

The Review.

B. B. PATERSON, PROPRIETOR.

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RICHIBUCTO, N. B., DEC. 31, 1896.

THE CLOSING YEAR.

The year just closing has been less eventful than some of its predecessors but some of its occurrences have been noteworthy. Space will only permit brief reference to its more salient features. On the whole it has been a peaceful year, though not without several so-called "little wars," for more of the great powers of the world have been involved in serious conflicts with each other. Chief of the minor struggles have been those of Spain and her principal colonies, Cuba and the Philippine Islands, the former continued from last year and the latter a more recent outbreak. In Cuba the general progress of events, notwithstanding the Herculean effort of Spain, had been in favor of the rebels down to the early part of December, when the death of Maceo, the most active and capable of the rebel commanders, gave a serious check to the insurgent cause. The year closes with doubtful chances both in Cuba and the Philippines. The very strong disposition of the Washington congress to intervene in behalf of the Cubans has called forth a remonstrance from the great powers of Europe which may bear serious fruit hereafter.

Britain, too, has had her share of "little wars" and battles, the expedition up the Nile being the most important of these. Several battles with the Mahdist troops resulted in victory for the Anglo-Egyptian forces. It had been intended that the cost should be borne by the Egyptian treasury but a recent decision of the Egyptian court of appeals was against this proposal, and £500,000 so expended was recouped to Egypt by Great Britain. Apart from the Nile expedition British soldiers and warships have found exercise in the bombardment of Zanzibar, the dethronement of the sultan and the enthronement of another favorable to British interests. The ill-starred raid of Dr. Janeson into the Transvaal resulted in defeat, the arrest of the leaders and their trial and imprisonment by British courts. The Italian expedition against Abyssinia which was in progress all the beginning of the year, was unsuccessful and involved the withdrawal of the Italian forces, with a big bill of damage to pay.

Such were the wars of the year, but there have been some threatening complications which raised black war clouds that were destined to pass peacefully away. Among these were the threat of the German emperor to intervene in behalf of the Boer republic against Britain; and the "war message" of President Cleveland against the Venezuela dispute. The latter for a time wore a most serious aspect. The president even went so far as to appoint his own commission to determine the disputed boundary, but diplomacy came to the rescue and settled upon a peaceful arbitration in which Britain and the United States should each choose two of their judges, and these form a fifth arbitrator, who should determine the whole question. Venezuela has since shown a disposition to resent this settlement, but it has at least restored accord between Britain and the United States, and led up to the notable agreement, completed last week, that all future disputes between the two great English-speaking countries shall be determined by peaceful arbitration. This is of incalculable importance to the English-speaking world.

In Europe some salient events of the year were the formal coronation of the young Czar at Moscow, followed by the mad rush of the crowd to the booths where gifts were to be distributed, resulting in the death of thousands. At the coronation all the great countries of the world, Christian and Heathen, were represented, among them China by her foremost statesman, Li Hung Chang. He subsequently visited the principal European capitals, the United States and Canada, and returned homeward by way of the Canadian Pacific Railway and a steamship of the same company, much delighted with his trip around the world. The Czar's subsequent visit to England,

France and Germany where he was received with great honor, impressed the nations with his peaceful intentions and aided to bring about a better understanding on the vexed Eastern Question. The unparalleled massacres of peaceful Armenian Christians during the year greatly aroused popular feeling throughout the world and as the year closes the great powers have come to a decision to force the Turkish Sultan to make reforms and cease his murderous barbarities.

Bismarck in his old days, chagrined at his deposition from power, created a profound sensation by making public the provisions of a secret treaty between Germany and Russia. This revelation showed that while Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy were bound together in the triple alliance, offensive and defensive, Germany had also a secret treaty with Russia for independent action in certain cases. The revelation has greatly weakened the bond of the Triple Alliance, and also tended to sow distrust between France and Russia, where close relations had long existed, and the end is not yet.

On our own continent we have had a hotly contested presidential election in the United States in which the question of the free coinage of silver was paramount. The defeat of Bryan and the election of McKinley brings the protectionist party again into power at Washington which must have an important bearing upon the tariff legislation of the republic.

In Canada the year opened with a cabinet crisis just at the opening of the parliamentary session. The sudden retirement of seven members of Sir Mackenzie Bowell's cabinet startled the Dominion. Their subsequent return to their former positions could not blind the country to the fact that serious dissensions existed in the cabinet. A stormy session proved the impossibility of passing the remedial bill, and the opposition by a policy of obstruction prevented the passing of supplies for the ensuing year till, on April 25th, the parliament was about to expire by limitation of time. The reconstruction of the Cabinet with Sir Charles Tupper as leader was followed by a dissolution. The general election of 23rd June resulted in favor of the opposition. Two weeks later the government resigned after an attempt to make sundry appointments to the senate and the bench which Lord Aberdeen resisted. Mr. Laurier's cabinet was formed, taking into it the premiers of Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick with ex-premiers of Quebec and P. E. Island. In August and September a short session was held and supplies voted. Since then by agreement between the governments led by Mr. Laurier and Mr. Greenway respectively a settlement of the Manitoba School Question has been made. It is strongly denounced as inadequate by sundry Catholic Bishops, but by-elections in Brandon, Saskatchewan and Cornwall, which returned ministerial candidates, show a disposition among the people to accept the settlement as final.

