

small. We are not arguing that this would be the best thing to be done now and here in these special cases, by the citizens or Council of Toronto. We are merely stating the case in the abstract, in order that all interested may ask themselves why the most direct and sensible method of procedure should not be at once adopted, and may reflect seriously on the meaning of the humiliating answer, viz., that the Council, composed of the men specially chosen by the citizens to look after their interests, should not be trusted, because it lacks either the ability or the honesty, or both, that are necessary to the carrying on of the business in the best way. The Council is, therefore, called on to confess its own incompetency, and to emphasize the distrust of the people, by handing over to others the emoluments of natural monopolies which should accrue to the city and which they themselves should control. It is quite possible that the distrust of the many who deprecate the undertaking of such work directly by the Council may be justified by the facts. But what a confession of incompetency for self-government! We are not sure that it might not further be argued with much force that the surest and speediest way to bring about the needed reform would be to require the Council to undertake the work, and thereby constrain responsible citizens to take so much interest in civic management and to watch it so closely that the imperative demand for integrity and competence would speedily bring the supply.

THE papers relating to the coming reciprocity conference at Washington, so far as they have yet been brought down to the Commons, do not add very materially to what was previously known to the public. A good deal of natural curiosity has been felt as to which party was to blame for the uncomfortable position in which Sir Charles Tupper and his associates were placed when they reached Washington only to find that the proposed conference had been postponed to a later date. Some light is thrown on the subject by the statement in Sir Charles Tupper's Report from England, that he had received from Sir John Macdonald, before leaving for Washington, Sir Julian Pauncefote's telegram, dated April 3rd, saying that Mr. Blaine had written him that after conferring with the President he might have to modify the date fixed for opening the discussion on the commercial relations between the two countries and promising to advise him definitely the next day. The High Commissioner states that as no further communication was received, they assumed that the previous arrangement stood, though it is evident from a comparison of dates that he and his colleagues must have left Ottawa for Washington soon after the receipt of the first telegram, and certainly before the further communication promised Sir Julian Pauncefote by Mr. Blaine could have reached them. Both of these gentlemen seem to have been surprised at the action of the Canadian delegates in not waiting for the receipt of the promised communication. It must be borne in mind, however, that the earliest date at which that communication could have been received would have been too late to admit of the Canadian delegates reaching Washington in time to meet Mr. Blaine on the 5th, the date previously fixed. When one finds Sir Charles Tupper gravely informing Sir John Macdonald that Mr. Blaine expressed great regret at their (the Canadian delegates) not having received his message of the 5th of April in time to prevent the necessity of their journey (to keep an appointment which required that they should be in Washington on the 5th of April), one is puzzled to know whether the seeming *naïveté* is on the part of Mr. Blaine or of Sir Charles. The matter is not, perhaps, of great importance, yet the question forces itself upon the mind whether it would not have comported better with Canadian dignity and possibly better promoted the end in view, while saving the delegates themselves some chagrin, had they taken the matter a little more coolly and manifested less apparent eagerness to hold Mr. Blaine to his first arrangement.

ANOTHER vexed question of somewhat greater importance, because of its bearing upon the probabilities of the ultimate success of the conference, was: "Who began the negotiations?" The Canadian Government, in the proclamation announcing the dissolution and in the course of the electoral campaign, certainly conveyed the impression that the first advance was made by Mr. Blaine. On Mr. Blaine taking exception to this, Sir Charles Tupper hastened to assure him at their first interview, that "he wished at the outset to recognize the accuracy of the statement contained in his (Mr. Blaine's) letter to Sir Julian

Pauncefote, in reference to the initiation of the negotiations." This admission seems very like a reflection by Sir Charles upon the candour of the leaders of the Canadian Government. Had the impression which is thus removed been correct the fact would have been an augury full of hope for the success of the negotiations. Mr. Blaine's anxiety to have it removed and the fact clearly brought out is, on the other hand, not encouragingly suggestive, though it may not have any deeper motive than diplomatic caution.

THE portion of the correspondence which, however, far transcends all these minor matters in interest and importance is that in which Sir Charles Tupper recounts the arguments in favour of reciprocity which he brought to bear during his interview with Mr. Blaine. To many this part of the report will be a surprise. After all that has been said from time to time by members and supporters of the Government on the platform, as well as by the newspapers which are believed to represent its opinions and policy, it is refreshing to find the High Commissioner assuring Mr. Blaine in the strongest terms that the present Government of the Dominion is warmly in favour of the most friendly relations with the United States. He recalled very effectively the fact, that "when Sir John Macdonald, who was one of Her Majesty's joint High Commissioners, submitted to Parliament for approval the Alabama Treaty, which settled also all the then pending questions between Canada and the United States, he was fiercely denounced by the leaders and press of the Liberal party for having basely sacrificed the interests of Canada in his endeavours to promote friendly relations between Canada and the United States. He added that he himself had experienced the same treatment from the same party when he submitted for the approval of Parliament the Treaty of Washington of 1888, he having then been charged by the leaders and press of that party with having conceded everything to the United States and having obtained nothing in return." He further said that Canada was "most anxious to have the freest and most friendly trade intercourse with the United States, consistent with the interests of both countries." Further on he repeated with emphasis that "the Government of Sir John Macdonald and the party which sustained him had the strongest desire to promote reciprocal trade between the two countries," and more to the same effect. All Canadians, irrespective of party, who believe that the commercial interests of Canada are so inextricably interwoven by nature with those of the United States, that freedom of intercourse cannot be restricted without great loss to both, and that the hope of perpetual peace and amity not only between the two countries, but between Great Britain and the United States, depends very largely upon the preservation of free and friendly commercial relations, will hail the views so emphatically expressed by Sir Charles on behalf of the Canadian Government with delight. Some may indeed question the propriety and good taste of introducing party questions and quarrels so freely in a diplomatic interview with the representative of another nation. Others may despair of being able to reconcile these views with the many strong arguments that have from time to time been urged, on behalf of the Government, to prove that reciprocal trade beyond certain narrow and probably impossible limits would be ruinous to Canadian industries. But by the great majority of Canadians the views expressed by Sir Charles, in regard to the desirability of a large measure of free commercial intercourse between the two countries, will be deemed eminently sound, sensible and statesmanlike.

