

"The channels of thought and the channels of commerce, thus owned and controlled by one man, or by a few men, what is to restrain corporate power, or to fix a limit to its exactions upon the people? What is there to hinder these men from depressing or inflating the value of all kinds of property to suit their caprice or avarice, and thereby gathering into their own coffers the wealth of the nation? Where is the limit to such a power as this? What shall be said of the spirit of a free people who will submit without a protest to be thus bound hand and foot?"

The third semi-annual report of the railroad commissioners of the State of Georgia, submitted 1st May, 1881, says:—

"The moral and social consequences of these corruptions are even worse than the political; they are simply appalling. We contemplate them with anxiety and dismay. The demoralization is worse than that of war—as fraud is meaner than force, and trickery than violence. Aside from their own corruptions, the operators aim directly at the corruption of the press and Government. \* \* \* \* \* Worse even than a purifying storm is this malaria in the air, which poisons all the body politic, and corrupts the youth of the country by presenting the highest prizes of society to its most unscrupulous and unworthy members."

In the report of the New York Board of Trade occur these words:

"Honestly and equitably managed railroads are the most beneficent discovery of the century, but perverted by irresponsible and uncontrolled corporate management, in which stock watering and kindred swindles are tolerated, and favoritism in charges is permitted, they become simply great engines to accomplish unequal taxation, and to arbitrarily re-distribute the wealth of the country."

"The modern barons, more powerful than their military prototypes, own our greatest highways and levy tribute at will upon all our vast industries. And, as the old feudalism was finally controlled and subordinated only by the combined efforts of the kings and the people of the free cities and towns, so our modern feudalism can be subordinated to the public good only by the great body of the people, acting through their government, by wise and just laws."

These are only a few culled from a host of extracts handed down to public gaze by the author to stir the moral sensibility of the great nation to the south of us, and show us the difficulties they have to contend with. Now, hon. gentlemen, we are on the threshold. Our young nationality has not been stricken with the disease that has laid such a strong hold upon the constitution of our neighbours, and the free-

dom of our institutions is our guarantee of safety; but those who are accustomed to think for the public can see a pulsation which marks that the vigour of our constitution is threatened. The eyes of the world are upon Canada to-day, and although other nations are too much engrossed in their own concerns to give it more than a passing interest, the stand that the people of Canada take upon the questions affecting their political morality will exercise its influence for the right or the reverse in the history of the country. For these reasons I have drawn the attention of this hon. House to the necessity of the people guarding well the birthright of constitutional liberty, which is threatened by taking too superficial a view of the effects of a system that was exposed to view during the last session. The next clause in His Excellency's Speech says:

"The meeting which had been arranged with the United States Government for a day in October last, for an informal discussion on the extension of trade between the two countries, and on other international matters requiring adjustment, was postponed at their request. But, in compliance with a more recent intimation from that Government, three of my Ministers proceeded to Washington, and conferred with representatives of the Administration of the United States on those subjects."

It is not necessary to read the clause in full, but the gist of the matters that are submitted to us lies, I think, in the question of the National Policy of Canada, and I propose to discuss that policy. Many consider that the head and front of the National Policy are its commercial features; but my own opinion is that the authors who designed the National Policy, chiefly our late lamented leader, Sir John A. Macdonald, did not so regard it. The authors of our National Policy designed that the people of Canada should unite for the purpose of building up a nationality in British North America, a Canadian nationality, not as a dependency of the British Crown, but as a partner of the British Empire—as much a partner in the British Empire as the State of New York is a partner in the American Republic. That is my view of the National Policy. The commercial features of it are open to discussion. They may be changed, or not changed, according as the people of the country feel how the commercial policy of the Government presses upon them, or the reverse. My hon. friend on my left, in