

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N. B., APRIL 25, 1900.

MR. T. W. RAINSFORD, Travelling Agent for the Daily and Weekly Telegraph, is now in Northumberland County. Subscribers are asked to pay their subscription to him when he calls.

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REFLECTIVE UTTERANCES.

In some respects Sir Charles Tupper's speech at Montreal was an effort to modify what he had said at Quebec. The impression had apparently been devoted to reflection, but we cannot see that the result was such as to cause his friends to regard that one of the greatest blunders ever made by a political leader had been atoned for. In fact, in one essential regard he made matters worse. At Quebec the ravages of his bitter attack on Sir Wilfrid Laurier's imperialism was that parliamentary union with Great Britain could cast unassailable burdens upon Canada. With an eye to the sentiments of his Conservative friends respecting the war, he declared that the cost of Canada's share for the army and navy alone would be \$88,000,000 a year. At Montreal he explained that this figure applied only to the present year. We cannot see that this softens his case. How does he know what the military bill of England will be for the current year? And supposing it would reach the large figure involved in his calculation, does he think it was fair to select an extraordinary year like the present, when Britain has 2,500,000 men in foreign field, for the purpose of criticising a measure of general application. Leaving Sir Charles to popular judgment on that score, the question remains to be answered why he attacked imperialism at all. Not many weeks ago his tongue was set to quite another key. He was then denouncing Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Mr. Tarte and the government as a whole, with infidelity to imperial interests. He took to flattering unctious to his soul that he himself deserved all the credit for sending troops to South Africa, which was the natural result of the policy of the least imperialist in Canada and the leader of an intensely pro-British party. After the many things that Sir Charles has claimed this further appropriation of money to be accepted by his friends and the government as a whole, with infidelity to imperial interests. He took to flattering unctious to his soul that he himself deserved all the credit for sending troops to South Africa, which was the natural result of the policy of the least imperialist in Canada and the leader of an intensely pro-British party. After the many things that Sir Charles has claimed this further appropriation of money to be accepted by his friends and the government as a whole, with infidelity to imperial interests.

The Republic. That the movement is thus regarded is apparent from the use of the respectful term "imperialism" and we are bound to see that such an epithet would give rise to complicating problems among the armed nations of Europe. Coincident with this largely increased expenditure on the navy will be the continued levying of the war tax. Last year the extra excise on beer, the license fees from various sources, and the stamp tax yielded an increased revenue of \$100,000,000, over and above an unusually abundant income from customs duties. The experience of the first two months of the current year warrants the expectation that this sum will be swollen during 1900 by a further \$20,000,000; so that the problem of meeting the war debt may be regarded as having been solved. It is not surprising that many people should have looked for a reduction of these special burdens during the present year; but this does not seem to be the plan of those who are in executive control. The taxes are to be continued and the money employed in enlarging the armament of the navy and increasing the strength of the army. The one feature which we may be permitted to remark upon in this connection is the cheerfulness with which our neighbors, already carrying relatively larger burdens than we do, submit to these fresh drafts upon their resources. The explanation is probably found in the large measure of prosperity which they are just now enjoying, in common with ourselves.

LIBERAL WEIGHT AND GENIUS.

The Conservatives who presented Sir Charles Tupper with an address at Montreal recently, made the following statement to their chief: "The people of Canada having had an opportunity of testing the principles and motives of the party now temporarily in possession of the reins of power, having weighed them in the balance and found them lamentably wanting in the genius of administration, and recalcitrant to every principle they advocated while in opposition, are turning confidently to the Liberal-Conservative party to replace an aggregation of opportunists by a Liberal-Conservative government, founded on principle and conducted on lines of patriotism as opposed to those of political expediency." Disregarding the gratuitous assumption by the Conservatives of Montreal, that they know accurately the judgment of "the people of Canada" on these matters, we may be permitted to ask when and where was this weighing of the Liberal party done? Who manipulated the scales, and what was put in the other pan? These are important things to know before one can be satisfied that it was a bona fide affair. It is easy to understand that if Sir Charles Tupper himself had charge of the operation, the weight of his own opinion would probably be held to more than counterpoise anything which could be put on the other side. No one has ever heard him express an exact notion of the weight of his judgment; but it is probable that the man who could look an audience in the face and say, "I am the history of Canada," would not be apt to use small figures. What warrant have the Conservatives of Montreal for saying that the Liberals have been found wanting in the genius of administration? Most people would be disposed to think they had been doing very well. Is there a single department of the government in which the minister has not made a record for capacity and administration far beyond that of his predecessor? Who would think, for example, of comparing Mr. Daly with Mr. Sifton, in the hope that the work of the former would stand the test; Sir Adolphe Caron with Mr. Mulock, Mr. Ouimet with Mr. Tarte, Mr. Haggart with Mr. Blair, or Clark Wallace with Mr. Paterson. It is certain that the Conservative ministers referred to were not conspicuous for the success with which they carried on the particular branch of the public service entrusted to them, while their successors have been singularly zealous and effective in that regard. This need not be denied by any man who desires to be fair.

