CURRENT COMMENT

NEW TRAILS IN TAXATION.

Whatever may be thought by the politicians the people will judge the present Ontario administration by its business capacity. The provincial Chancellor of the exchequer brought down his budget and confessed to a deficit of $802,748. By a little book. keepin he could have made this a surplus of $875,198. Adopting the policy of paying as you go, he decided not to stall off any accounts that could be paid. Stalling off in the past created surpluses, but they create deficits some time. The provincial treasurer has gathered them all together and expects to have no more. There was $608,000 election expenses, and $400,000 for the University deficit, and $460,000 to the teachers' superannuation fund, and another $460,000 for increased salaries to civil servants; and there was $391,000 exchange payable in New York on $3,000,000 treasury notes that the former provincial treasurer had issued. Other large sums for exchange had to be met also, making a total of $789,000. It is easy to see how a surplus could have been constructed out of these amounts. Hon. Peter Smith is apparently preparing the way for a budget and statement next year in which the surplus will be unimpeachable and like Caesar's wife as far as the financial critics are concerned. It will take some taxing to do it, but Hon. Peter is not afraid of levying taxes. What the people will want to know is whether they are getting value for the money expended, and if it can be shown that they are they won't object. Everybody knows that the cost of living is doubled, and that wages have doubled. If Hon. Peter can run the province for less than double former cost he will be doing better than most people are doing in their own affairs. If he can provide revenue from resources of the province that will lighten some of the burdens borne at present, he will contribute to the popularity of his Government. There are great possibilities in the way of taxation reform, but financial authorities are proverbially conservative; not to say obstinate, and it will take an Hon. Peter to find some of the new trails.

CLASSICS OF TODAY.

We talk a great deal about the classics, but as some one has said, the classics are books that everybody talk about and nobody reads. All the same the classics are read, and what is more, they are written. There are and have been things written in our days which will be revered as classics a thousand years hence. These things make their way slowly but they have the stationers' hall mark. They carry their own irresistible appeal. It is not only the thought, not only the expression, but the incommunicable magic which lodges both in memory like those "jewels, five words long, which on the stretched forefinger of Old Time, sparkle forever," as Tennyson praises it. Prejudice usually prevents people reading these classics at first, and people are of course free to take their own course and make their own choice in their reading. There is something in a man's own consciousness that guides him to the right kind of mental food, or what will suit him, just as the cattle know what herbs to eat and what to avoid. In literature what is one man's meat is another man's poison, and vice versa asks some one. Virtue is wrong, says the dog-latinist. The virtue of the calssics of modern literature is "in wrong" in our modern slang, but there is no reason for this and it should be made plain that there is not. Here is a paragraph from a little classic that the millions who read never hear of, yet it is a lesson they need: "Listen to the song of life. Store in your memory the melody you hear. Learn from it the lesson of harmony. Life itself has speech and is never silent. And its utterance is not, as you that are deaf may suppose, a cry; it is a song. Learn from it that you are a part of the harmony; learn from it to obey the laws of the harmony." And here is a kindred thought from another modern classic: "The workmanship of souls is by those inaudible words of the earth; the masters know the earth's words and use them more than audible words." By the way, would that last sentence not be a capital motto for a farmer? Happy are those who can discover and treasure their own classics. It is not such who form a subject for such a lecture as George K. Chesterton's "The Ignorance of the Educated."

IT STRIKES SOME.

