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Western Autonomy.

PREMIER ROBLIN of Manitoba recently discussed at a public banquet the question of autonomy for the Northwest Territories and the interest of Manitoba in the settlement of the terms. The Dominion government has invited the Haultain executive at Regina to send representatives to Ottawa next month to discuss the matter. They came here three years ago and discussed the matter then with a subcommittee of Council, so that this invitation does not necessarily imply immediate settlement. The questions involved are so important that some considerable time should elapse after the publication of whatever agreement maybe outlined before taking steps to put it into operation. Of course the Laurier government takes pride in "doing things" and it was one of the reasons for its recent great success at the polls. No one would suggest that the Laurier government shrink from a task simply because it is a heavy one, but the matter under discussion is one of no ordinary character and even the strongest Administra-

tion may go to wreck over it. The question at the outset, shall there be one or more provinces created, has been variously answered. In the event of two being erected, how shall the line be drawn, north and south, or east and west, or shall it be drawn with regard to the capabilities of the districts? What control is to be given the new government? Is the Dominion government to withdraw altogether from supervision of that immense tract of country with its Indian population? Will it part with the land, and the timber and the minerals? Manitoba did not get any of these things, and now wants to participate in any readjustment of the relations between the Territories and the Dominion. It has been suggested that Manitoba's western boundary should be extended further west so as to include a portion of East Assiniboia, and it has also been pressed more than once that the province should be extended northward to Hudson Bay, which would involve taking in a small portion of Saskatchewan. Mr. Burrows,

the new federal member for Dauphin, urged this last policy on the local legislature when he was a member of that body, about the year 1899. Premier Roblin is now agitating for the same thing. The Edmonton Bulletin, a paper controlled and edited by Mr. Frank Oliver, another federal member of the new parliament is publishing articles against what it terms the aggrandizement of Manitoba at the expense of the Territories. It looks, however, as if Manitoba has a good claim to be considered and doubtless will be considered if Premier Roblin does not by indiscretions of speech make the federal members antagonistic. Mr. Roblin is essentially an agitator and not always a very wise one.

There are few people we imagine who will be found objecting to the extension of Manitoba to Hudson Bay.

The eastern boundary of the province of Manitoba should have been at Port Arthur, thus giving the people of that province an outlet to the great lakes and in a certain sense to the seaboard. Law and the Judicial Committee determined otherwise, and now that the opportunity offers, the limits of the province should be extended to Hudson Bay and thus afford an outlet to the sea whose usefulness can be settled by a people who are fond of settling things for themselves. If the Hudson Bay route is any good Manitoba and the Territories will demonstrate it in a very short time. It will be a good thing merely to give the western people the pride of country involved in the idea that they have a seaport, and it is understood that the Canadian Northern Railway Co. are prepared to build the railway for which they hold the charter and so give to all energetic people an opportunity for the display of that enterprise which is the dominat-

ing factor at the present time of the present generation.

The following editorial from the Calgary Herald is published in a paper controlled by Mr. J. J. Young, a member of the Territorial Assembly:—

The Dominion Government has notified Premier Haultain that the cabinet will be prepared to begin negotiations looking to the ultimate and early establishment of provincial autonomy the first week in January. A delegation is invited to visit Ottawa at the time for the purpose of arranging details.

This is glad news to the people of the West. Because of the failure in the past to obtain home rule for the Territories there was a serious disposition to question the good faith of ante-election pledges. Now that the practical details are to be disposed of, there is satisfaction throughout the country between Manitoba and the mountains.

Now the chief concern of the people is the terms of admission—the public lands. No question is settled until settled right. Therefore the citizens of the Territories wish nothing less than the assumption that the resources of the country belong to the new province. If this broad aspect appeals to Dominion authorities as strongly as to the West, the minor details will not prove obstacles to an early agreement.

The school question, the division of the Territories, into one or more provinces, or the slicing off of the eastern section and attaching it to Manitoba will all follow as a matter of ordinary details.

