

"The French are doing as their aggressive British neighbours have often done. The British don't like it any more than the French liked their doings; but that is no reason why the British should call them names." So says the September Review of Reviews. The statement is at best only a half truth. The British have often, in following up the advance guards of commerce, been drawn into conflict with savage tribes, and the conflict has generally ended in the conquest and opening up of new territory for civilization. Then the defence of this territory has often led, as in the somewhat recent case of Burmah, to the necessity for further conquest in order to the safety of that already gained. But it must be admitted that, of late years at least, Great Britain has entered upon any such conflict with reluctance and only after much provocation. We do not say that this has always been so. We speak only of comparatively recent years, during which the ethics governing the relations of strong nations to the weak and the uncivilized have, it may be hoped, become better recognized than before. The Review writer may safely be challenged to produce an instance within the last fifty years in which the British have designedly provoked a quarrel with a weak nation in order to gain a pretext for spoliation. We doubt whether any instance can be found in any period of her history in which, after a weak nation had humbly submitted to her most extortionate demands, she took advantage of the submission and humiliation, in order to extort still further concessions, or added insult to injury in order to the furtherance of some occult purpose. Great Britain has sins of aggression and self-aggrandizement enough to answer for, but there has always been a spice of magnanimity in her treatment of her weaker foes which seems to be wholly wanting in French republicanism as it exists at the present moment.

The proposed departure of Mr. Goldwin Smith at an early day, for a prolonged visit to England, reminds us of what Canadian literature, politics, and philanthropy owe to this distinguished scholar and writer, and of the loss they will sustain in his absence. In the course of the many years during which he has made Toronto his residence he has left the impress of his high character and exceptional learning and ability upon the public as well as the literary life of the whole Dominion. In his mastery of a singularly pure and graceful style, wedded always to clear and vigorous thought, he has, by common consent, very few peers and no superior among living writers. In the public spirit which has prompted him from time to time to quit the quiet delights of his literary labors, and take a part, often a thankless part, in the discussion of great public questions, he has set an example that many scholars and thinkers in other lands, as well as in Can-

ada, would do well to emulate. His generous and well-directed interest in social questions has been continuously manifested in his connection with the charitable and philanthropic institutions of the City, and his unostentatious liberality in aid of the poor and suffering have been a stimulus to others and entitle him to the lasting gratitude of many. Mr. Goldwin Smith is a man who has in an eminent degree the courage of his convictions. He never stays to inquire into their popularity before expressing them. No one not blinded by party prejudice could fail to admire his courageous honesty, however vehemently he might dissent from some of his conclusions. The Week, in particular, owes him the gratitude due to the man who founded it, and who has ever been its warm friend, though his personal connection with its management is severed. We have sometimes been obliged to dissent from his views, yet we have never ceased and can never cease to admire his talents, to honour his disinterestedness, and to regard his views on whatever subject he touches as worthy of the most careful attention.

We have refrained from comment upon the proposal to form a colonial party in the British House of Commons, hoping for fuller information in regard to the specific ends which such a party would be expected to keep in view, and the modes by which it would be sought to reach those ends. In the absence of such information and of definite knowledge of any material cause for complaint of ignorance or of inattention to colonial matters, so far as those come within the purview of the Imperial Parliament, we are not convinced that such an organization is needed, or that it would be likely to promote the well-being of the Colonies to any great extent. There is even, to our thinking, a possibility that the very existence of such a party in the Commons might to a certain extent tend to prejudice the interests of which it had constituted itself the guardian. We say "constituted itself," not with any intention of imputing undue officiousness to those who are promoting this movement, but simply to denote what would be, to our thinking, a very serious detriment to the influence of the party, viz., the fact that we can see no way in which it could be made genuinely representative. Its members might, of course, as has been suggested, put themselves in communication with the Agents-General or other official representatives of the Colonies, but it is questionable whether the attempt, or suspicion of an attempt, to bring influence to bear through such an organization might not lessen rather than augment the official and legitimate influence of these Agents with the Government of the day. Any light the Agent or High Commissioner of a given Colony might be able to shed upon the state of feeling in his Colony, with re-

gard to any subject of colonial legislation, would almost certainly be asked for and communicated directly and officially to the Government, possibly with better effect than it could have when percolated through the unofficial and irresponsible media of the Parliamentary party in question. These representatives could hardly be working with a Parliamentary party at the same time that they were in official communication with the Colonial Secretary. But we are writing to some extent in the dark. Fuller information may show that we are misconceiving the proposal in some material respect.

The eyes of many in Great Britain and Canada as well as in the United States are now upon the Ways and Means Committee at Washington. Little reliance can be placed upon the newspaper correspondents' forecasts of the Committee's action in respect to the tariff, though these may perhaps afford some indication of the direction in which the current is setting. Should these guesses prove true in any large measure with reference to the action of the Committee, especially in the alleged enlargement of the free list, and should the result, if the tariff Bill run the gauntlet in the two Houses without serious mutilation, the world might be congratulated on the result. A great forward movement would have been commenced. The reform so well begun would almost surely be carried forward by its own momentum until the United States should have taken its place side by side with Great Britain in the van of the march of commercial freedom. With these two great Anglo-Saxon nations thus strengthening each other's hands and moving forward to capture the world's trade, the protectionist powers of Europe would soon have to cast the fetters off their industries or see them go to the wall. It is true that looking at the matter from a more selfish standpoint, Great Britain might seem to have good reason to fear the rivalry of her inventive and energetic cousin, and to prefer that the Republic should continue to wear her fetters. But the reciprocal benefits derived from freer intercourse with each other would more than counteract such selfish impulses on either side and bring, in all probability, to each such a tide of prosperity as would sweep away all barriers of jealousy and distrust.

We have no sympathy with the view that Canadians should, in the meantime, studiously refrain from uttering a word of encouragement or congratulation to the tariff-reformers over the border, lest the manifest desire of Canada to see the reform hastened forward might put a fresh weapon into the hands of those who are doing their best to retard it. To say nothing of the folly of supposing that the politicians at Washington are in the dark with reference to Canada's interest in the matter, it is one