AMERICAN AMBITION.

Our American neighbors are just now struggling with a severe attack of what one of the more Democratic journals calls imperialism. They want a large navy and a large standing army—both of which are costly luxuries for any country. The sum appropriated for the navy last year was \$4,000,000, which, following upon the war with Spain, was not seriously nor generally objected to. This year, however, the sum asked for is \$61,000,000, and it is not, perhaps, unnatural that such a demand has aroused a great deal of adverse criticism. It is charged by those who are on the opposition side that this large expenditure simply means the United States is regarding to challenge the supremacy of the seas, which would be a long step away from the notions of those who founded

GENERAL BULLER.

Before the beginning of the present war General Buller was thought to be the best fighting general in the British army. This view was accepted mainly on the dictum of Archibald Forbes, who had been with Buller in several campaigns. Forbes was regarded as a good authority, and when it was announced that the great Buller was to have the supreme command in South Africa, the whole Empire was satisfied. Everyone felt that the business of commanding the Boers was in good hands. The Telegraph accepted this view of Buller's ability and, notwithstanding some suspicious circumstances, did not lose faith

in his ability after the defeat of Qokeles where he lost eleven guns and a great many men. We concluded then that a general that had no higher ideas of strategy and tactics than to make a front attack on a position defended by long-range cannon and Mauser rifles, with a river in front, was not the man to lead a British army to victory, and we did not hesitate there and then to express an unfavorable opinion of General Buller. This view did not commend itself to some of our readers, but the British war office seems to have been of the same opinion, for General Roberts was promptly replaced by General Buller. Since then Buller has not regained his reputation. He has proved himself to be a hard fighter, but nothing more. Since the relief of Ladysmith he has been torpid, and should be recalled.

ST. HELENA.

St. Helena was chosen as the prison of Napoleon because it was the safest place in which to keep the disturber of the peace of Europe. After his abdication in 1814, he had been assigned the island of Elba as his residence, and within his own little realm could do as he liked; but he broke faith with Europe, again landed in France and was again overthrown at Waterloo. It was therefore very necessary that he should be put in a secure place, and so St. Helena was chosen. There were many plots formed for his rescue from that island prison, but they all failed and there Napoleon died. In sending the Boer prisoners to St. Helena, the British government has violated no law, international or otherwise. It is simply providing for the security of the men it has captured. The fact that many of them attempted to escape as soon as they got to Cape Town showed that extra precautions would be needed to retain them in the midst of a population, many of whom would be disposed to assist them. At St. Helena, they will be safe and it will not be necessary to confine them within narrow limits. Their health will be better and their comforts greater than if confined within a stockade or in a prison ship. There is, therefore, no ground for protest against their removal to St. Helena, either on the part of the Transvaal government or of its sympathizers in Cape Colony. St. Helena is the best place for them and there they will remain until the end of the war.

THE ONTARIO OPPOSITION.

The Ontario opposition appears to be conducted on the principle that anything that will injure or defeat the provincial government is a good weapon to use, quite irrespective of the principle involved. On Wednesday last a notable instance of this occurred when a motion was brought up by a private member for the purpose of reopening a case which had been decided many years ago in the time of Sir Oliver Mowat. A man named William A. Scott was proceeded against for making illegal returns of pine and other timber cut by him during the years 1865 to 1871 inclusive, and after a long investigation by the Crown Lands Department of Ontario, by a commission and finally by Sir Oliver Mowat, a fine of \$2,000 was imposed and collected. Scott is now dead, and his family are now moving to have part of this fine refunded on the ground that it was excessive. At their instance a motion was made in the legislature to appoint a select committee to inquire into the charges against Scott, and as it was sprung suddenly on the government and received the support of several Liberal whose sympathies had been worked upon, and of the entire opposition headed by Mr. Whitney, it was carried. Here we have a man who expects some day to be leader of a government, using all his influence with his party to reopen a case which was decided almost thirty years ago, and that for no other purpose than to embarrass the government. There could not be a better proof of the entire unfitness of the Ontario Conservatives to be entrusted with power.

