OTTAWA LETTER.

Conservatives Glad to Know Just Where Costigan Stands.

The Member of Five Conservative Cabinets, He Enjoyed the Spoils of Victory,

And Looked Well After His Own Flesh an Blood-Some Grits Do Not Welcome Him With Open Arms.

OTTAWA, May 12.-In the absence of a session yesterday, political interest centred around the interesting statement of Hon. John Costigan an nouncing his withdrawal from the liberal conservative party. The opposition members find in this declaration a considerable relief from embarrass ment. Whatever strength Mr. Costigan brought to the party when it was in power, it can hardly be claimed that he has been of much as to its fortunes since June, 1896. During this session especially he has been giving what influence he commands to the government party, and there is a natural feeling that since his hos tility is to be met, it is much more convenient to have him fighting in the opposite side than to be discharging his fire in the flank of his old party. No feeling of bitterness finds expres sion. In his political career Mr. Cos tigan has not made many enemies. It was not his habit to attack political opponents, and though possibly his political associates did not always fare quite as well at his hands, it was always recognized that Mr. Costigan was not given to personal ill

For nearly thirty years Mr. Costisan was understood to be a supporter of the conservative party. For four teen years Mr. Costigan held a cabinet position and was at the head of a department. Whatever may be his present feeling towards the conservative leaders, he never declined office at the hands of any of them. He was a minister under Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir John Abbet, Sir John Thompson, Sir Mackenzie Bowell and Sir Charles Tupper. He was the associate of the ministers whom he now accuses of wrecking the party. Whatever high opinion even his friends may entertain of him, there is no man who doubts that Mr. Costigan would have retained office under Sir Charles Tupper if the election of 1896 had determined that Sir Charles should remain

Whatever changes of policy may have occurred in the party which now commands Mr. Costigan's confidence, no change has taken place in the principles or policy or conduct of the party which he leaves. Sir Charles Tupper has pursued the identical policy which he advocated while in power and which during that period enjoyed Mr. Costigan's support. When Mr. is more satisfactory to the business people than the tariff changes made by Mr. Foster, he of course rememhers that he himself was a party to the Foster tariff.

During the second session of the present parliament Mr. Costigan took occasion to inform the public that he felt himself under no obligation the conservative party. The declaration was made apropos of nothing in par-ticular, and naturally opened up the discussion as to the balance of obligation between him and his former associates. It is very difficult to value the service of any member of a party, and perhaps under the reculiar rela tions which Mr. Costigan occupied it is still more difficult to appraise his influence. He made no claim to special ability. He contributed nothing to the general discussion of public affairs or to the defence of his party in the country. On the other hand, he brought to the discharge of his duty as the head of the department good common sense, and luring his career of public life he was regarded as an honest administrator. On two or more occasions charges of boodling in regard to concessions made against him in the press, but they were not sustained by any serious evidence. When Sir Richard Cartwright supported a resolution strongly condemning ministers who received testimonials from their friends, having particular reference to Sir Hector Langevin, he took eccasion to offer something like an apology to Mr. Costigan, who also received a present of a fine house at Ottawa. In the management of his department Mr. Costigan did not give himself or anyone else undue anxiety. Som ministers of marine have made matters uncomfortable for various inter-Mr. Costigan usually settled disputes in the easiest way for himself and for the parties concerned without too scrupulous regard to ultimate effects. His administration was not unpopular, 'ess so probably than that of more strenuous ministers. Certainly it was much easier for him-

It does not lie today with supporters of the late conservative leaders to attack Mr. Jostigan on the ground that he was always a source of weakness to the governments of which he was a member. These premiers invited him to their cabinets and kept him there. They were supposed to their business. It was their fault if they retained in office ministers who should not occupy that position. To say that Mr. Costigan was never useful to the conservative party or to the country as a cabinet minister is to condemn four conservative

At the same time it must be recognized that Mr. Costigan was not in the ministry because of his real or assumed ability as an administrator, or his power as a statesman. He himself recognized and testified to his peculiar position in the government.