It is therefore a matter of first concern that the delegates at the conference representing the Territories have this point established in the primary stage of negotiations.

EVENTS.



THE CENTRE OF ATTRACTION.

Hon. A. G. Blair: Why, why this unsolicited attention? Cannot a plain man live and think no harm?—Saturday Night.

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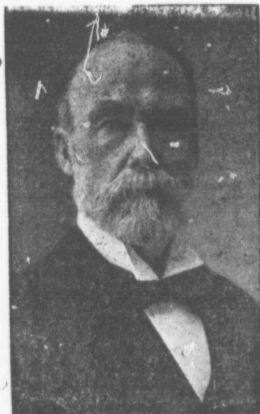
ARNOTT J. MAGURN, Editor

VOL. 6. DECEMBER 17, 1904. No. 25

THE fear is expressed in some quarters that Lord Grey is too active and too keen a man for the position of Governor General to which he has just been appointed, and Canadians are beginning to appreciate the fact that Lord Minto was a pretty good governor. We do not share this fear as to Lord Grey. In the first place he has had a training in the House of Commons and there, if nowhere else, must have learned the principles and acknowledged rules of our system of government. His Excellency is well aware of the duties of the position he has accepted, and in addition he is no stranger to the country and its people. Canada is a self-governed country with a system of responsible government and the ties which bind her to the Mother Country are of such a delicate nature that any indiscretion on the part of the Imperial representative might strain them. We feel sure that Lord Grey can be relied on to fully appreciate the responsible position to which he has been appointed. Lord Minto's term was extended for one year through the influence of Mr. Chamberlain, and he was indiscreet enough at the Barton banquet in Montreal to try and commit this country to Chamberlainism, for which he was publicly criticized. Imperialism or Chamberlainism, or by whatever name it is called, is a political question and the Governor General or Canada has no right to give the weight of his great influence for or against a political question. The main issue involved in Mr. Chamberlain's programme are matters of taxation, and representation, matters essentially political, to be left to the elected representatives of the Canadian people to settle should they ever come before them. Of course the Governor General is entitled by every legitimate means to strengthen the bonds be-

tween Canada and Great Britain, and we may rely on His Excellency's good judgment to employ none but the proper means.

THE Ontario Legislature has been dissolved and a new House will be elected on the 25th inst. This disposes of the question of the bye-elections to the relief of everybody, as they would not have settled the turmoil in Ontario politics which has lasted now for over two years. The Liberals feel as though the Ross government will be sustained, if for no other reason than the extreme weakness of Mr.



Premier Ross

Whitney and the men he has about him. Then Mr. Ross has served the province so long and faithfully that he has a strong personal following which the history of both British and Canadian politics shows counts for a great deal. The general record of the government is good, though the stress and strife of recent elections have led to irregularities which Premier Ross deplored in his Ottawa speech of a few weeks ago. The attempt, however, to connect the Liberal organization in Ontario or the Dominion with the silly and criminal bogus ballot box fiasco in West

Hastings and Frontenac was unsuccessful. The misguided candidates were it is true candidates offering as Liberals and as supporters of the Laurier government. They are now fugitives from justice.

EARL GREY, Canada's new Governor General arrived at Halifax Dec. 10, and was sworn of office the same day. His Excellency arrived at the Capital Dec. 13 and was suitably received. By means of an address from the city council both Lord and Lady Grey were made to feel that in Ottawa they would be at home.

THE question of a parliamentary investigation into the various stories concerning Mr. Blair's resignation, the purchase of different newspapers and other matters connected therewith, has been discussed in the daily press. Just how these matters could be brought before parliament we fail to see. The alleged plot to bribe twenty-five Liberal candidates in the province of Quebec to resign on nomination day and allow Conservative candidates to be returned by acclamation, even if true, is no business with which parliament is concerned, though in such a strange affair one would like to hear the opinion of responsible and experienced public men. One thing is certain, that the whole truth could not be reached in a court of law.