DOWN ON DEWEY.

Admiral Dewey does not seem to be making substantial headway in his candidacy for the presidential chair. His free and easy announcement that he was willing to be a candidate of either party has not strengthened his position, and the tone of American comments to hand are distinctly hostile. Most of the journals talk lightly of the admiral, which is, to say the least, very sharply in contrast with the ecstatic encomiums heaped upon him a month or two ago. The "greatest hero of history" seems suddenly to have become the laughing stock of his whitish worshippers. Sic transit gloria mundi. While moralizing upon the uncertainty of popular admiration, we cannot fail to see the whimsical side of Admiral Dewey's character as revealed by this new ambition. It suggests the question of what qualities should be conspicuous in the make-up of the executive head of a great nation like the United States. "The Nation" in a recent issue, discusses this matter in a broad spirit. "What must be the qualities," it asks, "possessed by a man fit and able to come forward to put back the American presidency on its old pedestal? Evidently, no mere hero will do. We are glad to believe that Americans now take their hero-worship more easily; that we shall not easily make again the mistake of supposing that a successful military commander will be a successful president. The military habit as such is a distinct handicap in the White House. No man is fit for civic training which the times now call for more loudly than ever as we are invited to rescue us from our present choice of evils. He must be, distinctly, an

old American—not one of our heady new Americans, forgetful of the principles in which our institutions are rooted, and carried about by every wind of imperialist doctrine. He must be for sound money and a pure civil service. He must be a man of rugged, four-square build, able to resist the 'ardor civium prava juben-tum.' If ex-Speaker Reed were a presidential possibility, he would illustrate these necessary qualities. Even now, if he had it in his mind to put himself at the head of the dissatisfied, the disgusted, the independent voters of the country, we do not doubt that he would soon display formidable strength. At any rate, he would be a candidate for whom men could vote with respect both for themselves and for the office of president; and would at least meet that longing which we are convinced is widespread throughout the land, and which Admiral Dewey's entering the lists has but served to accentuate—a longing for a full-blooded man in the presidency, to restore it to the honorable position of an elder day." Such criticism cannot be regarded as helpful to the gallant admiral.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

The return of famine in India after so many previous famines in recent years is a disquieting circumstance, and one which seems to demand the best thought of the British people and parliament for the purpose of devising a suitable remedy. It was thought that by a large expenditure on irrigation works and the building of railways through the districts usually affected by famine all danger from that source had been removed, but the present famine seems to be even more widespread than its immediate predecessor and the latter was one of the worst on record. There does not appear to have ever been an actual shortage of food in India taking the country as a whole, even in the famine years, but food was short in certain localities, some of which were not easily reached for the purpose of relieving the scarcity. In other words while India as a whole is able to provide its own food and something more certain districts are too densely peopled and cannot always be counted on to produce sufficient food for their inhabitants. British India has an area of 1,500,000 square miles and a population of 300,000,000. That is less than 200 persons to the square mile, a number exceeded by many European countries. But India contains much waste land, large areas of mountains in its northern districts and also large areas of jungle or forest. The mountain districts have but little land suitable for cultivation, while the jungle is of course incapable of producing anything in the shape of human food that is reclaimed. In the cultivated districts of India therefore the population is greatly congested, and it would seem that the only remedy for famine is the removal of a part of the population to other districts that are less densely peopled. If after providing every appliance necessary to irrigate the land and guard against drought the famine still prevails a removal of a part of the population would seem to be the only remedy. Yet such a remedy will be most difficult to apply especially in India, where caste has so much potency and where large classes refuse to associate with each other.

BRIBING THE CONSTITUENCIES.

