

most of us may deprecate the idea of hostilities of any kind on the part of our neighbours, all will be of one mind in the determination, should such a thing unhappily occur, to make the best of the situation, and refuse at any cost to yield to coercion of any kind.

THE London *Spectator* complains that Lord Rosebery "thinks only of opinion in the colonies and never of opinion in London." This contains at least a moiety of truth. Few who know the England of to-day can doubt that the *Spectator* is right in saying that England "will not fight for Canadian cod." Fewer still will doubt that the *Spectator* would have been equally near the mark had it added that England will not tax the food of her people to cement Canadian loyalty, or even to secure Canadian custom for her manufacturers. But those who know Canadian sentiment know that it is no less true that Canada will not fight to help England maintain some fancied balance of power in Europe, or to secure some territorial advantage in Africa, nor will Canada tax her people for the support of England's immense armaments. And who can blame the people of either country, the great majority of whom are engaged in a daily hand-to-hand conflict to keep the wolf from their own doors, for their lack of interest in quarrels with which they have no immediate concern and possibly no genuine sympathy? Disguise it as you may, three thousand miles of ocean are a formidable non-conductor. The sum of the whole matter in regard to Imperial Federation, stripped of the halo of misty splendour with which the loyal imagination surrounds it in the distant clouds, is that, on the one hand, England will never give what the colonies—Canada at least, of which alone we presume to speak—would want; and, on the other hand, Canada will never give what England would want. As for the rest, very few of those who understand the intense love of freedom from restraint which Canadians seem to inhale with their bracing atmosphere, and which makes them impatient of the slightest pressure of the yoke which they have, as provincialists, imposed upon themselves in Confederation, will, we think, doubt that Lord Rosebery is wrong in thinking that the retention of the colonies would be secured by any tightening of the bonds which unite them with the mother country, and the *Spectator* right in thinking that "the empire depends upon the present looseness of the federal ties."

LORD ROSEBERY'S eloquent plea for Imperial Federation, addressed to the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, will convince few of anything save the sincerity of his advocacy of an utterly visionary scheme. That the future relations of Great Britain to her great and growing colonies constitute a most difficult problem, no one who has given the least serious thought to the matter needs to be convinced. But the absolute hopelessness of all attempts to devise a practicable scheme of federation of the Empire becomes more and more apparent the more it is discussed. It is scarcely too much to say that Lord Rosebery's own speech, presenting all that can be said on behalf of the project by one of its ablest advocates, will operate powerfully against it. The considerable part of the speech which was devoted to showing by statistics the truth of the maxim that "the trade follows the flag" may be conclusive so far as the trade relations of the colonies with such foreign countries as have different languages, customs, and currencies are concerned. So far as it applies to Canada in its relations to the United States and the mother country, respectively, it is, we believe, without force, mainly for the reason that the Canadians, like Lord Rosebery himself, find it difficult "to consider the United States as a foreign power." Chambers of Commerce, such as that Lord Rosebery was addressing, are not in the habit of being much affected by sentiment, even though it be national sentiment. They know that matters of trade are matters of self-interest and of fact, and must so be regarded. It is impossible for anyone who is at all familiar with the facts of the case to doubt that, other things being equal, the great majority of the people of Canada would trade just as readily with the United States as with the mother country. Whether a given consignment or a given order shall be sent across the border or across the ocean is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, decided solely on the grounds of cost and convenience. Hence it is clear that, even assuming that any commercial union were possible between Canada and England, it would be in the power of the United States to more than offset the advantages of such union to Canada, by simply offering equally favourable terms, and this it would probably be to their advantage to do.

