

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

The Cattle Business.

On Tuesday Mr. Montague and Mr. Long discussed the much-talked-about cattle bill now before the Imperial House of Commons. Mr. Long informed our Minister of Agriculture that the agrarian community of the United Kingdom was strongly in favour of the principle of the bill, and that the Government would be compelled to consult the interests of the farmers. Mr. Long assured Mr. Montague that he would personally have been pleased had a decision more favourable to Canada been possible, as he not only recognized the important position occupied by Canada in the Empire, but was proud of the part that the Dominion had taken in recent trying times. He hoped and believed that the bill would not be prejudicial to the interests of Canada. Had the Dominion Government been a little more active in the matter this bill would probably never have been brought before the House.

The case of Dr. Sproule.

Sir Charles Tupper, Bart., has announced in the House that he no longer regards Dr. Sproule, the member for East Grey, as among the "warm and determined supporters of the Government." The country will not approve of Sir Charles' action in this matter. Dr. Sproule is quite justified in taking the stand he has. If members are to be read out of the party simply because they cannot always agree with their leaders, so much the worse for the party. Dr. Sproule has been a member of the House of Commons for eighteen years and is as consistent a Conservative as any of those who form the Administration. When the Cabinet find such honourable and prominent men as Mr. McNeill and Dr. Weldon opposing their measures it is time the Ministers paused ere they slap in the face other members of the party who see as Mr. McNeill and Dr. Weldon see. Mr. McNeill declares that he will not be read out of the party even by Sir Charles Tupper, and claims with truth that he is as good a Conservative as the leader of the House. This declaration will find a hearty response throughout Canada, and will be emphasized strongly when Mr. McNeill is returned at the head of the polls in his constituency at the coming elections.

Something Sensible.

On the fifteenth of June the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire opens in London, and those Canadian Boards of Trade who intend sending delegates—it is to be hoped the intention is general—should give close and immediate attention to the consideration of the subjects to be discussed. Each one of the four chief subjects—commercial relations between England and her Colonies, inter-Colonial trade relations, cable and steamship communication—are of immense and pressing importance to Canada. As there is nothing about Separate Schools or Roman Catholics in these subjects it is not to be expected that much interest will be taken in them here; but it is to be hoped that the officers of the Boards of Trade will manage to secure one or two meetings for the discussion of the objects of the Congress.

Berthelot's Resignation.

M. Berthelot, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for France, has resigned, and the Premier has taken charge of his portfolio. So far as we can learn, the immediate cause of the resignation was the exception taken to M. Berthelot's action by the Premier touching the matter of Egyptian affairs. It is claimed that the Minister allowed himself to be the "dupe" of Lord Salisbury in carrying out the latter's policy, his action resulting in the restoration of the Dreibund at the moment when it was likely to be broken up. But it is also claimed that M. Berthelot resigned his portfolio because he felt that the policy of his colleagues in the Ministry was contrary to the public welfare. However, his friends state that ill-health was the sole reason for his resignation. The truth seems to be that M. Berthelot is paying the penalty of seeking the friendship of England. He may be a better chemist than he is a diplomat, and his confreres of the Cabinet may have hinted the fact to him, but in cultivating friendly relations with Great Britain he displayed his sound common sense and his superiority to the prevailing and uncalled for hostility to England on the part of his fellow-countrymen. It remains to be seen whether the Premier will make a better Minister of Foreign Affairs than M. Berthelot. M. Bourgeois does not promise to shine in that capacity.

An Intolerable Nuisance.

It is a matter of profound regret that the Winnipeg Conference has been a failure. Under the circumstances no other issue could reasonably be expected, for Manitoba could scarcely regard as "conciliatory" the advances made by the Dominion Government whilst the Remedial Bill was still being actively pressed forward in committee. The Bill should have been dropped until the Conference had ended, and it was known whether or not Manitoba had consented to make reasonable