THE first step towards the abolition of the "Upper House" or Legislative Council, has been taken in West Australia. A Bill to provide for a referendum on the question of a Single Chamber Constitution has passed the legislature. At the first General Election of members to the Legislative Assembly, to be held after the passing of this Act, the following questions are to be referred to the electors:

1. Are you in favor of a Single Chamber Legislature for the State?
2. Are you in favor of household suffrage in the election of members in the Legislative Council?

Each voter is to vote by ballot, Yes or No, on the questions submitted.

Another radical change proposed by the labor Government of West Australia is that

the office of State Governor shall be abolished. Fortunately the project cannot in any case be carried into effect without the assent of the Colonial Office, and many good reasons will present themselves at Downing Street for its rejection. British interests can be best served and conserved by adherence to the traditions of our Parliamentary system of government, and it is as well to remember that the dual plan of a lower and an upper House at least affords some security to the British investor in Colonial stocks, and is a check upon the vagaries of irresponsible agitators and frenzied legislators.

TO show the liberality of English public opinion, which indeed is the basis of the success of that nation in colonizing various portions of the earth, the expression of the view of the London Speaker may be quoted on the question of the proposed redistribution of seats for the British parliament. That exponent of the Liberal party in England says: "If Ireland's population has shrunk under our rule that is an argument for strengthening rather than weakening her representation until her grievances receive attention". The Dominion of Canada was large enough and should be generous enough in the case of the small maritime provinces, to allow them to continue to receive their original representation in the federal House of Commons. A member or two more or less in the Canadian Parliament does not matter compared with the humiliation of reducing the representation down almost to the point of zero.

THE Text of the Anglo Russian Convention has been published and contains very little which was not expected though no doubt it disappoints some of the expectations raised by Mr. Balfour's speech. The second Article, in deference to Russian susceptibilities provides that the Commission shall determine whether any blame attaches to either of the contracting parties or to any other nation. No one can object to this provision. We cannot expect that the terms of the Reference should imply that Russia is in fault. Meanwhile Lord

Lansdowne, in a circular issued to ship-owners and chambers of commerce in answer to an inquiry, has warned all whom it may concern that a British shipowner who charters a boat "for such purposes as following the Russian fleet with coal sup-

plies." renders himself liable not only to have his ship captured by the Japanese, but also to be prosecuted by his own Government under the Foreign Enlistment Act.



WAITED TOO LONG.

Political Native (as wave sweeps by him): By the Great Gum Gum, I ought to have gone in on that.—Toronto World.

The South Sea Islander carrying a toboggan-like board may be often seen wading or swimming seaward to meet an unusually large wave. If lucky he throws himself on it at the right moment and rides safely and triumphantly shoreward on its crest.

Canada and Imperial Defence.

THE London Graphic has rediscovered the fact that Canada contributes none of her political taxes for other people to spend. In other words Canada does not contribute to the support of the British navy. It is now reported that the British government has decided to withdraw all warships from North American waters, save one on each seaboard. This step if taken, will be or has been taken without consulting Canada for the reason that these ships are kept in these waters for reasons with which Canada has nothing to do. Their withdrawal would concern Canada quite as much as the posting of them. There is as a rule only one first class cruiser in the lot, and their presence or absence is a matter concerning the policy of a cabinet in London. For Canada to contribute to a fleet over which she had no control would be opposed to the bottom principle of our form of government. Britain does not spend a penny in Canada that is not expended by her own agents and officers without consultation with the Canadian government. The presence on the Pacific coast of a British squadron did not prevent the illegal seizures of Canadian fishing vessels in Bering Sea a few years ago. The London Graphic says that the time of one gunboat of that squadron was devoted last year to fishing patrol. Yes, but not in our interests. It was in pursuance of an arrangement with the United States. All the daily papers a few months ago announced that a British vessel was engaged in protecting United States interests in the seal fisheries, which meant, we presume, that they were jointly engaged in carrying out the Paris award. It is also reported that the British government is reducing its colonial garrisons. The reported reduction is to be from 36,000 to 22,000. Why, England has 74,000 troops in

