

be true, as alleged, that Mr. Chamberlain favors the direct representation of Newfoundland, some way of doing it may found.

A semi-official programme of the subjects which a Royal Commission for Newfoundland is required to consider almost appals us with its length. If England is asked to appoint a commission, it is because she is directly interested in several of the matters which would figure in the subjects of enquiry. Some of the questions which Newfoundland desires to have brought before the commission are purely imperial; others mixed, others again purely local. Of this first class is the fortifying of St. John's and the conversion of its port into a naval station. A training ship in Newfoundland waters might, as a matter of theory, be the work either of the colony or the mother country, but practically, the colony in her present condition, could hardly be expected to undertake the work, while England might find the use of this agency valuable for the recruiting of her navy. The enforcement of the treaties with France which affect Newfoundland is an Imperial duty; and the time seems to have come when the strict limitation of French rights to the four corners of these instruments should be enforced on these limits; on the desirability of enforcing their strict observance, there have, in the past been differences of opinion between the colonists and the British Government. The completion of a railway across the island creates a new condition, which calls, among other things, for proper terminal facilities. Under the treaties, the French fishermen must not be interfered with; but, on the other hand they have no right to put up permanent structures on the land. If the limitations of the treaty are to be observed, the observance must be mutual. That St. Pierre has become a smuggling centre is beyond doubt, and it is time the nuisance was abated. Here Canada is interested. For this purpose, the Newfoundlanders ask for the assignment of a British consul to the French island, and the request is not unreasonable. There may be some evils which it is impossible to cure. If France insists on continuing the fishery bounties, we know no way of preventing her; whether it is possible to get such an arrangement for the admission of Newfoundland fish into the United States as Norway has made, the International Commission may be able to discover. But it is always desirable to remember that treaties can be made only with the consent of two countries. Whether Newfoundland should have an agent in England, as so many other colonies have, is a matter of which the adjustment ought not to be difficult. On purely domestic concerns, the fortune of the island is in its own hands. One thing appears obvious to an outsider; that too exclusive a reliance has hitherto been placed on the fisheries, with results disastrous to the well-being of the colony.

As a reverberation of the session, is heard, on the plains of Manitoba, the voice of a member of the House of Commons, Mr. Richardson, laden with reminiscences of tariff promises and tariff policy. If, as it apparently was, provoked by a speech of the member for Centre Toronto, the enquiry forces itself on us, why was it not delivered in the arena where the speech to which it is a reply was uttered? The orator has learnt the lesson of sowing his seed on ground prepared to receive it. Mr. Richardson recalls some tariff promises of the Premier and contrasts them with the performance, not in anger, but to show the danger of deviations between promise and performance. The occasion of the speech to which this is a reply was the tariff policy that ought to rule in the international com-

mission. When the Government is told that they must not touch the ark of protection, which they were certainly not elected to preserve, Mr. Richardson thinks it time to recall, without malice or rancour, with reluctance attested by delay, pre-election promises. The significance of the incident is that this disposition is likely to grow as time goes on and another election approaches. It will be interesting to note the precise shape which the tariff question will take when that time arrives.

The destruction of Cervera's fleet outside the harbor of Santiago brings us to a crisis in the war, from which peace ought to spring. For the present the sea-power of Spain is practically at an end. If the remaining squadron, which recently left Cadiz, should come into contact with Dewey's or Sampson's fleet it would probably share the fate of those which disappeared in the harbor of Manila and off Santiago. The chief stronghold of Spain in Cuba, Havana, is yet untouched, it is true, and its capture would by no means be easy, but it would be accomplished, at whatever cost. It is difficult to see that Spain has anything to gain by continuing the hopeless contest, while it is pretty certain that the longer she continues the war the more difficult will it be to secure terms of peace. Her great defect has been that she has not been able to govern Cuba to the advantage of the population of the island, and there is no reason to think that she would do so in the future. Spain is practically bankrupt and cannot continue the war with the remotest chance of defending herself and her colonies against the colossal power of the United States. She has made a gallant defence of Santiago; her honor is vindicated, and she ought now to seek terms of peace.

At last the United States Congress has resolved to annex the Sandwich Islands. This marks the progress which the imperialistic idea is making. It is doubtful if this would have happened if the war with Spain had not broken out. Not that there is any direct connection between the two events; the war has fostered the imperial spirit. What is to be done with the territorial conquests when the question of making peace comes? The idea that they should all be retained is the one that gains strength, and is likely to get uppermost in the end. Spain has thrown away magnificent opportunities, both in Cuba and the Philippines, and her day in both draws near a close. An energetic people of 70,000,000 like those of the United States were not likely to remain contented with the isolation which they have hitherto worshipped with a curious superstition. The danger is that once the thirst of expansion becomes a national passion it may run riot, and not observe bounds of reason or prudence.

THE FRIGHTFUL DISASTER AT SEA.

Fog was primarily responsible for the collision which sank the French liner "La Bourgogne," with over 500 passengers on board, early on the morning of Monday last. If the fog-horns on both vessels had blown continuously would the disaster have been avoided? There will doubtless be an investigation into this and other matters, and if report be true, great culpability on the part of the crew of the lost steamer after the collision, will call for severe correction. The vessel, on her way from New York to France, was about one hundred miles from Halifax when the "Cromartyshire" struck "La Bourgogne." And then began a scene which, to the honor of human nature, does not often occur. In the struggle for existence the strong