

reciprocity in the Dominion will be unable to extract much encouragement from the announcement. Perhaps the most interesting and suggestive portion of the message, as it relates to all nations, and to Canada in particular, is that in which the President points out how the authority with which he was clothed by Congress, empowering him to exclude from the markets of the United States the products of any nation which "should perpetuate unjust discriminations against the meats" of the Republic, have enabled him to bring such pressure to bear as has caused Germany, Denmark, Italy, Austria and France to open their ports to "inspected" American meats. Taken in connection with the pressure of a kindred kind whereby Mr. Blaine has secured the advantageous trade arrangements above mentioned with the South American Republics and the Spanish West Indies, we have here distinctly brought to view a kind of commercial weapon which, if not exactly novel in character, has certainly never before been used to the same extent, or with the same effect, by any other nation. As a matter of fact, no other nation has ever, we suppose, been in a position to so use it. The situation is one of startling importance in its bearing upon the great trade questions which are coming to play so large a part in international relations. Given a nation of sixty-five millions, immensely wealthy, possessing within its own boundaries such vast expanses of fertile soil and such variety of climate and productions as to render it to a greater degree than any other nation capable of supplying the necessaries of life to its own people, and yet, as a result largely of the luxurious habits of that people, affording one of the best markets in the world for many of the products of other nations; let that nation enforce a highly protective tariff, such as the conditions named enable it to indulge in, and it is evident that it has in its hands a weapon which, skilfully used, may enable it to impose, in a large measure, its own terms upon other nations having extensive dealings with it. This view of the case may be commended to those who are urging that Great Britain, seeing how injuriously the McKinley tariff is affecting her industrial interests in important lines, should adopt a policy of retaliation. The conditions, as British statesmen of both parties have again and again recognized, are too unequal. The nation which cannot supply a third of the food necessary for the support of its own population has simply no chance in such a contest of tariffs. To increase the price of food for its labourers would be but to add to their difficulties. In this fact, as we have before pointed out in effect, is the key to the apparent contradiction in Lord Salisbury's Birmingham speech a week or two since. Lord Salisbury has now himself corrected the mistake of those who inferred from some of the admissions in that speech that he was in favour of protection. In whatever direction the counteracting force may be found, to seek it in a policy that would increase the cost of her people's food would be simply suicidal.

PRESIDENT HARRISON thinks that the country has reason to be satisfied with the operation of the McKinley tariff, and deprecates continued agitation for its repeal or modification as likely to be injurious to trade. With reference to the latter plea it may be observed that it is a favourite one with the friends of any trade policy which may at any time have been established in any country. There is, too, always a certain force in it, as any agitation looking to a change of the tariff, or trade policy, will of necessity tend, in proportion to its strength, to unsettle trade and increase the timidity of capital. Nevertheless the argument is not likely to have much effect upon the minds of those who have no faith in the existing policy, inasmuch as, if its validity were admitted, it would effectively bar the door against the possibility of tariff reform under any circumstances. Touching the President's satisfaction with the operation of the Act, several observations suggest themselves. In the first place it is evident that a nation with the boundless capital, energy, and resources of the United States is sure to prosper under, or in spite of, any fiscal policy which the majority may see fit to adopt. Again, the circumstances thus far have been peculiarly favourable, owing to the excellent harvest on this side of the ocean, on the one hand, and the widespread scarcity in European countries, on the other. But beyond all this it must, we believe, be admitted on unprejudiced consideration that, looked at from the point of view of the United States alone—a nation whose exceptionally great extent of territory and of resources has enabled it to flourish for many years past under a highly restrictive tariff—the McKinley Bill is really a more logical and con-