Does it ever strike the outsider while the legislative mills are in operation that the object of all the activity seems directed less to the benefit of the country than to the glory and satisfaction of the parties in and out of office respectively? Of course the true party man will not admit this. The true party man insists that Government cannot be carried on without party, and there would be some disposition to agree to this if he did not also insist that it could not be carried on without the palpable faults and deficits of party. Many definitions have been given of a statesman, but the essence of statesmanship is not to care who does things or who gets the credit for them so long as the right things are done. In contradistinction to this the rabid party man does not care what is done, as long as his party and its friends reap some general or personal advantages. This latter attitude means that partisanship resolves itself into a struggle to obtain office. It is rather a reproach to democracy that many intelligent leaders appear to be willing to acquesce with this view. As long as one party attributes the basest possible motives to the other, and men are willing to admit that partisan followers must be inspired with the hope of spoils in order to secure their allegiance and loyalty, we cannot hope for any high tone in the political world. It is a fact, nevertheless, that the real character of most often leading men is much above the average this low level would indicate, and there is no question at all that the average tone of the country is very much higher than our politics represent it. The noisier, more aggressive element lend color to the apparent average, and drive off the quieter and more inoffensive citizens who do not care to yell and shout and make physical demonstrations of their views. But the vote of the quiet man is just as effective as that of the boisterous one. This fact is gradually soaking into the politician conscience, along with woman suffrage.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS.

Hon. Mr. Rowell's forecast of the South African elections proved to be reliable and Premier Jan Smuts, who appealed to the country on the issue of remaining within the "Empire," which means of course retaining the British connection as one of the Commonwealths of the British union on an equal footing with the other members of the union, was sustained by a substantial plurality. The feature of the election was the self-abnegation of the Labor Party which sacrificed itself to ensue Smuts' victory. The Labor members lost more than half their seats but have constituted a claim to recognition which cannot be forgotten. General Hertzog and his party gained nearly one-third of the seats, so that the separatist sentiment is by no means to be ignored, but another term of office for Premier Smuts at this time should serve to allay much feeling, and give opportunity for the bitterness among the Dutch, consequent on their experiences during the last generation, to be outgrown. Time works wonders, and a progressive and tolerant administration such as may be expected from Premier Smuts will do much to create the South African sentiment that will bind all sections of the country together. The difference in language is an obstacle, but not more so than in Canada, where the unity of the Dominion is a first consideration with all, and the British connection goes without saying. The real difficulty is the racial one of color, and the white races are likely as time passes to be driven closer together. The native races vary considerably in calibre, but some of them are exceedingly intelligent and education may give them the moral power which will constitute them a factor in the development of the country. There is a deeper bond than that of education or morals, and it depends very largely on the attitude of the white races towards the black whether a solid citizen peace will be possible in South Africa. If the native races could be segregated it would be an immense advantage, but the rapacity of the white races makes this difficult, if not impossible. The experience of the Red Indian in the United States indicates what would probably happen to the black man in Africa. The white man professes religion, but the native races find white men acting on other principles than those they preach, so their religion falls into disrepute. In Africa the Dutch race has always borne heavily on the black, and they regard them still as inferior beings. In the solution of the native problem depends the future success of the South African Union.

DISARMAMENT OR WAR.

Among the plans to lighten the load that bears upon humanity and the nations at the present time none is more necessary nor more reasonable than the proposals for disarmament. The fact that President-elect Harding has declared himself in favor of it and promised to do "everything that is becoming" to bring it about is a hopeful sign. If the United States joins the League of Nations there should be no great difficulty about arranging for disarmament. It is recognized that a police force of some kind is needed to keep the unruly of the world in order. When every nation organizes a force sufficient for this service then trouble ensues. But the League of Nations could depend on its senior members to look after trouble makers among the smaller fry, if they developed the same trust and confidence in reasonable methods which have existed among the English-speaking nations for a century or more. If any great nation insists on remaining outside the League and building up a great armament of its own, nothing can stop other powers, which think themselves threatened, from doing the same, and given great armaments it is difficult to prevent war. Militarism consists largely in the opportunity and means to fight. When the late Tsar of pitiful memory issued his peace rescript many good people thought that the millenium was in sight. The Tsar and his advisers no doubt saw the inevitable conclusion of the trend of events, and he did what in him lay to stop the catastrophe. But the causes of national and international strife generally lie too far back for the catastrophe to be averted at the eleventh hour. The forces of greed and selfishness, of cruelty and hate, are not first of all national, but grow out of the individual sentiments of each man and each woman in every nation; and all this latent force breaks out into an overwhelming fury on occasions when leaders refuse to recognize the ministrations of reason and justice. There is no reason in the world why reason and justice should not control and order all the dealings of mankind, but human obstinacy, pride and conceit, massed into national arrogance ignores all reason and refuses to count the cost. The cost in the recent European case has been so calamitous and appalling that it scarcely seems possible that any nation would risk such another experience. The remedy is the League of Nations, with which goes disarmament and an international court for the settlement of all disputes. Such a disposition of events would give humanity an opportunity for peaceful development which it hardly seems possible any country would refuse. Yet the United States is still standing aloof. Let us hope that the Harding administration will join hands with the rest of the world.