India, and of the 36,000 spoken of there are more in little Mediterranean islands than in Canada. There are more in Gibraltar than in Canada. Great Britain withdrew her troops from Canada about 1871, more than 30 years ago. She chooses to keep a few hundred men at Halifax treating it as a British fortress. Canada is well able and quite willing to look after Halifax. Halifax is a safe harbor and coaling station for the British navy, and is so used without the slightest reference to Canada. It is what they call a naval base, and if it were not for that British vessels would not be there at all. A Mr. Brassey, speaking at a meeting in England the other day, is reported as saying that of all the colonies Canada was best able to contribute two or three million pounds to the support of the British navy. Of all the "colonies" Canada is best able to mind its own business and Mr. Brassey might well do the same. The British navy is a European affair whose chief strength is devoted to the Far East. Sir William Mulock, Hon. Clifford Sifton and other representative men have recently stated publicly that Canada's true policy is to walk in the path of peace and develop our agriculture and commerce. Commerce needs no protection in time of peace and is always paralyzed in time of war. If England were at war with the United States the British navy would be employed to protect vessels carrying United States goods across the Atlantic because nearly all of such goods are carried in vessels owned in Great Britain. The miscellaneous use of that word "colonies" gives rise to great misapprehension. While a colony in some small sense Canada is a self governed nation of 6,000,000 people, and has power to tax British goods as high as she pleases. To be told by Mr. Brassey that she should take one half of the cus-

tems revenue and give it to Mr. Lytellton, and the other second rate men in the present cabinet at London, or to even first-class men, is a mere impertinence.

The Graphic, which is, like Mr. Brassey, engaged in lecturing Canada says that while Australia contributes about a million dollars to the British navy Canada contributes nothing. The Graphic is laboring under a mistake. Australia contributes nothing to the British navy. The

Commonwealth supports a small squadron composed entirely of old vessels, on the express condition that the squadron does not leave Australian waters. That is not part of a navy under the control of the authorities in London. It is essentially an Australian navy maintained as a matter of policy determined in the legislature of Australia. A Pacific island is, one might be allowed to remark, a slightly different proposition to the Canadian Dominion.

Fuel Oil.

THE full report of the tests made under auspices of the United States navy to determine the relative efficiency of coal and crude petroleum as fuel has just appeared in print. An enquiry equally thorough has never before been made in this country, and much of the information secured will be serviceable to railway companies, owners of merchant steamers and persons who meditate the establishment of power plants either for the generation of electricity or for manufacturing purposes. The relative merits of a variety of burners were also examined by the government and the results obtained increase the practical value of the report.

The experiments were made with a water tube boiler of the kind which has been adopted for cruisers of the Denver class. Coal was used in seventeen and oil in sixty-nine. The average amount of water evaporated by a pound of coal was nine pounds while twelve and a half pounds

were evaporated by the same quantity of petroleum. Weight for weight, then, the latter showed a superiority of about 40 per cent. It should be added that Pocahontas coal and Beaumont oil were employed in these tests. Had either the solid or liquid fuel been of another quality, of course, the ratio would have been different. In determining which is the more economical it is necessary to consider not merely the price at the place of production, but also the cost of transportation to the place of consumption. The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company once operated twenty five freight engines continuously for a month with coal costing \$6.65 a ton, and then for another month with petroleum which was bought at \$1.33 a barrel. It was found that three and a half barrels of the latter (involving an expenditure of \$4.67) would do the work of a ton of the former.

Preference Action in Australia.