Mrs. J. B. Clough, Box 203, Lisbon, Grafton Co. New Hampshire, writes: "I am the mother of a nice baby four and a half months old. He is a perfect child and weighs about eighteen pounds. If you remember I wrote you about a year ago about my condition. I cannot give too much practice to your 'Favorite Prescription' as it saved me a great deal of suffering. I got along remarkably well, this being my first baby." At the same time it must be recog-

He took occasion often to say that he was there aspecially to represent Canadians of a certain race and faith. He never denied, in fact, he was accus-tomed to declare, that he made it his peculiar business to attend to the interests of the class which he represented. It came about through peculiar relationship that his attention was largely devoted to matters of patronage. In the other elements of public administration the interests of all classes and creeds are usually the same. Mr. Costigan's associates were left to discuss the larger affairs of state. Mr. Costigan no doubt was quite successful from his own point of view in the particular business which he had in hand. As one of the two cabinet ministers from New Bruns-wick, he no doubt had a considerable advantage over his associates. Sir Leonard Tilley and Mr. Foster were in the front rank of statesmen dealing with important national affairs. They could not give the same attention to matters of patronage as an associate whose mind was not turned to the other business of the nation.

Many conservatives have complained that undue advantage was thus obtained for Mr. Costigan's friends and followers at the expense of other equally deserving and equally capable members of the conservative party.
Whether this is true or not, considerable dissatisfaction was created in some parts of the country, and the interests of the party suffered in some constituencies. Mr. Costigan, doubtless, used his personal influence among the people whom he was supposed to represent in order to bring support to the government. But the time passed in Canada when any individual can gather in a large personal support and deliver it over to a political party. At all events, in the chief city of his own province Mr. Costigan was never able to make any considerable treak in the ranks which had been consolidated around the person of the late Mr. Anglin. Mr. Anglin had in his day a tremendous personal influence which Mr. Costigan, whatever he may have tried to do, was not able to inherit. Possibly he was more successful in other parts of the country. But it is the peculiarity of states men of his class that their influence passes away when their party loses rower and they themselves are left without patronage.

Sir Charles Tupper in a public interview refers to the papers read in the house the other day by Dr. Roche, one of the members for Manitoba. In a previous letter to the Sun the full enefit was given of Mr. Costigan's statement on that occasion. It is not worth while to reopen the question further than to say that the government which has shown a considerable severity towards many officers appointed by their predecessors displayed the opposite tendencies in this particular case. Mr. H. A. Costigan had been suspended in consequence of certain irregularities. His father says that they were nothing worse, and in the absence of proof, other than Mr. Christie's statements, this view may be accepted. But it is certain that many officers appointed by the late government have been turned out of office with far less excuse than could be given for the dismissal of Mr. H. dismissed, but was transferred to the control of the Ottawa office, and is now in the line of promotion to a higher position.

Hon, John Costigan has a son-inlaw also in the public service. He was appointed about ten years ago, taking the place of another official whose salary was \$800. That place, which is said to be not one that calls for signal ability, Mr. Armstrong still holds. But the salary is now double what it was when he took the position. He was in Mr. Costigan's department, and through generous promotion had reached a fair position in the beginning of 1896. In the memorable period when the late ministry was shorthanded Mr. Costigan's son-in-law had his salary largely increased, and it is said that two increases have been made by the present ministry, the last one on the eve of the New Brunswick election. And another son-in-law of Mr. Costigun was in the militia .department, and got into some trouble which led to his retirement. Today he holds a very excellent position in



mother by the side of her suffering little one? Such mothers take little or no account of their own weariness and weakness, but keep on until they drop. They seldom realize how completely their baby's health depends upon their own.

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ction with the force in the Tuhave had as much effect with Mr. Costigan as some suppose, but perhaps it would not be unfair to speak of them cording to Mr. Fielding's form as 'contributory causes" to Mr. Costigan's present attitude.