Death has been as usual busy during the year. One great calamity, the tidal wave in Japan, swallowed up tens of thousands. Famine and plague are now at work in India. The death of our beloved Governor Fraser brought heartfelt sorrow to every community in the province. But the year closes with a time of general health and fair prosperity in Canada and with better prospects of peace among the nations than there was at its beginning.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS.

The defeat of the Liberal Conservative Government at Ottawa, and the advent of a Liberal administration, have had a peculiar effect on the party press in this Province. Liberal journals, which, while their friends were in opposition, were at times almost violent in their denunciation of the schemes and methods of the Government, have now no word of condemnation or criticism of the like methods pursued by the liberal leaders, while the conservative press is now finding fault with much that it formerly justified or regarded as trivial and unimportant.

During the Conservative regime at Ottawa, the leaders there paid no attention to New Brunswick provincial politics. Their attention was engrossed with what they, in their wisdom, regarded as larger and more important matters. The local legislature and the liberal conservative opposition there were ignored. Under the plea that the local government, led by Mr. Blair, was a coalition, Mr. Forster and Mr. Costigan manifested no sympathy with the opposition leader or the gentlemen associated with him in the legislature. On the contrary the patronage and influence of the Ottawa Government was used to the disadvantage of the local opposition, and Mr. Stockton found himself compelled to fight the patronage of both administrations. No word in condemnation of coalitions, or suggesting that local politics should be run on dominion lines was then heard from the conservative leaders at Ottawa or found expression in the New Brunswick party press. The situation then was satisfactory to the Liberal Conservative leaders, who foolishly thought the trade and other party questions would continue them in their long lease of power on another appeal to the people, and that no necessity existed to strengthen their friends in the legislature.

The general election, however, rudely awoke them from their dreams, and now local politics appear to be of increasing importance to the party leaders. The St. John Sun, now ready to do battle in the cause of provincial good government along dominion lines, valiantly takes up the gauntlet thrown down by the Globe, and moralizes on the question in the following language:—"The liberal leaders in this province are more than welcome to carry the federal issue into provincial politics. The system of coalition has been largely responsible for the development of a type of political adventurers who are the bane of both parties. An opposition party organization is an excellent piece of machinery for protecting the public from injustice, corruption or incapacity in their rulers, and for the enlightenment of the masses in respect to both sides of public questions. But the coalition system in this province has impaired the effectiveness of any power in the legislature outside the government. It has given the ministry a control altogether beyond its strength in the country and beyond the public confidence in the administration. It has deprived the weak man, the self-seeking man, the opportunist and the political adventurer of those inducements and restraints that in regular party politics keep him true to his cause in action if not in motive. It has put a premium on treachery to allies, carelessness of principles and loyalty to the plighted word. It has developed a school of trimmers who, while claiming to believe in one set of principles, are sometimes found supporting for the time and the purpose quite opposite ideas."

All this is true—and we are not disposed to dispute its accuracy—was equally true before the overturn of June last relegated the Sun and its friends to the cold shades of opposition. The time to have talked in this way was when the Sun and its party, could if they had been so disposed, have been of service to the Liberal Conservative opposition in the legislature. It would seem that the suggestion is now made more in the interest of the party in the Dominion parliament than of the Liberal Conservatives in the legislature, and we would suggest to the friends of the party in the latter that they need not now be in any hurry to meet the views of Sir Charles Tupper, Mr. Forster and Mr. Costigan and the Sun. The leaders did what they could to weaken the local opposition when they were in power at Ottawa, and have no reason now to expect a very enthusiastic reception of their present proposition. The province was fairly prosperous for several years under a coalition government led by Mr. Blair, a liberal, and there is reason to hope that the coalition led by Mr. Mitchell, a conservative, will not prove any less satisfactory.

The fire at Spring Hill Mines is a serious calamity, specially if it should result in the large body of men there engaged being thrown out of employment for a length of time. The miners earn good wages and spend their money as they go with little preparation for such interruption of employment. The prosperous town of Spring Hill, nearly as large as Moncton, is almost wholly dependent upon the miners earnings for its prosperity. The loss in any case will be great from the property destroyed, the loss of time and the cessation of coal production. It was most fortunate that the fire did not occur while the men were in the slopes, else there might have been a repetition of the disaster of a few years ago in which over 100 miners lost their lives. This fire being on Christmas day, came when the miners were above ground. In any case fire in a mine is a serious matter. At Stellarton, and in other places, mines have been closed from this cause and remain on fire after years of waiting.

