have