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CURRENT TOPICS.

After a struggle, probably unexampled in the history of colonial self-government, the Newfoundland Legislature has closed its session. The net result is that the new Government is fairly in the saddle and likely to remain so, though there must be many by-elections to be held. The White-way Administration is, we judge, utterly discomfited. Its leaders are not only unseated but disqualified, for corrupt practices. Thus the somewhat high-handed course of the Governor, in retaining the new Government in office notwithstanding its lack of a Parliamentary majority, seems to be justified by the event. Whether there is any truth in the rumour which credits the victorious party with a design to bring the Island into the Canadian Confederation remains to be seen. It is quite as likely, perhaps, that the rumour was set in motion as an additional means of discrediting the new

Government, for there is no evidence, so far as we are aware, to show that the masses of the people have changed their minds in regard to this matter. Nor does it seem probable that the Dominion Government would be anxious to encourage such a movement at the present time, when the controversy with France is still unsettled, and apparently as far from settlement as ever.

If President Cleveland has sent a message of recognition and congratulation to the Government of Hawaii, under the new constitution, he must have done it purely on the *de facto* principle. Otherwise it is impossible to reconcile his action with the position he has previously taken on behalf of the rights of the native Hawaiians. He must congratulate the officers of the new Government on having, in proclaiming the new Constitution, done, as the *Nation* puts it, the same thing for which they had dethroned the Queen. Moreover, the new republic will be, in many respects, very much of the Spartan type. The native Hawaiians will be ruled by an oligarchy of wealthy foreigners. The constitution of the Senate assures this. It is made the repository of real power in the State, and the property qualification for membership is put so high that it is sure to be dominated by the few wealthy people in the Islands. This Senate elects the President. When it is not in session the ruling power is in the hands of a council of state which is virtually autocratic. A unique and most remarkable provision of the Constitution is that which provides that if the Legislature should at any time refuse to vote salaries to Government officials, the Minister of Finance shall go on paying them just the same. Apart from the fact that it is obviously intended to give the rule of the country completely into the hands of foreigners, the Constitution contains some wise innovations, such as those which constitute the Supreme Court sole judge in disputed elections to either House, make the President not eligible to re-election, and require a majority of the whole House and not simply a majority of the members present, in order to the passing of any law.

The *Canadian Gazette* complains, with apparent cause, that the Dominion Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Colonization, in discussing the question of child-immigration, did not take the trouble to acquaint itself with the facts. For in-

stance, a suggestion that when a youth taken to Canada under the auspices of one of the child-emigration agencies had been convicted in Canada of a second offence, he should be returned to Great Britain at the expense of the agency which sent him out, was received with warm approval. "If" says the *Gazette*, "the members had taken a little trouble to inquire as to the facts, they would have learnt that such agencies as Dr. Barnardo controls do not wait for a second offence, or, indeed, for any offence at all. If a young immigrant belies his former credentials, and proves unworthy of Canadian citizenship, he is at once brought back to this country." The *Gazette* reasonably concludes that Canadian members of Parliament are in need of more light on the subject and suggests that, instead of sending circulars to the Reeves of the principal municipalities throughout Canada, in which child-immigrants have been located, the Government should be asked to appoint one or two competent and reliable commissioners to enquire into the whole subject and report. We are persuaded that a good deal of prejudice exists in the minds of many in regard to this matter. We have yet to learn of any distinct evidence to prove that the children sent out by these agencies contain a larger percentage of failures than would be found in the same number of Canadian children taken at random from the streets or homes of our towns and cities. The prejudice is probably fostered by the scientific tendency in these days to make altogether too much of heredity as a determinant of character.

There has of late seemed to be some reason to fear that we were on the eve of an outcry for retrogression in the work of public school education. Because there are evidences of over-competition in clerical and other pursuits requiring a little better education than the average, and popularly supposed to be easier, or more lucrative, or more genteel, than farming and other forms of manual labour, some of the newspapers from which better things might have been expected have actually begun to cry out that our people—themselves and their families we presume excepted on some principle not quite apparent—are getting too much schooling. They are thereby being unfitted, we are told, for those industrial pursuits in which most of them will of necessity have to find the means of livelihood. We have before expressed our views in regard to the opinion that ignorance and torpidity of