

already declined. The tone of the whole paragraph prepares us for pretty strong words in a special message, should one be sent to Congress. We ventured to prophesy, immediately after the defeat of the Republicans in the fall elections—as any one acquainted with the peculiar political system and methods of the Republic might pretty safely do—that the temptation to try to make some political stock out of the Behring Sea affair, by way of diversion and offset, might perhaps prove too strong to be resisted. One finds it difficult, at first thought, to conceive of any pretext on which the Secretary of State, who, but the other day, was lauding arbitration in the Congress of American States as a guarantee of peace, can now, with any show of consistency, promptly reject it when offered by the British Government. That pretext is, however, hinted at in the President's Message, and probably correctly indicated by the newspapers. Mr. Blaine will consent to arbitrate on the vague question of what is required by international good morals, but not on the definite constitutional one whether Behring's Sea is an open sea. The probability is, we fear, that the dispute will not only be kept open, but will be to some extent aggravated, during the coming Presidential campaign. Some strong language may be used and heroic measures hinted at, but that any overt act will be committed of such a kind as to compel the British Government to take active measures to protect vessels carrying her flag in the North Pacific is in the last degree unlikely. The Democratic character of the new House of Representatives, and the attitude of at least a very influential part of the American press and people are excellent guarantees that a more prudent policy will prevail.

THE return of Sir John Pope Hennessy for North Kilkenney by a majority of more than eleven hundred makes clearer that which has been from the beginning of the struggle pretty apparent, viz., that Parnell and the faction which adheres to him are fighting a losing battle in Ireland. The combined strength of the clergy and the better class of electors make heavy odds against one who is so manifestly fighting for his own position, rather than for the success of the cause for which he professes to stand. Whatever may be the effect of Parnell's failure, nothing can be much more certain than that his present success in Ireland would be the end of any possibility of Home Rule for many years to come. His own words and tactics, and the conduct of the campaign, scarcely less than the unpardonable moral offences which gave rise to it, put any reunion with the Gladstonian Liberals out of the question, at least for many years to come. We need not stay to argue that such co-operation, and that alone, could ever bring Irish Home Rule within the sphere of practical politics. But on the other hand, it is almost equally certain that no success which the McCarthy wing of the Irish Nationalist Party can now gain, even assuming that wing to represent the constitutional, as opposed to the "physical force" reformers, can avail to restore Home Rule to the position it occupied a few weeks ago in the councils of the nation. It is for the present, if not forever, a lost cause. We shall be surprised if this fact be not admitted by the Gladstonians themselves before many more weeks have passed. The retirement of Mr. Gladstone, which is among the possibilities, would be conclusive in regard to the matter. Apart from that, however, the improbability of gaining, with the help of one wing of a divided Irish Party, the assent of the Imperial Parliament to an almost revolutionary change, which has hitherto been unattainable with the help of a solid Irish Party, must be tolerably obvious to the most ardent believers in Home Rule as the panacea for Irish ills. It is conceivable, of course, that the Irish representatives, though divided in allegiance, might still unite their votes in support of a Home Rule Bill, but it would be a reckless or a desperate Parliament indeed which would consent to hand over that distracted country as a prize to be fought for by the two contending factions. In fact, the new evidence the events of the last few weeks have afforded of the divisive and pugnacious tendencies of Irish statesmanship must have done not a little to shake the faith of the most sanguine of English Home Rulers in the present capacity of that people for successful self-rule. In the midst of the despair which the present state of things is well adapted to beget, there is, perhaps, some room for the hope that when all parties shall have become thoroughly satisfied of the futility of continuing the struggle on the present lines, all who have really the interests of Ireland and the Empire at heart may begin to feel their way to some new arrangement on the double basis of a comprehensive settlement of the

land question and a liberal concession of municipal self-government. The present seems certainly to offer a fine opportunity for the leaders of the two great parties to show to the nation and the world that they are statesmen first, even if they must be politicians afterwards.