ON 17th November a public meeting of citizens in the Melbourne Town Hall adopted resolutions moved by the President of the Chamber of Manufactures and the President of the Trades Hall respectively, cordially approving of preferential relations between the Motherland and Australia, with due regard to the industries of the Commonwealth, and urging Parliament and the Government to take the matter into consideration. Mr. Mauger, Secretary of the Protectionist Association, in seconding the first resolution, said he recognised that some duties should be raised against the foreigner, and some lowered in favor of Great Britain. Mr. Deakin remarked that all nations protected their own people and expanded their markets by commercial treaties, which tended towards peace. The British Empire consisted of a constellation of States, the self-interest of which pointed to the advisability of making a national treaty. It was the interest of every Empire builder to cultivate closer relations with the Empire. Was there, he asked, a man or woman who could contemplate the present relations of the Empire without grave alarm? The finest market for the surplus products of Australia was with that nation with which they desired to be brought into closer relations. Mr. Watson expressed the belief that there was practical

unanimity on the Preferential Question in Australia. There was room on the Preferential platform both for Protectionists and Free traders. The trade of Germany and the United States with British Colonies had increased in a decade from eleven and a half millions to thirty and a half millions, whereas the exports from Great Britain to Australia had dropped from twenty six millions to twenty three millions, and the trade of foreign nations with Australia had risen from six to eleven millions. He advocated the reduction of some duties in favor of Great Britain and the raising of others against the foreigner. It was possible to make valuable concessions, for the list of duty free articles imported into Australia, excluding spirits and narcotics, covered, approximately, half the imports.

The resolutions were telegraphed by the Lord Mayor to Mr. Chamberlain, the following telegram being subsequently despatched to Sir H. Campbell Bannerman:

"Melbourne Town Hall Preferentialist meeting a failure; widely advertised, prominent speakers, under 700 present, one-third votes against. Yesterday workmen's meeting against preference; almost unadvertised; larger attendance; enthusiastic condemnation.—(Signed) HICKFORD President Free Trade."



HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, K.G.
One of the big men opposed to Chamberlainism.

The Railway Rates Question.

THE wrangle in the United States over government regulation of railway rates "is something in which, though he may not at first realize it," says the Providence Journal, "the ordinary man has a livelier personal interest than in almost anything else which is likely to come up for consideration before the 4th of March." Some think the personal interest of this ordinary man should be due to the fact that the railroads are combining into a gigantic trust that will have the entire business of the country at its mercy; others exclaim that the railroads are arteries of trade, carrying life and prosperity to every city and hamlet, and aver that the present movement to "regulate" them will endanger prosperity. The railroads "employ more labor, give life and occupation to more industries, contribute more to general industrial progress, than does any other department of business," declares the Commercial and Financial Chronicle (New York), and the movement to empower the Interstate Commerce Commission to fix railway rates "will endanger the solvency of the railroad systems, and hence, among other disastrous results, interfere with present business activity." The Brooklyn Eagle, too, explains that, far from having any desire to loot the shippers, the railroads "realize that their interests are identical with those of their patrons, that what

damages one injures both, that their welfare is in common."

This picture of peace and good will, is not so apparent to some others. The governors of Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin have united in an appeal to the President to urge restrictive legislation. Governor Cummins of Iowa avers that the railroads, by freight rate favoritism compel the Iowa farmers to send their cattle and hogs to Chicago and Kansas City for packing, thus preventing the development of this industry in Iowa, and encourage the cattle men to send their stock to Nebraska, rather than Iowa for feeding. The Atlanta Journal objects to the railroads' possession of the enormous power to tax commerce without control by the Government, as does also the Chicago Tribune. The Interstate Commerce Law convention, which met in St. Louis a few weeks ago, sent a petition to Congress asking that the railroads be curbed. Several bills already before Congress provide for the granting of more power to the Interstate Commerce Commission, and some believe that one of them may pass the present session. In Canada the Railway Commission is seeing that the schedules of freight are published in the Canada Gazette and an extra of that publication last week contained the classifications of the Grand Trunk and the C.P.R.

Australia Follows Suit.