At least it is true that the present government have treated Mr. Costi-gan's relatives and appointees with far greater leniency and generosity than they have shown to other members the civil service. These particular civil servants are probably not more capable or more devoted to their duties than many who have received a promotion except a promotion back wards. The circu nstances are men-tioned because they are themes of dis-cussion in connection with Mr. Costi-gan's recent declaration. What the future may have to offer it is impossible to predict. Mr. Costigan has ione for the liberal party all that he can do for it now. Whether the liberal party can do any more for him remains to be seen; also it will be ineresting to observe how far the conservative portion of the element the population which Mr. Costigan claimed to represent can be trans-ferred by him to the grit fold.

It is also interesting to hear the of them in co that politics was after all a species warfare, with changing fortunes. He thought that an officer in the army who had enjoyed the spolls of victory when his side won ought to be content to share the losses of defeat. It struck this old-time liberal as a somewhat ungenerous proceeding for one who had been a sharer in the good fortune of his party when it was victorious to march over to the enemy in the hour of their victory. this gentleman is himself above suspicion of personal interest, there are others who have the feeling that the grit ranks are full enough of people who desire to have their friends warded and that the advent of Mr. Costigan will reduce the chances of some who deserve more from the present government. When Mr. Costigan speaks of his leaders in a disparaging way they seem surprised that it should have taken him so many years to discover their weakness.

The conservative party is not wrecked. When Mr. Costigan says it is he means nothing more than that it has been defeated. No member of the conservative party did more, according to his ability and influence than Mr. Costigan to commit the government to its action on the school question. Whether that action was wise or unwise it was for the time disastrous. The skilful use made of the question by Sir Wilfrid and his party. their varying attitude to suit varying localities, was the cause of their acession to power. The late government felt that a constitutional necessity was thrust upon them. Mr. Costigan urged that this necessity would also be attended by political advantage inasmuch as it would strengthen rarty with the element which he particularly represented. The leaders of the conservative party have never disowned their responsibility for the course taken, though it alienated many friends. But it is a somewhat remarkable turn in affairs that Mr. Costigan should be the first prominent man to desert his late associates on account of the disaster which followed the action of which he was the most ardent idvocate. It was somewhat more remarkable that he should be now found transferring his influwho attained power by attacking the measure which Mr. Costigan believed to be the chief duty of the conservative party to promote.

OTTAWA, May 13,-The ministers are not obtaining the supply from the house with undue precipitation. Mark Twain speaks of a newspaper m Constantinople whose journal had a circulation of 15 copies. The man was getting rich, but was doing it with great deliberation. Opposition members are voting supplies at about th same rate of speed. The discussions are on items which are easily assailable, but it must be admitted that the immediate purpose might be served with fewer observations. The ultiobject is not announced, but perhaps it would be safe to say, that the government will not get the estimates through with alacrity until something more is known of the redistribution bill. At the close of las session, when two or three important bills, a number of railway subsidies and a heavy assortment of supplementary appropriations were brought down in a bunch, Mr. Foster made an announcement. He pointed out that the ministers had withheld a great part of their important legislation to the last hour, after most of the members had gone home, and declared that if he should be alive and in his place next year, this thing would not be allowed to happen. The ministers would probably hasten business for this year if they would bring down their important legislation at once. The ancient and time honored recourse of parliaments is to withhold supply from government until grievances are redressed. This is also a recourse for en opposition which can only protect itself by checking the vote of supply until the intentions of government are

It happened yesterday that the es timates before the house were open to attack. Sir Louis Davies, who is not unpopular with the opposition, and who keeps his temper well under fire, was not as explicit in his explanations as some of the members thought he ought to be. This was probably because the minister of mar-ine was not himself acquainted with the details of the vote which he proposed. His position is also weak from another cause, in which he has the sympathy of his colleagues, most of whom are in the same position.
When Sir Louis took office he announced his intention of carrying on the services of his department for less money than his predecessors had partment of marine has been in the and Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper are not given to extravagance and always keep a careful watch on the outlay was perhaps not so particular, but his control of the marine department was brief and the traditions as to expenditure were maintained.

So it happened that when Sir Louis Davies having made it his particular ness to criticise the extravagance partment of marine, assumed that he was going to manage it for less money, he found that his in his haste he reduced the vote last year so that it was rather lower than the amount required in previous years. For next year he asks a large additional sum, apparently more than has usually been expended under conservative ministers. When confronted with the smaller vote of last year, Sir Louis, while the sorrow is big at his heart, humbly confesses that he did not take money enough. He is asking for a large supplementary vote to help him out in this current year, and, as was said above, wants a bigger appropriation for the year that will commence in July.