"BRADSTREET'S" for December 20, contains some remarkable facts in regard to the decline of the Mercantile Marine of the United States. Taking the quarterly report of the Bureau of Statistics which covers the closing months of the fiscal year that ended June 30, the latest statistics available, the writer shows that the percentage of the total foreign commerce carried in American vessels has declined during the last twenty-one years from 35.6 in 1870 to 12.29 in 1890. That is to say, the percentage of the total foreign commerce carried by American vessels in 1890 is little more than one-third of the percentage so carried in 1870. A diagram graduated for five-year periods shows that the decline has been gradual and almost uniform throughout the periods. *Bradstreet's* further says that close observers, in view of the returns quoted, predict the almost entire disappearance of the flag of the United States from the ocean, and seem to have good reason for the prediction. And yet the commerce in itself is enormous, notwithstanding the high tariffs, having increased within the period covered by the tables from a total of less than \$992,000,000 in value in 1870, to a total of more than \$1,647,000,000 in 1890. Statements of vessels entered and cleared show further that England, Ontario and Quebec, Germany, British Columbia and the Maritime Provinces of the Dominion lead, in the order indicated, in the foreign commerce of the United States. Another set of tables, giving the entries and clearances of steamers, in distinction from vessels of all classes, show that while 3,709,005 tons of foreign steamships cleared for England, the American steamships aggregated only the insignificant total of 41,648 tons, and there were no clearances of American steamers to Germany, the Atlantic ports of France, or the Netherlands, and no entries from Germany, Scotland, the French Atlantic or Spanish Mediterranean ports. American vessels, however, monopolize the sea-going commerce of the United States with British Columbia, and have a good lead also in that with the Maritime Provinces of Canada, and stand high in the Cuban trade. This decline and approaching extinction of the commercial marine of a nation containing sixty-five millions of people, doing an enormous amount of foreign traffic, and occupying a country bordering on two oceans, indented with numerous bays, gulfs and traversed by majestic rivers, is a remarkable phenomenon. It must have specific causes. Those causes, whether found in a suicidal fiscal system, in a tendency to effeminacy caused by luxurious habits, or in other circumstances and tendencies, are well worth studying by Canadians, with a view to profit by the object-lesson set before them as a warning.

GENERAL STRANGE ON CANADA AND AUSTRALIA.*

"I HAVE spent the greater part of a lifetime in Britain beyond seas. I was for fifteen years in Canada. For the greater part of that time I was engaged as one of the senior officers employed in training the Canadian Militia. Subsequently working on my own rancho, I saw a good deal of the ordinary civil life of the country, and, as I had the honour to command an independent column during the suppression of the Riel rebellion, I had the opportunity of seeing the Canadian Militia actively engaged. Earlier in life I was for six years in various parts of India, during peace and war-service, from Calcutta to Ladak. I was for some years in the Crown Colonies (West Indian and Mediterranean), passed through Egypt, paid a short visit to Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope, and I have now just returned from visiting all the independent colonies of Australasia." With this introduction General Strange begins his series of articles, in the *United Service Magazine*, referring chiefly to Australia and Canada. He is one of that class of men, to be found in large numbers only in London, whose wide experience has been rendered possible by the unique commonwealth of Great Britain, and by the spirit of enterprise that animates her sons. The mere fact that he belongs to the military profession is quite enough to excite a strong prejudice against him in minds that lose their equilibrium at the sight of red as completely as turkeys. But while every profession has limitations incident to it, and—for that matter, every man has his limitations and incomplete points of view—it would be folly to rule out military men, either as observers or witnesses to fact. Their education tends to make them look at every country from a defensive and offensive point of view, but it also tends to make them intolerant of wind-bags, and to