CANADA'S example in regard to her militia system has been followed by Australia where the general officer commanding has gone back to England and a board with an expert Inspector General appointed. Mr. M'Cay, the Minister for Defence, recently completed a comprehensive scheme of reorganisation. It provides for the institution of a council of experts, the exchange of Australian and Imperial officers for a term of years, improved instruction and equipment of the citizen

forces, the construction of the nucleus of an Australian coastal navy or the protection of the ports and harbours, and co-operation with the Imperial Government in the maintenance of coaling stations. This scheme was denounced by the late commandant, Major General Sir E. T. H. Hutton, before quitting office, on the ground that Australians are as yet incompetent to control their own forces. It was, however, adopted by the House of Representatives on the 25th November.

Electricity as an Anesthetic.

DR. LEDUC, of the Faculte de Medicin in Paris, has found a way of utilizing a current of electricity to produce insensibility, in place of chloroform or ether. A series of experiments on animals, dogs, rabbits and pigeons, where a current of from 10 to 20 volts, alternating 100 to 200 times per second, was directed to the back and top of the head, was found to produce insensibility without harmful results. The success of the experiments so encouraged Dr. Leduc that he determined to try the effect on a human being, choosing himself as the subject. The current pressure was raised to 50 volts. The electrodes wet-

ted with salt water to obtain a good contact, were applied one to the forehead, and the other on the back, in order to act on the brain and spinal cord. The operation lasted about ten minutes at the end of which time insensibility was complete. The doctor says he felt none of the inconveniences which follow the inhalation of chloroform. As soon as the current was cut off the awakening was immediate, coupled with a sensation of vigor. Other experiments are about to be tried, in the hope of arriving at the happy solution of the problem of inoffensive anesthetics.

The Afghan Fron

THERE is one large Indian question which occupies the mind of all who are responsible for the future of India; and it is important to grasp its proportions. The application of Indian economics and the urgent remission of Indian taxation are evidently to be affected by the sense of a new military danger. Mr. Balfour's historical declaration that the British system of defence must be based on the fact of the Russian neighbourhood to that frontier has been followed by an explicit statement from Lord Selborne, who said very truly that he was not going to mince his words. It is therefore important to grasp clearly what is this danger by which statesmen and journalists think it necessary to regulate Britain's defensive policy. How far is this danger imminent? How far is it to be met not by wise policy but by more military expenditure?

Lord Selborne's statement at Bristol was clear, explicit, and, as we shall show in certain important respects, inaccurate. We will begin by reproducing that statement.

"In respect to India we did not require to mince our words. As a business nation dealing with our liabilities we had to recognise facts, and to meet them. We could not disguise from ourselves the great march which of recent years the empire of Russia has taken towards our frontier of India. The time had gone by when Lord Salisbury's witty and wise remarks to consult 'large maps' would suffice. The empire of Russia and of India were now separated only by the independent State of Afghanistan instead of a great tract of almost impassable territory between Afghanistan and the internal military organisation of Russia. We were confronted with the pregnant fact that Russia had two lines of railway terminating on the fron-

tier of Afghanistan, and the distance which separated these from our railway lines was something less than 400 miles. The strength of our army in India must henceforth be governed by that great military fact; and what that fact meant we could realise when we considered what Russian military organisation had been able to achieve in Manchuria at the end of 6,000 miles of railway line, and when we remembered that there were two lines on the railway up to the Afghan frontier, and that the distance thither was far less than it was to Manchuria."

This declaration points to the necessity of strengthening the Indian army on account of the Russian advance on the Afghan frontier, an advance by two lines of railway which are far shorter than the railway to Manchuria. It is quite true that there is now a Russian line of railway from Merv to Kara Tapa on the Afghan frontier. That railway is connected with Tashkend, which is about 1,700 miles from Moscow. European troops can be brought to Tashkend, thence to Merv, and to Kara Tapa. Kara Tapa is thus very much nearer than Manchuria to European Russia. About that railway two things have to be said. One is that the line from Merv to Kara Tapa was built as a retort to our action in carrying our line from Quetta to Chaman. Secondly, that the motive of the Russian line from Tashkend to Merv is not primarily military at all. It is a colonising and commercial railway running through country from which Russia draws her cotton which she wishes to develop.