sistent measure of protection than any which has preceded it. In saying this we have of course no regard to the character of the Act as considered in itself and in the motives which underlie it, or in its effects upon any other people. In the eyes of a consistent protectionist the merits of any given measure must be in the direct ratio of its efficiency in shutting out such foreign products as would come into competition with those which are or can be produced in the country, while, at the same time, the lower the imposts upon all such necessaries of life as cannot be produced at home the cheaper will its artisans and other labourers be able to live, and the lower will be the cost of production of those commodities which it is desired to produce for either the home or the foreign market. Thus regarded, the McKinley Bill is certainly skilfully drawn and, with its almost prohibitive taxes on certain lines of goods and its extensive free list, approaches much more nearly to the standard of a thoroughly logical protective measure than our own National Policy. It is only necessary to refer to the article of sugar as dealt with by the two countries to find an illustration of this. In so speaking, we are regarding the Blaine modifications as an essential part of the tariff whose workings President Harrison approves. Of course all this is far from an admission that the prosperity of the United States might not be much greater and much healthier under a thoroughly liberal trade policy. If it be true, as alleged by the New York correspondent of the London *Daily News*, that the McKinley Bill has materially increased the price of nearly all the necessaries of life, without having brought about any corresponding increase in wages, the fact is very suggestive in this connection. Still less does what we have said ignore the fact that the same protective policy—equivalent as it is to free trade over a vast extent of territory and amongst a large number of rich and populous States—under which the great Republic flourishes, might, if pushed to the same extreme, mean stagnation and ruin to a nation one-tenth its size and occupying a territory embraced virtually within the range of eight or ten degrees of latitude.

#### MR. LAURIER'S NEW DEPARTURE.

THE able and eloquent address lately delivered at Boston by the acknowledged leader of the Liberal party of the Dominion suggests, if it does not proclaim, a new departure. Mr. Laurier is an orator, a scholar and a gentleman. He is a French-Canadian *sans reproche*, and a loyal subject of Her Majesty, so long as the British flag waves over his head, with the consent of Mr. Laurier and his compatriots. It would not cost him a sigh if the option were given him to swap the Union Jack for the Star-spangled Banner. But he is neither a rebel nor a crusader. His rôle is that of a political Moses, who will lead his followers into the promised land with the consent of the British Pharaoh, if possible, and with a confident expectation of assistance, miraculous or otherwise, if Pharaoh should prove obdurate.

With this brief diagnosis of his temperament and political tendencies, we proceed to notice two or three postulates of his Boston speech. A brief historical review of the course of events anterior to the independence of the now United States suggests some very natural reflections: "What a change," he exclaims, "has taken place since those early days! What progress civilization has made! The relations now prevailing between the two countries are more worthy of two neighbouring American nations. Yet, though much has been done in that direction, much more remains to be done; the relations of the two nations are not yet what they should be, and this is the thought which, above all others at this moment, oppresses me."

Not many Canadians will dissent from Mr. Laurier's opinion that "the relations of the two nations are not yet what they should be." But how are these unfriendly relations to be improved? They are sixty millions and we are five. It is obvious that, if we cannot persuade, we are too poor to bribe, and too weak to coerce. But disparity of numbers ought not to prevent reciprocity in matters of trade. In fertility of soil and adaptation to the production of sturdy men and fruitful women, our half of the continent is equal, if not superior, to theirs. We make and unmake our own laws without let or hindrance from the Mother Country, and we impose the same duties on her imports as upon those from other countries. Mr. Laurier is oppressed by this condition of affairs, but who is to blame and what remedy does he propose? Is it free trade with Brother Jonathan, and with him only? If yea, Mr. Laurier will, no doubt, propose a commercial alliance with the United States, and high protection against all other nations, including Great Britain. He is too able and too honest a man to beat about the bush on a question so grave, so far-reaching and so revolutionary as this. *Aut Caesar aut nullus* is evidently his *mot d'ordre*.

Mr. Laurier's allusion to the rebellion of British subjects against their king in 1776 was deftly made to justify the rebels, and to remind their descendants of the pangs

and misgivings of their ancestors when they were forced to resort to arms. We suspect the descendants of the rebels of 1776 who mingled with his French-Canadian admirers in Boston were too few in number to give him a very boisterous encore at this point of his oration.

Mr. Laurier very candidly acknowledged that England "readily grants to Canada every right, every principle, every privilege which she denied to the people of the thirteen colonies," and, further, that "the British Parliament not only does not pretend to impose taxes upon us, or to force British goods and wares into Canadian harbours," but permits us "to claim and exercise the right of levying duty upon British goods and wares just as upon the goods and wares of any other country in the world."