give them a high sense of honour and of the necessity of truthfulness. Indispensable as this latter qualification is, it is not so universal, even in English-speaking countries, as we could formerly boast. The western senator who considered West Point a "useless institution," on the ground that "you can't get a West-Pointer to tell a lie anyway," represents a very numerous constituency whose standard is the same as his, though they may not be equally frank or explicit in formulating their reasons. With an empire such as ours, it is all-important that we should be correctly informed with regard to the prevailing sentiment and the real forces at work in the great component parts. Only in this way are we likely to escape making grievous mistakes. Men, therefore, like General Strange, who, while in Canada, identified himself thoroughly with our public and civil life, and who has since made himself pretty well acquainted with the Australias and New Zealand, confer on us a great boon when they give straightforward accounts of what they have seen and learned. Especially does it seem important at this time that Canada and Australia should know more of each other, as well as Canada and the West Indies. In addition to Great Britain, those are the two main directions to which we must look for increased trade. In saying this, I, of course, run the risk of offending those superior persons who protest against any policy that contemplates the development of distant markets, and assure us that the only market worthy of our consideration is the United States. But why did Central Canada make sacrifices to get open ports like St. John and Halifax on the Atlantic, and Vancouver and Victoria on the Pacific, if it did not contemplate trade with the whole world? Is it not also as clear as the multiplication table that the chief obstacle to trading with our neighbours lies with them and not with us, and that the only way in which we can do anything to remove that obstacle is by making our commerce of greater value and more independent? In Australia proper there are three millions of our fellow-citizens, intelligent, enterprising, wealthy and—what is of more consequence—friendly. These are separated from Canada by only one ocean, and that, everyone knows, matter less in trade than a distance of one or two thousand miles by land. Could there be more favourable circumstances for promising a rapid development of trade between two countries? And ought not sister-colonies to treat each other as sister-states do? These are the questions for us, and the present, too, is the time for answering them by wise and energetic action.

The recent hurried visit which I paid to Australia does not warrant my writing much about that great continent, but it is sufficient to give me an appreciation of the careful study that General Strange has evidently bestowed upon it, and to permit me joining him in warning the public against being led astray "by brilliant and imaginative ready-writers of Irish origin," who find it easier to invent their facts than to give careful study to the state of the case. With them, one swallow makes a summer, especially if they are anxious for the arrival of summer. A Mr. Gossip, of New South Wales, quotes the report of a French-Canadian meeting, in an obscure newspaper, as proof that Canadians generally desire annexation to the United States. In the same way, writers with us quote from Australian newspapers, representing only the baser elements of the population, to prove that there is no common sentiment, or no consciousness of a tie between Australia and Canada, and that anyone who appealed to such a sentiment would only be laughed at for his pains. If they wish to quote from Australian newspapers, they should tell us what the Melbourne *Argus* and *Age* say, or the Sydney *Morning Herald*, or the best papers of Adelaide, Hobart and Brisbane. I know no daily newspapers outside of Great Britain equal to the first three in form as well as contents.

The Australians are developing different types of men, and therefore it does not do to judge them from specimens of one type that we may have met. Essentially, they are brave, eager, fond of amusement and excitement, and more indifferent to religion than any other division of the English-speaking race. There is a greater difference between the country and city-bred Australian than between similar classes in other nations, and the difference is not in favour of the "larrikin." Partly, it may be, because of their isolation from all the other great divisions of the world, they have less reverence for the past, either for its history, or its religion, or its monuments of art, than any other civilized people. One of their numerous tourists remarked to me concerning Westminster Abbey, that "it looked old and dirty." That, I think, was his sole remark. I suppose it might be paralleled by Mark Twain's indifference to Columbus, on the ground that he had died so long ago, and his demand to "trot out a live Egyptian and none of your old mummies," but there is no need to write under Mark's descriptions, this is satire, whereas my Australian friend was in sober earnest. On seeing another venerable pile, he—I think in strict truth I should say she—remarked scornfully to the paralyzed guide, "What's the good of keeping up all the ruins in the country? Why don't you pull them down and build new houses with the stones?" General Strange refers to a wealthy and cultivated Australian, a graduate of Oxford, who told him, "They did not desire their young people to waste time over the histories of played-out old peoples, but to make history for themselves." He adds, "I got no clear answer to my query, What sort of history do you suppose will be made by a people who are not only ignorant of the history of the great race from which they sprang, but of all other races?" This indifference to the past is sometimes

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