As to Lord Selborne's second railway we cannot find any evidence that it yet exists. It has been suggested that Russia will build a line from Samarkand to the

Oxus, a distance of 250 miles, which would give her a second railway to the Afghan frontier. But that railway has not yet been begun. Its construction would occupy three or four years.

If this railway were built it would enable the Russians to overrun the plains of Afghan Turkestan, but as a means to a serious southerly advance it is quite impracticable. Only one pass can be kept open in the winter, and it is safe to assert that no Russian army could be carried over the frontier and kept in supplies. No railway will be constructed over the Hindoo Koosh.

One of Lord Selborne's railways may, therefore, be put out of consideration. The only possible line of advance is the railway from Merv to Kara Tapa. That railway might be prolonged to Herat. It would take seven months. It would take less time to extend the line from Chaman to Kandahar. It is only this line of advance that concerns England. And along this route they have the advantage over Russia for it is much easier for Britain to pour men north from Kurrachee than it is for Russia to pour men south from Moscow.

As a matter of fact nobody can seriously consider what this advance would mean without realising that Lord Selborne's 400 miles are no measure at all of the distance that separates India from Russia. First of all the country is overwhelmingly adverse. The Russians would have to strike not in Afghan Turkestan but through the hills. The railway would have to make diversions and pass through Sabzawar and Farah; the country round Herat abounds in fierce rivers, and nobody who has read Colonel Hanna's history of the Afghan war can fail to remember what a part the rivers play in the defence of Afghanistan. If the country is adverse, what of the population? A generation ago Britain found

the Afghans difficult enough in the wars (and to-day the Ameer's force is a most formidable army. When Lord Selborne talks of nothing separating India from Russia but 400 miles and the independent State of Afghanistan, he really means that the Russians can meet the British when they have built and maintained a railway in the country inhabited by the fiercest passion for independence in the world, and made by nature to be its fastness. British failures should be a warning against panic. We were unable to advance beyond Kabul, and when Sir Donald Stewart was consulted about the retention of the province of Kandahar, he replied that the province could not maintain a Russian or British army of occupation of twenty thousand men. How many hundreds of thousands would be needed to build and guard a railway from Herat to Kandahar in those hostile hills? If the reader could imagine an expanse of country as long as from London to Edinburgh, piled up with mountains twice as big as the wildest Swiss ranges, defended by the most virile and stubborn fighters in the world, he would have some conception of the kind of task that has to be achieved before Russia becomes a neighbor.

It seems to us extremely unlikely that Russia would ever attempt that task, however disposed her military party might be to pretend to set about it, in order to embarrass and complicate British policy. Nothing would suit an Anglophobe party better than to draw Britain into a costly and unnecessary system of defence. But, in any case, railways are not built in a day, or in secret, and the facts that alarm Lord Selborne do not seem to make a Russian invasion an imminent danger and to demand the imposition of fresh burdens on the heavily-taxed people of India.

The Education of Hercules Johnson.

BY R. E. VERNEDE

SOMEONE had mentioned the subject of national physical education and Johnson looked up. He was a middle-aged unhappy looking man, who breathed loudly and moped a good deal. Hardly anyone at the club knew him except by sight, and we were all a little surprised to hear him remark in a resolute voice:

"I believe a physical education to be a mistake for anyone."

"Why?" asked Grinley, curiously. He was an athlete himself, but tolerant of weaker men. I have heard him say that with all the exercise he took he doubted if he would ever be as big a man as Mr. Chamberlain, who took none.

"Because," said Johnson, coloring slightly, "I am an example of the physically educated."

