

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

The Death of Prince Henry.

Prince Henry Maurice of Battenberg, the husband of Her Majesty's youngest daughter, the Princess Beatrice, is the only victim of the British expedition to Coomasie. The unfortunate Prince was stricken down with malarial fever at Nyissa and died on his return from Cape Coast Castle to Sierra Leone. Major-General Sir Francis Scott, the head of the Gold Coast police, who commanded the expedition, had appointed Prince Henry his Military Secretary. It will be remembered that the Queen and other members of the Royal family were much opposed to the Prince taking part in the expedition. It was only on accepting certain conditions that he obtained permission to go. The remembrance of the unhappy fate of the Prince Imperial in the Zulu campaign no doubt made the Queen and the Princess Beatrice dread his departure. Her Majesty and the Princess have the heartfelt sympathy of the whole Empire in their great affliction.

A Grave Mistake.

It is a mistake for Conservatives to try to force the Liberal party into taking up a position that may appear to be either pro-American or anti-English. The attempt to turn the present strained relations between the Empire and the neighbouring Republic into some party advantage cannot be too strongly condemned. There is something very small and low in trying to make political capital out of the loyalty cry. It must be a weak cause which rests for support on a foundation such as that. We do not know that Conservatives are any more loyal than Liberals. They talk more about it, but that is of very little significance. For the Conservatives to say that Liberals are not loyal to British connection and institutions is to say that half Canada is disloyal, and that would be ludicrously untrue. We have every confidence in Mr. Laurier's loyalty, and in that of the great party of which he is the honoured leader. Were this country to be involved in war with the United States, which God forbid, we are assured that Mr. Laurier would be the first to declare that all party differences should cease and that the Government would receive the active support of himself and all his followers.

Preferential Trade.

On Monday last Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., addressed the Montreal Board of Trade on the question of preferential trade between Great Britain and her Colonies. Canada is more than willing to discriminate in favour of the Mother Country in matters of trade. Both Liberals and Conservatives are at one on this question. It remains only for England to say the word, and preferential trade would be an accomplished fact so far as Canada is concerned. But it has been generally supposed here that Great Britain is too much wedded to the principle of free trade ever to be induced to consent even to the very mild form of protection which preferential trade would involve. However, Sir Charles read copious extracts from recent speeches of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Goschen to show that there was some indication that Great Britain was beginning to realize that she had deliberately stripped herself of her armour by adopting a free trade policy. Protectionist notions, as The Globe points out, have several times been imputed to the Premier of Great Britain, but he has always taken pains to repudiate them. But it is important and encouraging to note that Lord Salisbury has stated in a letter which Sir Charles read at the meeting that preferential duties in favour of the Colonies could not properly be described under the term protection. The imposition therefore of a duty of, say, ten per cent. in favour of the Colonies would not mean the abandonment of the British principle of free trade. This opinion is by no means generally accepted, but it appears to be making appreciable headway. There is another obstacle: the unlucky and antiquated Belgian and German treaties which appear to prevent England from making any preferential arrangement with her Colonies. But there is every reason to hope that the elimination of the Colonial clause from these treaties is not impossible. A little firmness and tact on the part of England would have much effect. With respect to the great Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire to be held in London next June, all Canadians heartily agree with Sir Charles Tupper in the hope that Canada will have as large and as able a representation as possible from all the Boards of Trade throughout this wide Dominion. The first question that will receive attention at the Congress will be the commercial relations of the Mother Country and her Colonies.

National Spirit.

Some well-meaning people have been shaking their heads over THE WEEK of late. They say that this paper is pervaded by a spirit of jingoism. This arises from the inability of certain people to distinguish between jingoism and a proper and becoming national spirit. We are as much opposed to the travesty of national spirit and national self-respect known as jingoism as are any of our critics. The fact is that if anyone gives expression to sentiments in favour of putting an end to the country's present helpless condition in the way of means for resisting a possible invasion; if the better equipment and enlargement of the militia forces are advocated with earnestness; if it is remarked that the Americans are not all animated by the friendliest of feelings for Canada and the Empire, and that it is best to recognize the fact,—if one ventures