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ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1900.

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A Pleasing Episode. Occasionally something occurs to indicate that our public men on opposite sides of politics do not entertain altogether so bad an opinion of each other as the reports of some debates and the ordinary utterances of the party newspapers would lead us to believe. Too often it is when the politician's ears are forever closed in death that his opponents find their lips unlocked to say kindly things about him. A pleasant exception to this, which we are glad to note, occurred last Tuesday in the House of Commons at Ottawa. A magnificent vase of roses had been placed on Sir Charles Tupper's desk by his political friends in honor of his having reached the 45th anniversary of his entrance upon public life as member for Cumberland in the Nova Scotia Legislature, and when the honorable gentleman entered the Chamber he was greeted by his supporters with enthusiastic cheers, in which also the leader of the Government and members on that side of the House heartily joined. In response to a request for a speech, Sir Charles, with evident feeling, thanked the House for the kind manner in which he had just been received. "I am touched," he said, "by the kind manner in which my friends on this side of the House have marked the completion of the forty-fifth year of my public life, and not less by the very generous manner in which the same sentiment has been received by gentlemen to whom I am opposed politically." Continuing, Sir Charles alluded to his election to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly on May 22, 1855, and said that he had spent 29 years in the practice of his profession, and that for 28 years of his public life he had had the good or bad fortune to hold the highest offices in his native Province and in the Dominion. "I think," he said, "almost everyone will believe that unless I were a great glutton of office and its emoluments I ought to be abundantly satisfied with the past. I would say if I were half as polite as Lord Chesterfield when surrounded on his death bed by his friends, I should make public apology for 'lingering superfluous on the public stage so long.' I may say it is not my wish to stay much longer, but I am afraid I will have to remain until the electorate of this country say which of the two great parties is to govern and enjoy its confidence during the next five years." Sir Wilfrid Laurier responded in a happy vein. He said, "I am sure, Mr. Speaker, although I have no right to speak in this House except for one side of it, that on this occasion I voice the sentiments not only of those who are here present, but of the whole Canadian people when I express the pleasure that we are able to see this day, and to congratulate my honorable friend, the leader of the Opposition, upon the completion of his forty-fifth year of his public service to his country. It is one of the blessings of political life that it is possible sometimes to forget that we are divided in opinion. It is one of the redeeming features of public life that though our fights are keen and sometimes bitter, still after all we can realize that beneath, or I should say above, there are nobler sentiments that guide us. I do not share the views of my honorable friend on many questions. Those who are associated with me have taken issue with him upon many questions of public interest, but I am proud and glad to bear this testimony to the public career of my honorable friend, that although I might take exception to it in many ways, it will live, and live for the best in the history of Canada."

Election Frauds. The subject of fraud and corruption in connection with elections was recently discussed by the Dominion House of Commons, under a motion of Mr. Borden of Halifax, to refer the West Huron and Brockville election matters to the Parliamentary Committee on Elections and Privileges. It should be said that the subject was investigated in Committee last year, and though a large amount of evidence was submitted and considered, no conclusion in the matter was reached. When the matter was again brought up on Mr. Borden's motion, it was contended by some members on the Government side of the House that inasmuch as the facts in the case had already been brought out, and as Parliament possessed no power to punish those who might be proved guilty of fraud, it was useless to continue the investigation before the Committee and that such cases should be dealt

with by the Courts. The Opposition on their part professed to regard the position thus taken as evidence that the Government desired to prevent the investigation of an embarrassing subject. Which side of the House was the more or less sincere in the matter we shall not attempt to determine. But so far as the matter of bribery or other corrupt practices at elections are concerned, we are of opinion that the skirts of both parties are very badly besmirched. If any doubt had existed of this fact it would have been made plain enough in the debate referred to above. In view of the acknowledged prevalence of so great an evil, it would have been a hopeful indication if the leaders of the two parties in the House could have sunk all party considerations in the presence of this terrible menace to the health and stability of the Commonwealth, and united in an earnest endeavor to find some means of effectually punishing and preventing the corrupt practices which so vitiate and disgrace the political life of the country. It is to be hoped, however, that the discussion which the subject has had at the hands of our politicians will not be without wholesome results. At the end of the debate the Premier proposed, as a method of investigating and dealing with all charges of bribery and corrupt practices, a judicial commission to be composed of the best judges of the land. In proposing this commission Sir Wilfrid Laurier referred to the acknowledged prevalence of corrupt practices in elections, amounting to a system of organized corruption, and said that some investigation must take place, deep, searching and complete, and if legislation were necessary that must come. This view must be shared by all honorable men on both sides of the House, although unfortunately the fact that the subject had been made a bone of contention between the two parties prevented cordial co-operation in any effort to eradicate the evil. But whether the appointment of a judicial commission to investigate charges of corrupt practices is to be regarded as resulting from the wise views and pure motives of a statesman, or whether they are to be regarded, as the Opposition charge, as a concession forced from the Premier by the demand for a Parliamentary investigation, there seems to be reason to hope for good results from relegating the enquiry into such charges to a Court from which a calm and impartial investigation of them can be hoped for.