A GOOD deal of discussion was raised in England by Lord Bramwell's address before the Economical and Statistical section of the British Association at its annual meeting a few weeks since. This learned and brilliant lawyer had as his theme "Political Science." His lecture may be

described as a brave attempt to arrest the current of thought which has for some time past been sweeping the students of the "dismal science" towards new views and conclusions, and to turn it back into the old channel. He boldly declared that, in his judgment, the main governing precept of political economy is "*Laissez-faire*—let be." It is needless to say that to re-enunciate this as the cardinal principle of the science, is to condemn by wholesale a large proportion of British legislation, including Factory Acts, Merchant Shipping Acts, Land Acts, Education Acts, and a host of similar enactments which have their reason-to-be in a conviction that it is the duty of the State to protect the weak against the strong, the poor against the rich, and the ignorant against the cunning and unprincipled. It is far too late in the day for even Lord Bramwell's eloquence and wit to turn back the wheels of legislative progress and re-enthroned individual selfishness and greed as the supreme arbiters of the fate of the masses in the struggle for existence. The root fallacy in the exploded *laissez-faire* theory is perhaps best exposed in the remark of Cairnes, as quoted by one of Lord Bramwell's critics. It is easy enough to show that people, as a rule, follow their own interest, as they see it. But this is a very different thing from following their own interest in the sense in which it is co-incident with that of other people. All experience shows that a broad chasm yawns between the two principles considered as laws of conduct. "This chasm in the *laissez-faire* schools," says Cairnes, "has never been bridged; the advocates of the doctrine shut their eyes and leap over it." But it is the existence of this chasm which gives rise to the imperative necessity that the people as a body, that is the State, shall interpose its authority to secure the altruistic effect which the selfish instinct of the individual not only ignores, but too often antagonizes.

It cannot be denied that there is much force in one of the arguments used by the Bishop of Manchester, in his opening address as President of the Church Congress, to show that the work of such a congress cannot be relegated to the periodical press. "Newspapers and periodicals, like men, take definite sides, and, unfortunately, when they have taken their sides they are mainly read by the people who agree with them. You cannot bring both the *Church Times* and its readers and the *Record* and its readers into the same hall, force them to hear each other speak, to answer, to explain, and even, it may be, at times to retract and apologize." In these words the Bishop lays bare at a touch the radical defect of the modern party newspaper, whether religious or secular. It is, it is true, one of the hopeful signs of the times that the number of journals that manage to preserve a good degree of impartiality is slowly increasing. But even the most independent of these, so long as it is under the management of an individual, can hope to attain but a limited success. The most fair-minded and dispassionate manager is pretty sure to have his personal and party prejudices, and by these, in spite of his best efforts to hear both sides, his work will be more or less shaped and coloured. On the other hand there is something which, did it not reflect so keenly upon the intelligence and candour of the age, would be almost ludicrous in the eagerness with which multitudes who persuade themselves and profess to others that they are searchers after truth, seek out the papers which advocate the views to which they are in a manner pledged, and discard all others. There is, too, something not far removed from burlesque in the seriousness with which editors will marshal arguments in support of the opinions which they know are already held by their readers, while well aware that these arguments will not be read by one in a hundred of those who need to be convinced. May it not be that the newspaper of the future will be formed by amalgamation of those of opposing views? Suppose, for instance, *The Globe* and *The Empire* were to combine their editorial forces and henceforth, appear as a single paper, one-half of every issue being under the management of a Liberal, the other half being under that of a Conservative editor. Each reader, then, of either party would have both bane and antidote before him in the same sheet. We venture to recommend a five years' trial of the experiment, with a view of studying its effect upon Canadian politics.

"HE who excuses himself accuses himself." It might have been well for Sir Charles Warren, the Chief of the London Police, had he been reminded of the old French proverb, before going into print to explain the failure to ferret out the monster of Whitechapel notoriety. Notwithstanding the impatient criticisms of an excited press and public, no thoughtful tribunal would accept such a failure, temporary, it may still be hoped, as proof of want of efficiency on the part of the police, or acumen on that of the detectives. Neither policeman nor detective can be expected to have any supernatural powers. It is quite conceivable that the best efforts of the very highest order of ability in both may at times be baffled by