Sir Louis offers an explanation the effect that the Aberdeen will run next year at the expense of the general lighthouse and ocean and river service. She was so managed this year, though the vote was taken on the assumption that her outlay would be charged to fishery protection. Sir Louis says that the transfer of this charge from one branch to another, while increasing the vote for navigation security, does not imply But when asked whether the vote for fishery protection will be cut down by the amount that the other vote is increased, he replies in the negative. So the matter stands. At the present moment Sir Louis's career as an economist and reformer is somewhat under a cloud.

Coming down to matters of detail, attention is called to some rather high charges for supplies. Mr. Taylor and Dr. Sproule found difficulty in understanding why the \$2.50 a barrel would be paid in St. John for pota-toes supplied to the Lansdowne by Mr. Cotter. In Mr. Taylor's part of the country \$1.50 per barrel for turnips would be excessive. Nor is it clear to him and Dr. Sproule that \$5.50 per barrel should be paid for apples, \$2.40 per bushel for peas, or \$2 for beans. The Ontario members are prepared to supply provisions and freight them to the maritime provinces at half these prices, and market quotations in St. John would seem to indicate that some of the charges were 100 per cent higher than they ought

Mr. Ellis offered defence. He quoted the price of potatoes per peck in St. John to show that \$2.50 a barrel was not high, but was confronted with the suggestion that the prices he quoted. referred to new potatoes in July. Mr. Ellis rather excited the envy of western farmers by stating that in the maritime provinces the prices paid for the goods for the Lansdowne were not excessive. He supposed that the captain of the ship must have been struck with the appearance of a fine barrel of apples some time in the spring and that \$5.50 might not be too much to pay for these particular goods. It was pointed out that baking powder was not usually sold at fifty cents a pound, and Mr. Macdonald of Prince Edward Island could not understand why Sir Louis should pay higher prices for cheese, condensed milk, baking powder, and other products of Prince Edward Island bought at Souris than was paid by his agent for the same goods in British Columbia after they had been carried across the continent. Mr. Macdonald does not object to the purchase of goods from the gentleman at Souris who protested his election, but he could not justify the payment of double prices even to so good a party man.

Hector Maclougall of Cape Breton finds that \$6, \$7 and even \$7.50 has been paid for flour for Sir Louis's fleet when other people were buying it for \$5, or less. He is still more surprised at the payment of \$6 for coal

Sir Louis admitted that it is fectly allowable to criticise these items, and explained that the purchases were all made from supporters of the government when other things were equal. Further questioning elicited from the minister the fact that other things were not equal. The opposition members agreed that the minister might properly buy from his own friends in preference to tories at the same price. But Sir Louis admitted that the conservatives were not allowed to quote prices at all. confining the opportunity to his own friends, he frequently escaped com-petition altogether, and the party men made their own prices apparently with excellent profit to themselves, as when the Souris gentleman above nentioned obtained 30 cents a gallon for kerosene oil.

Mr. Taylor sought to encourage Sir Louis in his career as a reformer by moving a reduction of the vote to the former standard. Then it became pathetic to witness Sir Louis's perturbation. He drew a ghastly picture of Reglected light stations and misplaced buoys. He told how ships would run ashore in the darkness, and how orpses of maidens fair, lashed to drifting masts, would be strewn from Anticosti to Montreal. There were tears in his voice as he pictured the appy home which would be desolated and the scenes of horror which would be witnessed if Mr. Taylor should cut down the vote of the marine department, or reduce the price of baking powder. But the heart of the tory whip was hardened worse than that of the King of Egypt in olden times. He suggested that if the minister was really so concerned for human life, for the reputation of Canadian sailing routes and the honor and credit of the nation, he might accomplish his humane purposes by cut-ting down the profits on his friends' expended. Now it happens that dur- potatoes and beans. It was the twoin the last decade and a half the de- priced grocer and not the penurious opposition who would be resp control of careful men. Mr. Foster for the scenes of carnage that were

present in Sir Louis's glowing, but norbid imagination. In the end explanation was given of the mysterious transfer of expenditure from one department to another, with the effect of increasing the outlay in one place and leaving the other where was before.