The Boer Commissioners in the United States. As was anticipated, the Boer Commissioners, Messrs. Fischer, Wessels and Woolmorans, have met with a very cordial welcome from their sympathizers in the United States. They were received in New York by a committee of Congressmen, and Mayor Van Wyck assured them of his sympathies. At Washington also they were received at a great public meeting, to which many Congressmen lent their sympathetic presence. It should be said, however, that neither at New York nor at Washington was the action of the Congressmen in any sense official. The principal orator at the Washington meeting was the celebrated Bourke Cochran, of New York, whose speech on the occasion the New York Outlook describes as "characteristically reckless and irresponsible." Mr. Cochran considers Canada to be a standing menace to the Monroe doctrine, and more than hints that it is the duty of the United States to banish the British flag from the continent. The Boer Commissioners have also had an interview with Secretary Hay, which is described as semi-official, and an interview with the President, which was not at all of an official character. In both cases they seem to have been very kindly treated, but were assured by Secretary Hay in unmistakable language, which the Secretary immediately made public, that the United States Government had gone already quite as far as it was possible for it to go in the direction of intervention, having intimated to Lord Salisbury its readiness to use its good offices for peace if intervention would be acceptable, and having received from him the reply that Her Majesty's Government could not accept the intervention of any foreign power. The Boer Commissioners will now, it is understood, turn their attention, in connection with the Democrat bosses of the United States, to the business of stimulating pro-Boer sentiment throughout the country, with the hope of bringing popular pres-

sure to bear upon the Government and also of influencing the coming elections. Their success along this line of effort remains to be seen. While an influential element in the population of the United States is more or less strongly moved by race sympathy with the Boers, and a still more influential element by hereditary hatred of Great Britain, there must still be a very large class of intelligent Americans who understand perfectly well that the fight of the Boers is not in any true sense, a struggle for liberty, but really a struggle for a tyrannous oligarchy which it were preposterous to think of foisting upon South Africa at the beginning of the twentieth century. This class of people will be much less disposed to listen to the Boer Commissioners than to a number of influential Americans in Cape Colony, who have addressed to the approaching national political conventions of the two national parties and to the people of the United States an open letter, in which they declare that the cause of humanity would best be served by the observance of strict neutrality on the part of the people of the United States. They are convinced that if it were thoroughly understood in South Africa that American intervention is out of the question, the war would come to a speedy end and thousands of lives would thus be saved.

The War. The fuller intelligence received during the week respecting the relief of Mafeking, goes to show that the relief expedition was prudently planned by General Hunter and admirably carried out by Colonel Mahon, the officer in charge. The flying column which he led to the relief of the beleaguered town is described as a grand force of mounted men, consisting of Imperial Light Horse from Ladysmith the Kimberly Mounted Corps, with Royal Horse Artillery and pom-poms, and a selected body of infantry from the Fusilier Brigade. After a successful fight on the 13th with a body of Boers which attempted to intercept his march, Colonel Mahon joined forces with Colonel Plumer from the north at a point 20 miles west of Mafeking on the 15th. This body was also reinforced by a detachment of Canadian artillery which, as a part of General Carrington's advance guard, had come by way of Beira, Salisbury and Buluwayo, and by forced marches had arrived in time to share in the honor of the relief of Mafeking. On Thursday, the 17th, the relieving force encountered a body of 1500 Boers strongly posted nine miles west of Mafeking, and after a fight of five hours, in which the Canadian artillery rendered grand service, the enemy was driven off and Mafeking was practically relieved. It would appear however, that the relief force did not actually enter the town until Friday morning, the 18th, the very day which Lord Roberts had named to Colonel Baden-Powell as the day upon which he might expect relief. Later accounts also fully confirm the report of the brilliant strategy by which Colonel Baden-Powell inflicted defeat upon a strong attacking party of Boers, capturing Commandant Eloff and 107 of his men, and otherwise inflicting heavy loss upon the besiegers. During the week Lord Roberts has been pushing steadily northward, and with so much rapidity that on the Queen's birthday a British force crossed the Vaal river near Paris, and about 20 miles west of the main line of railway to Pretoria. This force is supposed to be that under the command of Colonel Hutton. Two days later, advance troops of Lord Roberts' main body crossed the Vaal and the infantry followed on Sunday. A despatch from Lord Roberts at Vereeniging, dated the 27th, says: "We crossed the Vaal this morning, and are now encamped on the north bank." The position reached is about 77 miles from Pretoria. The British advance during the past week has been practically unopposed. The Boers occupied an entrenched position at the Rhenoster river, where they had evidently intended to offer resistance, but the strategy of Lord Roberts and the overwhelming strength of his widely extended forces made that impracticable. They have, however, destroyed the railway as they retreated, and carried off most of their supplies. At the crossing of the Vaal they were so hotly pursued by a British force under Colonel Henry, that they

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