

enriched by seeing the Asiatic trade fly past them, even supposing that romantic anticipation to be fulfilled. The Lake Superior section is of use, in a commercial point of view, only on the double assumption that England is the market and that the grain could not be carried as well by the American lines. But though the object is political, the Government wants its line to pay if possible, and therefore guards it against competition by monopoly clauses which restrain the construction of commercial lines, and thus greatly interfere with the progress of the country. In Southern Manitoba, the garden of the region, the farmers in despair are refusing to sow their land because they have no means of carrying the crops to market. But for all this the Government and the Government alone is responsible. The Syndicate has been merely the contractor for a public work with the projection or the political objects of which it had nothing whatever to do; and no impartial person denies that it has performed its work both rapidly and well. The rapidity has, in fact, been too great, so far as the commercial interests of the territory were concerned, but it was evidently demanded by the political and military objects of the work.

To indemnify the Eastern Provinces for the expenditure of their millions on a line which could bring them no profit, even if it did carry the grain past them to England, they have been assured of the monopoly of the North-Western market for their manufactures. To enrich the agricultural implement makers of the East, and secure their votes to the Government, the pioneer in the North-West is weighed down in the struggle by a prohibition to avail himself of implements offered close at hand, and for his purposes, at least, of a better kind than those hitherto made in Canada. The "Bystander" was told, on good authority, that an information had been laid against importers by a protected manufacturer even when he had not implements of his own manufacture to supply. Thus the ploughman is disabled in order to encourage the maker of ploughs. The taxes on canned provisions, a considerable article of the settler's diet, and that on the lumber required for his shanty are hardly less oppressive. The tax on coal, the object of which is to secure for a party government the support of Nova Scotia, rivals, as a specimen of this sort of legislation, the tax on agricultural implements. In framing the tariff no consideration has been given to the interests of the North-West, which is subjected to a system devised for the benefit of Provinces with which it has commercially nothing in common. That there cannot be a separate tariff for the North-West is true; but at present there is a tariff framed exclusively for the East, of which the North-West is made the victim. When the settlers complain, they are upbraided with their ingratitude for all that has been done and expended on their behalf. But the Canadian Pacific Railway, so far as it runs through their territory or does them any good, has been built with the proceeds of their lands, and they must have paid in import duties a larger sum per head than the people of any of the other Provinces. We have all, wisely or unwisely, consented to a great pecuniary sacrifice for a political object, but we must look for indemnification to the political advantages, the internal line of communication, and the war port on the Pacific, and not expect to indemnify ourselves pecuniarily at the expense of the settlers in the North-West. Whatever they may be to the Dominion or to the Empire, to the North-West individually the policy of the Ottawa Government is a drawback; and it is hard to pay heavily for a drawback and be reproached with ingratitude besides.

It is true that the Dominion bought the land of a Company, whose exclusive charter had about as much moral validity as the Pope's grant to Spain of everything south of the equator. But it could not buy the settlers who were to people the land, and without whom the land would be of no value whatever. The Dominion had a right, of course, to reimbursement and to fair assessment for Federal purposes; otherwise surely the land ought to have been held morally as a trust for its inhabitants, not as a privy fund to be spent by the Dominion Government or the other Provinces on schemes of their own without any reference to the special interests of the North-West. It can never have been intended by the Mother Country that these free communities should be placed on a lower footing than their partners. It can never have been intended that they should be treated as semi-dependencies and not as full members of the Confederation. It can never have been intended, to borrow Mr. Norquay's metaphor, that one of the sisters should be poorly fed and confined to the kitchen while the others were faring sumptuously in the dining-room. Endowed by nature with a magnificent domain, the Province of Manitoba has hardly an acre of land which she can call her own to save her from direct taxation. The offer made to her of the swamp lands, however kindly meant, is little better than a mockery. What is done cannot be undone, but henceforth it will be necessary to treat Manitoba, and all Provinces to be hereafter carved out of the North-West, in the matter of lands and in all other matters, as members of the Confederation, entitled to a full equality of rights.