For politeness sake we tried not to look at him, and he went on in a slow voice.

"I have been physically educated, I may say, from the cradle. My father was a fanatic on the subject, and to prevent me from becoming flabby, he insisted on my walking at the age of nine months. Three months later I had a punching ball set up in my nursery, and at this I used to hit for two hours every day regularly. My diet was strictly supervised, with the result that—at eighteen months—I could pull my young brother in his go-cart a couple of miles without turning a hair. It is true that I was, and have been ever since, a trifle bandy-legged, but this, according to my father—was only on the lines of the

finest Greek models, and, as he said, I had a straight left. He delighted to see me use it on the nurses, and for every one that gave notice in less than a month, he would present me with a toy. 'You'll be a Hercules yet,' he would say, alluding to the name by which—much against the wish of my God-parents—I had been baptised; and would blow out his chest for me to hit. Had my education proceeded on these comparatively simple lines, I might have grown up an ordinarily healthy and contented man. Unfortunately it did not. My father was for ever improving on his previous schemes. I can still recall with loathing the breathing exercises I used to have to go through from the age of five to nine in his study, he with a stop watch in his hand to see that any given breath took the exact time proper to do it. He insisted much on the necessity of breathing through the nose, sending me running to the top of the house and down again ten times, and putting me in the corner if he found my tongue out of my mouth. Those times in the corner indeed were among the few peaceful hours of my childhood, which was otherwise spent in perpetual motion and the consumption of foodstuffs that varied between underdone beefsteak and charcoal biscuits. An attack of measles—necessitating a change of diet—gave me perhaps my happiest month, and I used to pray that I might have whooping cough like my eldest sister.

"When the time came for me to go to

school, my father purposely settled upon a day school four miles distant, in order that I might have the benefit of the walk there and back—with a little lead ballast in my satchel. Games were compulsory at the school, and I should have liked them well enough were it not for the fact that on my return home in the afternoon, I was at once turned on to a Whiteley exerciser. Three times a week a retired army sergeant (I should, perhaps, mention that my father himself had been in the army) drilled me in the evenings. He used a cane freely.

"I believe that my father would have been disappointed that I never got any colours for any school game, were it not that he believed that his own system—or systems—were better calculated to develop my muscles. Indian clubs, dumb-bells, parallel bars—I was put through them all so that on my twelfth birthday my father felt justified in inviting a few old friends to the house in order to see me lift the grand piano. It was in the drawing room that the exhibition took place. As I heaved the instrument, there was a snap. My father annoyed that anything should go wrong, said, somewhat sharply: 'If that's one of the piano notes, you young scamp, you'll go to bed after this.'

It was not one of the notes of the piano, as it turned out. It was a tendon in my left leg. I went to bed, nevertheless, and stayed there for a couple of months."

Johnson paused. Grinley, who had been gaping at him, said:

"Did the leg get all right?"

"Unfortunately it did," replied Johnson, "and my father, much aggravated by my ungrateful conduct, as he called it, took me from school entirely, and gave me concurrent courses of Sandow, fencing, and the Japanese method of self-defence. Before my health gave way permanently, I could use the spear, raise an elephant, and render helpless by a crook of my little finger the strongest hooligan existing. I could also remain under water for three minutes, and ride a bicycle for thirty-six hours at a stretch."

"But your health did give way?" Grinley asked.

"O, quite," said Johnson. "It was on my eighteenth birthday. I have been always an invalid since then." He rose awkwardly as he said this, and added "Good night."

"Bit of a liar, that fellow," said someone, as the door swung on Johnson's back.

"Yes, said Grinley, 'a considerable bit. But I daresay there's some truth in it. You can't compel people to be strong, you know.'"

"What about national physical education, then?"

"Well, I don't know," said Grinley: "I suppose it'll be the same thing as taking the horse to the water. One ought to do that. If he won't drink it, it shows either that it doesn't suit him, or that there's something wrong with him—or the way you drive him."