We shall still have peas any price, anl in spite of Dr. Sproule's criticism, Sir Louis will go on buying groceries as Mr. Emmerson buy, his bridges. The Doctor points out that the department of marine buys mushrooms at big prices notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Fielding has placed mushroom spawn on the free list.

There was some disagreement be

ween the minister of marine and Mr. Macdonald of his own province concerning the permanence of employ ment in the fishery protection service. Mr. Macdonald seems to have heard of some partisan dismissals, but Sir Louis says that he keeps all his men and employs them year after year. The dispatches have given a fair idea of the ministers' proposition respecting a naval reserve. This scheme as stated in a previous letter was outlined by Sir Louis at the meeting of the British Empire League. It seems that the discussion with the imperial suthorities is still going on, and there is hope that a contribution of Canadians to imperial naval defence will soon be arranged. Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, when minister of marine, made some attempt to begin the movement to keep the Canadian fishermen and other young men trained on the sea from offering their services to the United States navy. The fishery protection cruiser constitutes a sort of navy of our own. The men on board these vessels are trained in methodical habits. They have some ideas of drill and are accustomed to neatness and to regular habits. This training naturally disposes them to withdraw from ordinary seafaring and to enter the regular service. Sir Hibbert fears that if employment is not found in winter for these young men they will enlist in the service of our neighbors. Probably before the session is over we shall hear more of this scheme for establishing training stations for marines and the equipment of a Canadian naval reserve

Sir Louis is much at sea on the lobster question. He has his report of the committee appointed to investigate the lobster, but has not acted upon it. Mr. McInerney, representing constituency much interested in the lobster business, has been trying to learn what the department proposes to do. It is a problem of great interest in Kent, because the commissioners divide the county between two districts. The recommendation is that the lobster fishing be allowed to commence north of the Chockpish river early in April, but south of that stream not until the 19th of May. On the other hand, the packers in northern district would stop in the middle of July, whereas the southern operators may continue a month longer. About the beginning of May Mr. McInerney began to ask Sir Louis whether he intended to put these re-commendations into effect. The minister promised to answer in a day or two, and this promise was again renewed later, but no statement has this business as a producer of revenue killing has been going on and the most that can be elicited from Sir Louis Davies is that no rights will be taken away this year that were formerly enjoyed.

Speaking of the marine department

This answer is not very instructive just now, seeing that the period is about past in which the privileges would be lost. But there remains the interesting question whether the privileges will be conferred that have not hitherto been enjoyed. If Sir Leuis adopts the recommendation, the pac-kers in the southern district of the gulf shore will be allowed to continue operations a month longer than the present law allows. It is important for them to know whether they are to be shut off in July or in August. They want to know what contracts the can make. They want to provide themselves with tin and other materbought at Sydney, when the regular lal for the extended operations if they trice was less than half that much. are to be permitted. In the meantime they are working in the dark, and if the information desired by the public is in possession of the friends of the government an unfair discrimination

> In view of these circumstances Mr. McInerney has been trying to get some statement of intention from the head of the department. But Sir Louis is like King Arthur. All his mind is clouded with a doubt, and so he cannot clear up the doubts of other people.

OTTAWA, May 15.—It is probable

that the further discussion of the Drummond railway bill will be re-

ported by wire before this letter is

printed, and some disclosures will be

nade that are not known now. One interesting feature of the proposed arrangement will perhaps be new to maritime province readers. In the traffic arrangements between the Grand Trunk and the government, the Grand Trunk gets a great bargain. On goods shipped from Ontario towns or from Chicago or any other point reached by the Grand Trunk west of Montreal to Halifax or St. John for export, the freight receipts are not to be divided between the two roads on the basis of their respective mileage. It is arranged that the Intercolonial shall be regarded as a very much shorter line than it is. For purposes of division of the proceeds, the tailway distance from Montreal to Halifex is to be called 425 miles, though as a matter of fact it is 840 miles. The distance from Montreal to St. John is to be regarded as 375 miles, whereas it about 740 miles. This means that the government gets as its share only half the amount to which it would be entitled on the basis of mileage. In other words, the Grand Trunk gets just twice as much for carrying a ton of freight per mile as will be paid to the Intercolonial for carrying the same freight on the same trip.