The tariff Commissioners will meet in Ottawa on 4th and 5th January, and then come to the Maritime provinces. Two places of meeting in Nova Scotia, two in New Brunswick and one in P. E. Island is the expected programme. Halifax and Pictou or Yarmouth, St. John and Moncton or Charlottetown, and Charlottetown are the expected places of meeting with two or three days given to each of the capitals and one day at the smaller places. It seems that the Bay Chaleur Railway is to be operated by the Intercolonial this winter. Now what about the other branch railways, some of which in New Brunswick are closed during the winter?

To all our readers, patrons and friends THE REVIEW wishes A Prosperous and Happy New Year.

Do's Not Always Prove an Easy One. Before leaving the office the editor, with that rare forethought which is one of his most charming characteristics, requested us to "look after things a little." We individually agreed to do so, though considering our age, we ought to have known better. Charles Kerler, Jr., hadn't been gone ten minutes until the devil came into the sanetum with a yard of copy and wanted to know what "them pot books" meant. There was an evil gleam in the young man's eye as he pointed the finger of scorn at sundry and various hieroglyphics. "What's that stuff intended for, anyhow? Does the editor think I'm an antiquarian? Does he imagine that I can gibbly decipher the inscriptions on the tombs of the Pharaohs?" We took the copy and examined it carefully and laboriously. We turned it east, west, north and south. We looked at it sidewise and lengthwise. We turned it upside down. We squinted at it across the corners, and finally managed to grasp its meaning. "Commencing with July 4, 1899, we wish to inform the public that we are going to increase our devil's salary indefinitely."

"Bully for the editor!" shouted the devil as he rushed to his case and pied a stick or matter. "It's easy enough when you know how." We once more resumed our heavy editorial though we felt greatly exhaused. "The protoplastic theory, of consequentiality inextricably pro—" "Say, I want the paper stopped." She looked real indignant as she flounced into our sacred presence and glared at us ferociously. "I visited my grandmother in Cokeville yesterday and you didn't say a word about it. Don't send me your measly paper any more. I won't have it. How much do I owe you?" "Seventeen cents. Thanks. Here's a receipt. And now, madam, we want to tell you something. The fate of the Courier trembles in the balance. Your refusal to take it any longer will probably cause its downfall, but we'll do the best we can to save it. We didn't know you were in Cokeville yesterday and we were not aware that you had a grandmother. We hope the old lady is well. You ought to have seven grandmothers so that you could visit a different one each day in the week. Next time you go to Cokeville come up here and tell us, and we'll mention it in the paper and put a border around it and print it in red. That's what we'll do, madam. The fact is you're too handsome a woman to get mad."

Our final words touched her heart, and she at once renewed her subscription ten years in advance. But we want to say right here that although we have seen homlier women, we don't know when or where. "As we were saying, the protoplastic theory philosophi—" "Say, young fellow, where's the editor?" He tore into the sanctum like a roaring lion. He was six feet tall, he wore cowhide boots, and he flourished a long whip. And he had a copy of the Courier in his hand. "My dear sir, the editor is not in. He's out of town."

"Say, what are you giving me? That's always the story. If there's a licking in sight, the editor's always out. I want to know what this item means. My name is John Smith."

We sized him up at once and saw that he meant business. "Mr. Smith, you're not the man referred to. The editor alluded to another John Smith, who has died since the item appeared."

"You don't say. Pretty good story, but I believe it's a darned lie. Where is the editor?"

And he scowled savagely at us and fiercely cracked the whip. "Mr. Smith, as we have previously stated, the editor is away. We don't know where he is, nor how long he will be gone. If you want to see him you'll have to wait until he comes back."

"Say, young fellow, what are you giving me? Do you know what I think. I'll be blamed if I don't believe you're the editor yourself, and I've a notion to make you sweat for this item."

"Mr. Smith, do I look like an editor? Do you see any evidences of love, admiration and esteem lying promiscuously around here? Any turkeys, ducks, apples, or bottled luxuries? Are these indications of the affectionate subscriber with me? Nay, nay, Brother Smith, I'm not the editor. We're not one and the same. We are here, and he is there, or elsewhere. Comprehension is—"

But he had fled; and peace once more reigned, and the office soon climbed nonchalantly into our lap and smeared our shirt with a quarter section of the ink keg. The life of the printer surely has its compensations. In comparison with the hardships of the editor's lot it is a continual picnic, with happiness constantly on draught. Ambitious typos who aspire to the editorial tripod should bear this fact in mind.

K D C Pills tone and regulate the Bowels.

THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

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