It is well known that prior to the last general election Sir Charles Tupper exacted every means in his power to obtain a majority and a return to power. Every source from which money could be extracted was drawn upon; contracts for large amounts of supplies were entered into with wealthy contractors and promises of subsidies were made to new railway companies to secure their influence and support. A great deal of amusement was caused in the House the other day by the reading by Mr. Blair of a form of circular letter which was sent by Mr. Haggart, then minister of railways. This circular was drawn up by Mr. Dickey, then minister of justice, and it was thought would be efficient for the purpose of stimulating the energies of those who were public officials who did not dare to disobey the government's orders. This government having done all the damage he could to British interests in the West Indies is going back to England to remain, and it is to be hoped that no more of his kind will be sent out to any colonial possession. The British government should exercise more care in the selection of its governors and not appoint men to important positions who will be likely to thwart by their actions what is now the aim of all good men, the unity of the Empire.

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION.

From time to time those distinctive tenets of faith which bear the name of Calvin form the subject of bitter controversy among ecclesiastics, or in the courts of the church holding to those particular doctrines. Dr. N. D. Hillis, who recently succeeded to the pulpit of Plymouth church in Brooklyn, has aroused a great deal of public interest in a sermon respecting predestination. The element of heresy enters into the discussion from the fact that Dr. Hillis was at the time a member of the Chicago Presbytery, although his name has since been struck from the rolls. What he said in the sermon which has given rise to so much debate and comment was this: "On one page Jonathan Edwards says: 'God holds the unworshipper over the pit as a loathsome insect over the fire, and from time to time the generation in darkness fades, without thought, without belief, without religion, are swept into the future as the housewife lifts the lid from the glowing coals and sweeps flies into the flame.' And today one of our great & distinguished still holds that the tremendous statement in its confession of

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THE TRINIDAD ARRANGEMENT.

It is well to remember and we trust that the attention of the British government will be called to the fact that the proposed tariff arrangement between Canada and Trinidad which would have operated so beneficially to both countries was defeated by the efforts of the governor of Trinidad, an imperial officer, and one whose sentiments ought certainly to have been in favor of an intercolonial arrangement rather than one with a foreign country. In Trinidad the system of government is similar to that which prevailed in these provinces a century ago; the governor is an autocrat, the members of the government owe their offices to his favor and therefore are subservient to his wishes. For that reason the vote in favor of a tariff arrangement with the United States rather than with Canada, which was taken in the Trinidad council was not a free vote because nine out of the twelve who formed the majority were public officials who did not dare to disobey the government's orders. This government having done all the damage he could to British interests in the West Indies is going back to England to remain, and it is to be hoped that no more of his kind will be sent out to any colonial possession. The British government should exercise more care in the selection of its governors and not appoint men to important positions who will be likely to thwart by their actions what is now the aim of all good men, the unity of the Empire.

BAD GOVERNMENT MATERIAL.

Under the heading "A hint to Sir Charles," the Montreal Star warns the leader of the opposition that in the event of the Conservatives being successful at the next general election there will be an "absolute necessity for improvement in the personnel of the next Conservative cabinet." Sir Charles is told that the electors are growing independent and will not tolerate any more nonsense. "Sir John A. Macdonald, by continuous years of leadership of a dominant party, had become so strong that he could afford to take some weak men into his cabinet and count on the electors condoning it. Not so with the new leader. The very best material must be chosen by Sir Charles if he wins and if he hopes to retain public confidence. It would be well for Sir Charles Tupper to rise to the fact that he must have a clean government and a capable government or it will not last. The electors of Canada are in the humor to let party leaders know that they will not tolerate bad men." This article is double leaded and therefore intended to attract an unusual share of public attention. The "hint" to Sir Charles might have been sent to him in a private letter, but it would not have been known to the public if this had been

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

When the Conservatives of Montreal tell Sir Charles that the genius of administration is all on one side, they accomplish the double purpose of flattering their leader and amusing everybody else. The opposition are seeking to make a point out of the fact that the imports of binder twine rose from \$27,000 in 1895, to \$818,000 in 1899. When the Liberals were in opposition they repeatedly moved that binder twine should be on the free list. When they came into power they put it on the free list, and the larger importation shows that the change accomplished the purpose in view. The farmers of Canada have got the benefit, and the Tories ought not to complain, since it was Sir John Thompson who started the manufacture of this product in the penitentiaries. An extreme rigor is sure to arm every thing against it.—Burke.