No doubt Mr. Laurier's American auditors were somewhat surprised by this revelation. The average American is apt to believe that Canadians do not make their own laws, but meekly receive them ready made from the Mother Country. Except certain enactments of imperial and national concern, the Parliament of Canada frames and enacts the laws of Canada. The same power has been conferred upon Australia and other colonies of the Empire. It is doubtful if any of her colonies would, to-day, willingly accept independence and consequent isolation. Indeed, Mr. Laurier himself assured his American as well as his Canadian auditors that "Canada is still a colony, but, as already said, it is a self-governing country. The tie which now binds Canada to the Mother Land is Canada's own will, and"—giving vent to his enthusiasm, he declared—"it is with pride I say it, though still a colony, yet *Canada is free!*"

To every well-informed and fair-minded American this question must have suggested itself: "If Canada be free, what are Canadians whining about? If they unite with us it must be on a population basis. That will give them at most *one* vote (Canadian) to *thirteen* (American). But Mr. Laurier will do well not to trust Jonathan implicitly. Let him read the history of the enfranchised black population of the United States. Mr. Bryce tells us in the *North American Review* for December, that, "speaking generally, the fact is too well known to need either proof or illustration that over large areas and in really important elections, such as those of Congressman and for Presidential electors, the coloured people are not suffered to use the rights which the amendments to the constitution were intended to secure." (P. 646.)

We are, perhaps, not warranted in assuming that the white population of Canada would be driven from the polls in Federal elections like the blacks of the South. But our American neighbours have discovered many "ways that are dark," by which candidates who failed to obtain a majority could still be elected. Mr. Laurier, we believe, would not countenance chicanery or fraud in elections, but would he be able to restrain the "dark" ways of his collaborateurs?

Many of Mr. Laurier's friends will be much surprised by his revival of the accusation against England and Canada for permitting the representatives of the Southern States to purchase ships and supplies in English and Canadian markets. If this commercial privilege had been denied to the North and conceded to the South his indignant censures might be excused. But international law, as accepted by civilized nations, does not forbid neutrals to sell ships and munitions of war to belligerents. "The neutral," says Kent, "is not to favour one of them to the detriment of the other; and it is an essential character of neutrality to furnish no aids to one party which the neutral is not equally ready to furnish to the other."

The attitude of Canada during the great rebellion was strict neutrality. Fugitives from the South and the official representatives of the North were treated with equal comity. When Jake Thompson, and other Southern desperadoes, attempted to make Canada a base of operations against the Northern States, the Canadian authorities promptly interfered. A member of the Cabinet, well known at Washington as a pronounced friend of the anti-slavery party, was specially charged with the duty of preventing breaches of neutrality. The confederate plotters were determined to liberate their friends imprisoned at Johnson's Island, and for that and other purposes purchased a steamer called the *Georgian*, which was then undergoing repairs at Holland Landing, Ontario. The *locus* of the Canadian Government at that period was the city of Quebec. The Minister charged with such matters, hearing that the *Georgian* was being fitted out for a raid upon Johnson's Island, for the purpose of releasing some thousands of confederate soldiers imprisoned there, ordered an immediate seizure of the vessel, and directed his officer to remove essential parts of the machinery to prevent a possible escape. Thompson, and his abettors in Canada, were thus checkmated, and the attempt to embroil the Canadian Government and people in that terrible conflict between the South and the North did not succeed.

Mr. Laurier assured his Boston audience that "the American people"—including, of course, the Rebel Confederacy of the South—"had then too just a cause of being incensed against Canada," because, in the opinion of Mr. Blaine, she had "sympathized with the Southern States in their conflict." No one is better informed or more capable of exploding that impeachment than Mr. Laurier himself. He pleads youth and inexperience to anticipate and avert criticism, but the verdict of history is against him. "The American people" were engaged in a domestic war, the fiercest, the most sanguinary of modern times. It was said that 40,000 Canadians volun-