REFERRING to the Behring Sea Bill, which was passing through the House of Commons at the time of our writing last week, we mentioned, as one of the conditions which would no doubt be deemed essential, that the United States Government should agree to enforce an equally rigid prohibition upon its subjects for the time specified. It is now stated that the Bill as passed contains a clause agreeing that the United States, meaning no doubt the chartered company to which that Government has given a monopoly of its sealing privileges, may catch 7,500 seals as a supply of food for the native islanders whom the company is bound to support. It is alleged that these poor natives are utterly dependent upon the seals for their food supply, though this plea has been ridiculed by some of the American newspapers. These assert that the islands on which the natives in question live are swarming with wild fowl and other game, from which an abundant supply of food could be furnished.

No one, and least of all the British Government, will care to believe that President Harrison, at whose instance this clause is said to have been inserted in the Bill, would be capable of prevaricating in so small a matter. At any rate the modification is too insignificant comparatively to be permitted to block the negotiations. Mr. Smith, the leader of the House of Commons, is said to have told the House that the Canadian Government had given its consent to this clause in the arrangement. It was no doubt wise in doing so. It is hinted, however, that a more serious difficulty may arise in consequence of Lord Salisbury's resolve to insist, before issuing the proclamation necessary to put the Bill in operation, upon an agreement on the part of the United States, in case the arbitrators should decide adversely to its claims, to reimburse to the Canadian sealers the amount of their loss by the operation of the Bill. This seems reasonable enough at first sight. It would be, as we before observed, very hard on those who have been at heavy expense in fitting out sealers, to be ordered back empty-handed. They certainly should not be required to bear the full loss accruing from the sudden prohibition. But, on the other hand, supposing that Great Britain should be the losing party in the arbitration, what about the American Sealing Company's loss of the season's operations? Would not the rule work both ways, and require the British Government to consent in its turn to make good their loss in that case? If not, why not? Perhaps Lord Salisbury would do well to think twice before attempting to impose such a condition.

A STATEMENT that the Canadian people will be slow to believe is made in a leading article in the *New York Tribune* of June 6. The *Tribune* says, referring to the papers which were laid on the table at Ottawa the other day, and which we have discussed elsewhere, that "all the correspondence in Canada's possession that has a real value to the public was withheld." The *Tribune*, whose close relations with the Washington Administration give its utterances on such a topic a special claim to attention, goes on to say:—

The missing papers undoubtedly were those wherein Secretary Blaine expressed the terms on which the negotiation must be based. We can well understand the indisposition of the Dominion Government to give out these letters just now. They would show, we suspect, that Sir John Macdonald and Sir Charles Tupper have already committed themselves to a measure of reciprocity much larger and broader than they defined as their policy during the late electoral campaign.

It was not claimed that the papers brought down, comprised the whole correspondence. The rest was promised as soon as the requisite permission could be obtained from the British Government. It is, we must confess, not a little surprising that that permission has been so long in coming. It seems very unlikely that the Home authorities could have any objection to the publication of the complete papers, if the Canadian had none. If such a correspondence as that described by the *Tribune* really exists, we shall no doubt see it when the rest of the papers are given to the public. Till then it is but fair to withhold comment. Meanwhile we are surprised at the essential narrowness of the view of reciprocal trade relations between the two countries presented by the *Tribune's* article, and hope that those are not the views of President Harrison and Mr. Blaine. After arguing that to whatever extent the people of the United States encourage reciprocal trade with Canada to that extent they build up Canada, this broad-minded journal proceeds as follows. We quote at some length for fear of possible misrepresentation:—

Why should this be asked? Why should we be invited to transform Toronto into Liverpool, Montreal into Birmingham, Winnipeg into Manchester? Is it to perpetuate British authority in North America, to create a rich, numerous, and powerful nation upon our borders whose attitude toward us will be directed and controlled in Downing Street? Mr. Blake says that this is what it will do, and we do not doubt that he is right, but why should we do it? The United States are opposed not to England, not to any other European power—in Europe, where they belong. We are opposed to the transfer upon American soil of institutions that are not in harmony with popular sovereignty, and we are especially opposed to the interference of any European power in American issues. It is not necessary to any proper trade relations between Europe and American nations, and it certainly is not necessary to any proper political relation. We have not the slightest disposition to dictate to Canada where she shall lodge her sovereignty, and we have for her and with her only the warmest sentiments of friendship. There is no height of prosperity to which we should not wish her to attain as an American community—no height, indeed,