Nobody doubts that the intentions of the Ottawa Government towards the people of the North-West are good. But it is a distant government; its all-powerful chief has never himself been in the North-West; and references or appeals to it are tedious and precarious. It is a party government, and it cannot resist the importunities of hungry partisans who mark the new and defenceless territory as their perquisite, though the consequence of yielding has inevitably been injurious to the political morality of a young community, the foundation of whose character ought to have been laid in honour. The parliamentary system, though the best for those who are represented, is for those who are unrepresented or inadequately represented the worst. The North-Western delegation is necessarily small in proportion to the vast interests with which it is entrusted; yet its pleadings might have had weight with all politicians young enough to look to the future, had its members only been true to their constituents. Mr. Watson has been true, but others seem to have fallen under influences which prevail at the capital and which are fatal to public honour. It is believed that the party in power intends to make no more provinces, but to keep the remainder of the North-West on the footing of dependent territories, so that this vast region with its immense future will have no more votes in the Federal councils than British Columbia or Prince Edward's Island, a policy which would at least show that a genius for arbitrary government was not the exclusive property of the Stuarts. The Local Legislature of Manitoba, which might at least have protested with moral effect, has been weakened by the presence of the French element, though that element has given the Province an able, and so far as party entanglements permitted, a patriotic Premier. This source of feebleness will soon cease to exist, as the French vote will no more prevail; but in the meantime the mould is being formed in which the destiny of the new communities will be cast.

Old politicians think only of voting power; but there is a power besides that of votes, which, if a deaf ear is turned to the remonstrances of the North-West, will probably be soon encountered. Not that there exists a thought of violence; nowhere is the reign of law more perfect than among those Canadian pioneers. What they contemplate in the last resort is an appeal to England for release from the Confederation, and for the establishment of the North-West as an independent British colony. Their earnest desire for an outlet and a communication with England by way of Hudson's Bay is connected with this idea.

Immigrants from Old Canada have brought with them the infection of Party, but as yet in a comparatively mild form, the virulence of partisanship being sensibly tempered by distance from its native seat as well as by the free air of the broad prairie. The press, which has carried away no small share of the literary ability of Ontario, has a decided character of independence, nor does it seem that as yet any mere organ pays. Party however, is preparing to reclaim the fugitives, and to occupy the new domain: it is sending forth its emissaries and setting up its machines; if the people are not on their guard the representation may soon be taken out of their hands and made over to the Convention managed by the wire-puller. That which is senseless in Old Canada would be absolutely fatuous in the North-West, where there is no conceivable basis for a party. If the people are determined to bow their necks again to this wretched yoke, and, for the benefit of the place-hunting politician, to organize themselves into two factions, neither of which can have any aim but self, surrendering their franchise to the masters of machines, let them at least wait till by their united and independent action the vital questions which concern their local interests shall have been settled, and the rights of their own Province secured. Perhaps some of them may not be indifferent to the fact that the whole country, and perhaps the continent, has a deep interest in the preservation of that freedom from machine rule which is now the privilege of Manitoba alone.

With regard to the prospects of the Canadian Pacific Railway as a Government enterprize, the Anti-Continental policy of which that undertaking is the instrument, and the relation of the policy to the interests of the aristocratic enemies of democracy in England, and those of the Canadian people respectively, the convictions repeatedly expressed in these papers remain unchanged. But the nation has been persuaded to try the experiment, and the experiment must now be tried. A BYSTANDER.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES was seventy-five years old August 29. In evidence of the great affection in which he is held by his fellow-men, *The Critic* devoted almost the entire space of its issue of August 30 to the publication of letters of congratulation from the most eminent literary men of America and England. It was a fitting tribute to one of the most admirable of men, the very genius of Good Cheer.