

colonial Commission. While much of Mr. Butler's best work has been done during the past thirty years, he has perhaps as much ahead of him in the operation of the Intercolonial. For nearly thirty years he has been engaged in engineering problems, mainly on railways both in Canada and the United States, but also upon waterworks problems, having been appointed in 1891 chief engineer of the Bay of Quinte Railway and Navigation Company, besides having been assistant engineer in charge of the water service construction of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe in the United States. Having served a term as Deputy Minister of Railways, Mr. Butler was perhaps better qualified than almost any other man to become a member of the Intercolonial Commission. Always aggressive and constructive, he should be able to prove that this particular instance of Civil Service reform is to be well carried out. There is a heap of work to do on the Intercolonial; and in doing this work Mr. Butler and his associates will be too busy dodging the criticisms of party heelers to take much notice of mere titles. However, in his quiet moments it will be some pleasure to Mr. Butler to reflect that he got his share of nominal honours as well as his quota of responsibilities.

REFLECTIONS

GONE is the Imperial Press Conference as many another event has gone, lost in the making, forgotten in the passing. Called together by a bit of a boy with an English accent, a swagger, and a fondness for meeting "big" people, the Press Men of the Empire rallied because it was the First Call. If the Bugler sounded only the notes of a Master, who was that Master? Perhaps it was an accidental inspiration, and there was no master.

Such a gathering must leave its impress. Held

"in the Hall of the Five Free Nations that are peers among their peers"

it attracted the attention of them all. So many representatives cannot gather in one place without focusing the eyes of those represented. The Empire has been listening to the echoes from the meeting-place. It will be an impetus, though perhaps a small impetus, to a better Imperial understanding. It has emphasised Imperial equality, which after all is the main point. The newer nations are asserting their right to be heard as "peers"; the Britisher is slowly coming to admit that right. The younger voices are being heard, though as yet the tones are somewhat subordinated.

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TEN years ago, the opinion of the younger nations counted for little on the Strand and in the Westminster district, but that ten year period has seen a wonderful change. To-day colonial opinion is courted and sought to such an extent that there may be a danger of the younger people talking too much. Imperial Federation is dead; imperial union and equality is a living principle. The household idea has given way to the partnership idea. The service of the future will be a volunteer service, not one based on compulsion or conscription. The new Empire is built upon dreams which are impracticable and impossible.

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LIEUTENANT SHACKLETON is an imperial figure, and Canadians must have been greatly interested in the welcome which London gave him last month. His return from a successful voyage lasting nineteen months was an event of national interest. He planted the Queen's Union Jack 97 miles from the South Pole, discovered the South Magnetic Pole and eight new mountain chains, surveyed 100 mountains, ascended Mount Erebus for the first time, discovered coal and a new coast, and disproved the "Polar Calm" theory. Over snow and ice, with temperatures 70 degrees below zero and blizzards raging 70 miles an hour, he and his men struggled for four long months. His triumph, if not complete, was one of the greatest in the history of brilliant and intrepid exploits.

In all probability, Lieutenant Shackleton will visit Canada some time during the winter. He is coming on a lecture tour through the United States, after his book is written, and will undoubtedly want to see a little of this portion of the Empire. If he comes, he will be warmly welcomed.

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SOME time ago it was mentioned in these columns that the Bell Telephone Company were encouraging rural telephone companies and doing all they could to increase their growth. One periodical had the boldness to challenge the statement. It is surprising how some newspapers take delight in misrepresenting the attitude of large corporations, thinking thereby to serve the interests of the public. Such a notion must be based upon a queer conception of the difference

between right and wrong. The public's best interests cannot be served by denying the meed of just praise to any corporation or any individual.

Undoubtedly the Bell has fought the independent companies and tried to keep its monopoly intact. The rural situation, however, is not involved in such a statement. To-day, the Bell has connections with nearly four hundred companies, with 16,000 subscribers in Ontario and Quebec. It is the announced policy of that company to encourage the independent rural company, for the simple reason that it ultimately means more business for the Bell. The growth of independent rural companies does not mean dual service, and dual service is the only feature which that company fights bitterly.

The rural telephone has come and within five years, it is safe to assert, one-half of the farmers of Canada will have this luxury in their homes. No one company could possibly undertake to build all the required rural lines in that time. They will be sufficiently busy looking after the growth of towns and cities and in providing for the central and long distance services. The Bell has its faults, no doubt, but like most other Canadian corporations it has enough sense not to cut off its nose to spite its face.

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IF any proof is required that the independent companies are just as selfish as the Bell, the following resolution passed at the annual convention of the Canadian Independent Telephone Association, held in Toronto, September 4th, 1907, will suffice:

"That whereas the Bell Telephone Company is proposing long distance connection to local independent companies in various parts of Canada and is offering in consideration therefor to abandon the local field in certain sections, and whereas it is the opinion of this convention that any such connection is bound to injure the independent telephone cause as a whole;

"Therefore, be it resolved that this association frowns upon and denounces any such affiliation or connection of independent telephone companies with the Bell Company anywhere in Canada as being injurious to the people as a whole; and that this Association endorses the action of the International Telephone Association, held in Chicago on June 4th of this year, in respect to such arrangements."

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THE latest talk in Toronto is about "tubes." The International Council of Women has adjourned, and Controller Hocken with good journalistic sense chose the succeeding lull in which to make his radical suggestion. He wants to have the authorities investigate the possibility of running the street-car traffic underground in the central portion of the city as is done in Boston, New York, London and other large cities. Speed, comfort and economy are the advantages; the expense is the disadvantage. However, Canada is "looking up" when it possesses a city which is more or less seriously considering underground railways.

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THE city of St. John has issued a report of the shipping which left that port in the six months, November to May. During the season of 1895-1896, there were 22 boats which cleared from that port, and these had a total tonnage amounting to 50,892. In the season which has just closed there were 108 sailings and the total tonnage of the vessels was 474,620. This is a marvellous growth. In ten years the value of the exports for the same period has grown from seven million dollars to twenty-four and a half millions.

One feature of these figures is worth noticing. Of this twenty-four and a half million exports, the manufacturers of Canada supplied only two and a half millions. This is not a great showing. The products of the farm, forest, cheese factory and creamery formed the bulk of the shipments.

THE LIBERATED JOURNALIST

MR. JULES FOURNIER is not the first man to find a term of gaol experience the way to glory. After a brief sojourn in Quebec, where he enjoyed government hospitality in restricted quarters, as a penalty for criticising the administration of justice, Mr. Fournier arrived in Monteval on the last day of June to find himself a popular hero. Ten thousand perspiring citizens assembled in his honour and assured him that he is the Gallic equivalent of "a jolly good fellow." There was a mighty gathering at the St. James' Market Square and Mr. Fournier, Editor of the *Nationaliste*, accompanied by Mr. Henri Bourassa, that lover of freedom undefiled, was the centre of popular enthusiasm. Mr. Fournier, with the modesty which so frequently distinguishes the man of renown, disclaimed the ovation