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the rate per mile in order to compete with shorter roads, and the whole loss is borne by the government. Now it is well known that the rates for through traffic on the trunk lines have been cut down towards the lowest living point. The great railroads make most of their money on local and noncompetitive traine and carry on their through business with a small margin of profit. We can imagine how much he government will make on through traffic at one half the ordinary lo distance rate.

Then there is another remarkable provision. It is agreed that the amount assigned to the Intercolonial as ts return for through freight from Montreal to St. John shall be no more than the rate charged by the Canadian Pacific between the same points. That is to say, the Intercolonial agrees to make rates for 740 miles equal to those made by the Canadian Pacific for 480 miles. Furthermore, the Intercolonial agrees to charge no more for freight from Montreal to St. John han the Grand Trunk charges from Montreal to Portland, a distance of 293 miles, or considerably less than half the length of the intercolonial. The rate to Halifax is to be a little higher than that to St. John. difference is found objectionable to Halifax and the agitation there may have the effect of making a Halifax rate for 840 miles the same as the Portland rate for 293 miles. If the rates were the same to Halifax the Intercolonial would be receiving about one third as much as the Grand Trunk gets for performing the same service on the through traffic borne by the two roads.

It will be seen that the Grand Trunk has no share in the disadvantages of the longer route. It will receive as much on goods which it delivers to the Intercolonial or receives from that road as it does on traffic entirely its own. The Intercolonial will have to do its through business at half price or less. Mr. Plair must be an uncommmonly able minister if he can make the traffic pay on these terms.

The minister claims that he has done well with the traffic so far handled, but as yet he has done no through business for export and very has yet been applied to the value of or of deficit. Even as it is, the business has been conducted at a much greater loss than Mr. Blair admits. He says that in the eight months ending first of March the receipts cualled the expenditure, while during the four months beginning last March and ending with July there was a deficit of \$138,000. These twelve months include the exact period in which the Drummond railway was operated with the Intercolonial, so that the first year's operation of the Intercolonial extending to Montreal results in a net deficit according to Mr. Blair's own showing of \$138,000. It is true that the minister puts in a claim of an extra expenditure during the four months from March to July of last year, but he stated that this expenditure was made then instead of later in the year. In any case it would have been made during the twelve months. and the only result of anticipating it was that the balance for the early part of this current year is better. If Mr. Blair had deferred the expenditure to July and August he would have had a deficit of \$150,000 by the first of last March, instead of an even balance. In any case he seems to have done within that particular twelve months only a fair year's maintenance work and to have accumulated a deficit as above men-

It is true that the minister now tells how difficult it is to make an ar-S. D. S. rangement of that kind pay during the first year. But as was shown in a recent letter, he stated to the house when he brought down the arrangement that the first years operation would produce a net revenue of \$300,000 instead of a deficit of half that sum. The minister is apparently half a million lollars out in his calculations for the first year. It remains to be seen how far out he will be when he undertakes to carry through traffic at half price.

tioned.

The ministers are developing a taste for literature. While the house was in supply on Friday it was discovered that the contingencies account was loaded with a considerable number of interesting books purchased by ministers for use in their of-The parliamentary library is available for all government ployees, but it seems necessary that the ministers should have some particular books constantly at their bow. It is found, for instance, that every minister but one has bought a copy at the public expense of a work called Be Your Own Lawyer. Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper observed when the item was under discussion, that while Sir Oliver Mowat was minister of justice his colleagues were willing to take their law from him, but the moment Mr. Mills took that office everyone of them invested in Be Your Own Lawyer. Sir Charles Hibbert says that many laymen have been led astray by these compendi-The long route of the government railway makes it necessary to reduce better to take legal opinions even

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