CREELMAN GETS $12,500

Will Become General Manager of Ontario Fruit Growers' Ass'n.

Another good position is about to open up in Ontario Service for some returned soldier. It is understood that Prof. George Creelman, formerly of the Guelph Agricultural College, and later Agricultural Commissioner for Ontario, and at present Ontario's Agent-General in England, is to return to Ontario.

Statements in well-informed circles are to the effect that Prof. Creelman has been offered and has accepted a position with the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association as general manager at a salary of $12,500 a year.

This is considerably more than the London, Eng., position is worth. The change, it is rumored, is to be made almost immediately.

SPICED RHUBARB.

Wipe, skin and cut up two and a half pounds of rhubarb. Put this in a preserving kettle with two pounds of sugar, seven-eights cup vinegar, one teaspoon cinnamon, and a half a teaspoon ground cloves. Bring to boiling point and let simmer until as thick as marmalade. Fill jelly glasses with mixture, cool and seal. Onions can be added, according to taste.

POEMS You Should Know

MISCONCEPTIONS

This is a spray the Bird clung to,
Making it blossom with pleasure,
Ere the high treetop she sprung to,
Fit for her nest and her treasure.
Oh, what a hope beyond measure
Was the poor spray's which the flying feet hung to—
So to be singled out, built in and sung to!

This is the heart the Queen leant on
Thrilled in a minute erratic,
Ere the true blossom she bent on,
Meet for love's regal dalmatic,
Oh, what a fancy ecstatic
Was the poor hear's, ere the wanderer went on.
Love to be saved for it, proffered to, spent on!

—Robert Browning.

CANNOT BECOME CENSUS OFFICIALS

ENUMERATORS BARRED WHO ARE CONNECTED WITH MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

The Department of Statistics at Ottawa will notify the Assessment Commissioners in each riding that it will not be permitted to make any appointments of any officials connected with Municipal Councils to the position of enumerator or any other position in connection with the taking of the census. The reason for this is that there is a lot of information which the Government will require to be taken and which will be of a confidential nature. The Government desires to make it impossible for this information to be used for taxation purposes either for Municipal, Provincial or Dominion legislatures.

This prohibition will extend to reeves, rural councilors, town clerks, assessors, collectors, road masters, etc., or any person connected in any way with Provincial or Municipal offices.

BRUTE CENTENARIANS.

Elephants are perhaps the longest-lived members of the animal kingdom, averaging between 100 and 200 years. There are records of elephants living 350 years. Most naturalists allow the whale about the same length of life as the elephant. The camel comes third, averaging about 75 years. The average life of a lion and a tiger is 40 and 25 years, respectively.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

GET INTO THIS BIG PAYING BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF.
The supply of skilled motor mechanics, chauffeurs and garage men is always far below the demand. Next spring this business will offer more opportunities than ever. As usual trained men will command the highest wages. You can be one of these and earn big money all year round by preparing yourself for the job this winter. The International Automobile School has fitted scores of men to make big success. Some are earning as high as fifteen dollars a day. We can do the same for you by giving you a complete practical course in every branch of automobile work. Our course consists of two to three months' practical garage instruction, with individual attention and help which will enable you to take any responsible position. Not mere book learning, but sound teaching and experience under actual working conditions. We are the largest school in Canada and the only automobile school in Toronto which allows the prospective student joining to go through the school and talk with the man taking the course. Call or write
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