

patriotism. True, it is stated in the press despatches that the action of the commander in question has received the official approval of the President and his Cabinet, but this may be capable of other explanation, such as the alleged need of protection for the persons and property of American citizens. It seems highly improbable that the Government would be so blind to the seriousness of the movement, or so reckless of possible consequences as to commit themselves thus hastily to a policy which must almost inevitably bring them into contact with two or three great European powers. The game could hardly be worth the candle to the United States, while the importance of preserving their treaty rights in the only coaling station available in the mid-Pacific renders it impossible for those powers to regard the coup with the indifference with which it might otherwise be viewed. For the same reasons which make it exceedingly unlikely that the Harrison Administration has committed itself to the extent indicated, it is incredible that the statement ascribed to one of the self-constituted commissioners touching the alleged favourable reply received from President-elect Cleveland to a telegraphed question concerning his attitude toward annexation can be correct. Even Republican presidents usually have a sense of responsibility which prevents them from pronouncing upon such questions, off hand, by telegraph.

Should the event prove, as is nevertheless possible, that the Hawaiian revolution so-called, was preconcerted with the advance of the American Government, it is hard to believe that the American people would sanction a policy which is so completely at variance with all their historical principles and traditions. Without hazarding a conjecture regarding the extent to which Great Britain and Germany and other maritime powers interested would go to hinder the consummation of the scheme, the American people themselves would not be slow to see all that would be involved in it. It would mark the initiation of a new and sudden departure from the old paths of peaceful progress, and the launching out of the Republic upon the stormy waters of European politics. It would introduce an era of aggression and attempted national aggrandisement, for which there could be found abundant precedents in the history of every old world nation, Great Britain not excepted, but which is diametrically opposed to what has hitherto been best in American statesmanship. It would vitiate all that is grandest in the history and influence of the great American Republic, and destroy the force of the great objection which she has hitherto set before the military nations. In such matters it is the first step that counts. Having once set aside her traditional policy and taken possession of a country separated from her shores by thousands of miles of ocean, she would have taken the fatal plunge, into a troubled sea with which it has hitherto been the pride and boast of her people that they have nothing to do. The better and more thoughtful classes in the Republic will think more than twice before consenting to take such a leap.

The not unexpected death of Mr. Blaine has removed from the arena of American politics one who, by the force of his na-

tive ability, and scarcely less by the subtlety of his methods, has long been one of its most masterly if at times rather uncertain forces. Modern history contains the names of few men of influence, who have played a prominent part in the political history of their day, concerning whom there has been room for wider differences of opinion after their departure from the stage. That he possessed an intellect of great force and keenness is perhaps the one point in regard to which admirers and detractors are pretty well agreed. Mr. Blaine was patriotic, too, after his fashion, but his patriotism was not of the lofty and generous type which commands admiration abroad as well as at home. He failed to rise to the broader cosmopolitanism which is the highest glory of statesmanship, and is yet quite compatible with the truest patriotism. Probably the greatest blemish in a character which contained many admirable qualities was that absence of perfect frankness which makes it sometimes impossible for those with whom such an one has dealings, to feel confident of his absolute sincerity. It is just possible that injustice was done Mr. Blaine in this respect, but it can hardly be denied that his political opponents in his own country, no less, perhaps even more than the representatives of foreign nations with whom he had dealings, often felt themselves impelled to be suspicious, if not of sinister motives, at least of designs which did not appear upon the surface of his words and actions. Unless we greatly misread the facts connected with some phases of his career, this very tendency to undue reticence was the chief obstacle to his attainment of the one distinction which seemed to be the ambition of his life, the Presidency. There was, it seems to us, at least one crisis in his eventful career, when perfect frankness with the people would have won him success, while hesitancy, whether natural or assumed, brought defeat. It is easy to misjudge motives, and it is quite possible that what to onlookers took on the guise of diplomacy so subtle that it over-reached itself, may have really been but the weakness of over-caution, or of native indecision. In either case, it cost him the national supremacy which the manly straightforwardness of a Phillip Brooks superadded to his own commanding talents, would almost surely have won for him.

#### A NEW ERA IN CANADIAN POLITICS.

The revolt of Mr. Dalton McCarthy, Col. O'Brien, and others of the old-time adherents of the Conservative party marks the beginning of a new era in Canadian politics. It emphasizes the fact that the prestige of the dead Chieftan will no longer suffice to overawe some of those who, so long as his hand was upon the helm were content to be but a too subservient crew. It proclaims that the key of the past is rusted and will not avail to open the portals of the future policy of the Canadian Dominion. The new men whom circumstances have brought to the front will be obliged to reckon on at least a heavy discount from the party loyalty of their supporters. They must needs find some more potent words to conjure with than the old policy, or even the old flag, if they are to prolong their lease of office beyond the next general election. This is

not a surprising development. It was under the circumstances inevitable, and was foreseen by many at the time of Sir John MacDonald's death. And it is desirable and right. "New occasions bring new duties," and no one whose eyes are open to what is going on about him can doubt that the new occasions have come to Canada. The almost universal discontent and depression among our people, especially among the farmers, who are and ever must be the bone and sinew of our country's strength and progress, on the one hand, and the reaction against high tariffs and protectionism which is so marked among our neighbours and so rapidly spreading among our own people, on the other, make it clear to every citizen not blinded by self-interest, or biased by partizanship, that the time has come for a reconsideration of the whole question of Canada's political future, above all of her fiscal policy.

In so saying we do not forget that Mr. McCarthy showed dissatisfaction with some features of his party's policy even before the great force of Sir John MacDonald's personality was taken out of Canadian public life, though it is probably not too much to say that had Sir John Thompson been in Sir John's place at an earlier period, Mr. McCarthy's final break with the party would have come earlier. His restlessness was, even in the days of the old leader, partly, no doubt, the outcome of the struggle between conscience and personal and party loyalty, in the bosom of an honest man. Partly, we fear, it may have been due to a less worthy influence, unconsciously begotten of intense partisan feeling of another kind which we may call semi-religious conviction—we hesitate to use the word prejudice. To this feeling on his part and that of others the abortive "Equal Rights" agitation was in a large measure due. Nor are we disposed to attach overmuch importance, so far as any direct results are concerned, to the new stand which Mr. McCarthy has now so boldly taken. Without disparagement of his acknowledged ability, it must be said that there is a weakening admixture of the personal element in the affair. His new departure is not sufficiently broad-based upon a clear political or economic principle to enable him to gather about him on the cross benches the nucleus of a powerful new party. As a protest against political meanness and trickery, and a testimony in favour of scrupulous honour and integrity in the administration of the greatest of all popular trusts, the position he has now taken, even tardily, is worthy of all praise. But political morality, though it is the very foundation stone of all true statesmanship and all genuine patriotism, cannot become the peculiar possession of any national party, much less be made the basis of a party policy. The question of provincial rights, in connection with the Separate schools and dual language questions in Manitoba and the North-West may it is true, yet become an issue in Canadian politics in a way which will cause it to mark a plane of cleavage between two new parties, reconstructed out of the elements of the old ones. But let us hope that better counsels may prevail and the country be spared a struggle which, assuming as it would most certainly do, a religious aspect, would be sure to be