

All who expected that Lord Salisbury would on Wednesday night, at the Lord Mayor's banquet, announce that England was about to declare a protectorate over Egypt were disappointed. He thinks England may well be satisfied with the present state of things in Egypt, and that no cause for modifying it has arisen. But besides this he said: "I do not venture to prophesy, if we are forced by others into a position we do not now occupy, what may occur." He is careful not to say that no further step will be taken in future, but only that "we [England] can reasonably rest for the present with the existing state of affairs." Here are a contingent threat and a shadowy promise; the first is a warning, the second depends on circumstances for its realization. The preparation for war is explained as a precautionary measure, rendered necessary by circumstances, which are not particularly explained. The Duke of Devonshire justified the continued preparation for war on the ground that "Fashoda is only an incident in a much larger question." On the whole the world is not much wiser for what occurred at the new Lord Mayor's banquet. The reference to the United States as a new factor in Eastern and in European questions may mean that some countries, Russia or Germany, for instance, may find in the attitude of the Republic, at the Peace Conference, something to question, thus creating new complications, in which, however, he does not fear that the interests of England will suffer.

The victory of the Republicans in the November elections, means, among other things, that the party of expansion has got the upper hand in the United States. If Spain was founding any hopes on a different result she will now feel her helplessness more than ever, and will probably not much longer oppose the demand of the Republic for the whole of the Philippines. Expansion was authorized by the vote of Tuesday, and henceforth the United States becomes a colonizing power. With the Anglo-Saxon knowledge of how to treat colonies, she may be expected to succeed in the new career on which she has entered. But with the acquisition of the Philippines, Cuba and Porto Rico, she will have to face some new economic problems. The cheap labor of the Philippines will come into competition with the dear labor of the old States. The low-priced labor is of course not nearly so efficient as the high-priced. Higher pay may, in time, make the inferior labor more efficient. What is it that makes the negro labor of the States so much more efficient than the negro labor of Jamaica? For one thing, it must be remembered that there is a great deal of original difference between negroes, according to the part of Africa from which they come. But it is probable that the difference in the wages offered has much to do with the efficiency of this kind of labor in the Southern States and in Jamaica. But the problem is what degree of development are the Filipino laborers capable of, and how long will the process take. Are the laws against pre-contract labor to be enforced in Hawaii and the other new acquisitions? These questions, already mooted, will be fought out with great doggedness on both sides.

After a two days' conference, the Street Railway Company of London and its men failed to come to an agreement on the item of wages, though no other difference than this remained. The company contends that it is not able to pay Toronto wages, the mileage earnings not justifying its doing so. Mr. Everett alleges that the company has never paid more than six per cent. The capital stands at the modest figure of \$850,000, as put by Mr. Everett, or \$800,000 as named in last year's report. There is a

bonded indebtedness equal to the capital, \$850,000. The earnings of the company last year were 7.94 on the capital stock, and in the annual report a 2 per cent. dividend per quarter, was the estimated dividends for the present year. On what ground Mr. Everett compares the earnings of the London road with that of Toronto, which pays a dividend of only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and has no sinking fund to recoup the capital not represented by assets over and above its bonded debt, is incomprehensible. The London company is willing to take back all the 47 men on strike at 15 cents an hour; the men ask  $16\frac{1}{2}$ ; settlement has been reached, we learn this morning; wages to be  $15\frac{1}{2}$  c. an hour.

### THE SALARIES OF PUBLIC OFFICERS.

In bidding adieu to Canada, Lord Aberdeen felt privileged to give Canadians some advice on the public service. He thinks the salaries of the higher grade of public officers, including the Governor-General, inadequate pay for their services. Though he did not name the Ministers of the Crown in this connection, he referred to them in unmistakable terms; the Governor-General he specially mentioned. That he personally found the salary of the post inadequate to the expenditure we have no doubt. But then he was generous in his expenditure; a poor man would have had to make the salary meet the expenditure by keeping the latter within bounds; there is even a suspicion that some governors have saved something out of their official income, while in the country. We see no probability of the present salary being increased. The farmer, to whom public men have to account, regards \$50,000 a year as an enormous sum and even sees culpable extravagance in it. Others compare it with what the president of the United States gets, and looking at the relative populations they think it liberal. The salaries of ministers cannot easily be increased; it could only be done at all by both parties agreeing to it, and neither would be likely to trust the other with the proposal. There is a sense in which they may be considered too low: they are much lower than the salaries paid to men entrusted with the affairs, not of the whole country, but of a bank corporation. It is desirable that the salary should be such as to procure the best services; but the salary is not the only inducement to serve the public as Ministers of the Crown: the high honor which the position confers is the greatest charm, the most powerful attraction; commercial services are wholly paid in money and for that reason the remuneration has to be higher. No one refuses to become Minister of the Crown on account of the lowness of the salary; a higher rate of remuneration would attract no better men. As a rule, we get for the money the best men available. A professional politician is not to be despised if by that we mean a man who conscientiously gives his best services and his whole life to the public. There is another kind of politician, not so respectable; but there is no need to offer him additional inducements. For better, for worse, there is reason to believe that the salaries of the Governor-General and his Ministers will not, for some time, undergo any augmentation. Of the superior court judges the salaries are certainly too low to tempt the ablest men at the bar. This is a bad state of things and a remedy cannot be applied to soon.

### ALLEGED EVASION OF THE CUSTOMS LAWS.

It is now a good while since proceedings were begun by the Canadian Government against the Montreal firm of Fitzgiobon, Schafheitlein and Co., for an alleged infraction of the customs laws in bringing in dutiable goods from Europe at an undervaluation. The amount of duty claimed