

ground on which Canada could claim a right to interfere with the action of her sister Colony in the matter. The only reply we have seen from Hon. Mr. Tupper was contained in a speech in which, so far as we could gather from the report, he somewhat hesitatingly adhered to his original interpretation of the purport of the draft treaty in question. But the matter certainly needs to be cleared up, for Canadians have a right to know the whole facts, in order that they may be in a position to do justice to their colonial cousins. No doubt the question will be brought up when Parliament meets, but it seems desirable that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries should, for the sake of his own reputation, either substantiate his statement or frankly admit his error.

THE Mayor and Council of Toronto have taken a serious responsibility in permitting the practice of cutting ice on the bay for cooling purposes to be continued. Apart from considerations of anybody's self-interest, which should be held entirely subordinate in such a matter, the very fact that the ice so procured is admitted to be unfit for ordinary household purposes, should be sufficient to condemn its use in the butchers' refrigerators. That at least is the view which would, we think, at once suggest itself to the unscientific mind. In a matter in which the lives and health of the people are at stake, no risks should be taken. It is in the highest degree unlikely that hundreds of tons of this ice can be in use in the butchers' establishments all over the city without more or less of it finding its way into general consumption. And even if it were possible to avoid that danger and guard against the use of the impure article in every case for any other than cooling purposes, is it quite clear that the disease germs can be taken into the system only as they are swallowed with the food or water? Is not their very presence in the atmosphere a constant source of danger? That is a question on which we should have the best scientific opinion before deciding a question of so much importance. If there is a doubt on this point, would it not, in the meantime, be safer and consequently right to give the residents of the city the benefit of the doubt? It is urged that to forbid the cutting and use of ice from the Bay would mean the loss of employment to many citizens during the winter season when employment is most needed and hardest to be found. It is evident that even this consideration, the importance of which we fully admit, should not prevail against the public health. But there is surely a fallacy in this reasoning. The ice is a necessity for the butchers. It must be procured from some locality. The only result of closing the old source of supply would be to cause the butchers and others interested to look elsewhere for a purer article. If it had to be brought from a greater distance, or procured with greater difficulty, the effect could only be to increase rather than diminish the demand for labour. One thing is clear. So long as there is any good reason to fear that the ice in question is a source of danger to the health of the city, it is a disgrace and a crime to permit its use, and those who are the responsible guardians of the interests of the citizens at every point, are guilty of a neglect of duty in permitting it. Should not the matter be left in the hands of the Board of Health and they held responsible for the results?

IF enthusiasm and perseverance in what the advocate believes to be a good cause deserves success, Col. Howard Vincent certainly ought to succeed in his advocacy of the project of an Imperial Customs Union. If it can be shown that such a scheme would benefit the colonies without injuring the Mother Country, and that it is within the bounds of the reasonably practical, no true Canadian could desire to put the slightest obstacle in the way of its promoters. In the meanwhile, it can only be of service to the cause to point out clearly from time to time, not only the difficulties which beset the scheme in itself considered, but any weaknesses or fallacies in the arguments advanced in its support, which may tend to raise false hopes in the minds of those who may be inclined to favour it, without having time or opportunity to make personal investigation in regard to its real prospects and merits. We have more than once confessed ourselves to be utterly sceptical as to the possibility of inducing the people of Great Britain to consent to any scheme which proposes to again tax their food, no matter by whom the proposal may be advocated or for what purpose. We have seen as yet no reason to change our mind on this point. The applause with which a public assembly of British operatives in any locality particularly affected by the operation of the McKinley tariff may greet a sanguine orator who has a rem-

edy to propose, in the absence of anyone disposed to point out the objections which in the opinion of others as well qualified to pronounce an opinion would make the remedy worse than the disease, cannot be regarded as such a reason. Be that, however, as it may, the people of the Mother Country may safely be left to decide the question, so far as their interests are involved, for themselves. The practical point for us to consider is the relation of the question to our own people and interests. To what extent did Col. Howard Vincent's Canadian tour justify him in the very sanguine representations which he is making in England in respect to the warmth of his reception in Canada, and the heartiness with which his project was welcomed by the Canadian people? There is no question of intentional misrepresentation on the part of Col. Vincent. He no doubt is fully persuaded that the great majority of Canadians are ready to give a hearty endorsement to the principle of an Imperial customs union. Nor need it be doubted that the general tone of the meetings which he addressed while in Canada was such as to give apparent ground for that belief. The real question is, to what extent were those meetings representative of the sentiments of the Canadian people as a whole? May it not have been that the announcement of his subject and the general purpose of his tour were such as would naturally have the effect of bringing out in the main only those who were favourable to the scheme of which he is the ardent advocate? If so, it is clear that any conclusions based upon the verdict of those meetings would be necessarily one-sided and misleading. In this connection it must of course be borne in mind that Col. Vincent's mission was in no sense official. Had it been otherwise—had he come clothed with representative powers such that it would be understood that important conclusions and perhaps legislative measures depended upon his report, the meetings might have assumed a very different complexion. As it was and is, it is, to say the least, questionable whether anything more can be inferred from those meetings than that a considerable and not unimportant section of the Canadian people would be prepared to consider favourably, a proposition looking to some form of commercial union with the Mother Land. To what extent even they would be prepared to make such a union reciprocal by substantial tariff concessions in favour of British manufactures, would be another and a very important question.

WE certainly desire to do full justice to Col. Vincent's patriotic motives and to appreciate at their true value his disinterested efforts to draw into closer commercial relations the scattered portions of the great British Empire. Has he the statesmanlike qualities which are generally found essential to success in leading an important movement of the magnitude of that which he is now seeking to promote? We have not yet, perhaps, the means of judging. But it must be confessed that some portions of his reported speeches suggest grave doubts on this point. Note, for instance, such passages as that in which he describes the journalistic enemy—whoever that may have been—as having "attacked him (me) with malignant venom from town to town, sought by poisoned words to misrepresent your patriotic feelings, and, mindful of his dastard aim to bring about the independence of the over-sea portions of the Empire of Britain, to separate them from the Motherland, dished up with vinegar and garlic all the garrulous growlings of venal traitors and set them before the Sheffield public as the real expressions of Canadian feeling," or that in which he characterizes the arguments of those whose views do not agree with his own as "the post-prandial maunderings of sleek professors," or "the essays of venerable peers and the twaddle of party hacks." But whatever may be thought of the probable effect of that mode of parrying the criticisms of unbelievers, it is at least incumbent upon the advocates of a revolutionary change in the fiscal policy of the Empire, to give a clear answer to the fundamental objections of those who are not necessarily unfriendly to the project, however they may be disposed to examine closely into its merits before committing themselves to unqualified approval. This is, we hold, especially true of the crucial dilemma which has more than once been presented in these columns, which has also been urged from the opposite point of view by leading English journals, and to which we have never yet seen any clear answer, or attempt at answer. That dilemma may be stated from the Canadian side somewhat as follows: Canadian farmers are, we are assured, to be greatly benefited by a discriminating tax on foreign grains at British ports in

favour of colonial products. But the British market for colonial grains could not be made freer than it now is, thanks to the free-trade policy of the Mother Country. It can hardly be denied that that market is already ample to absorb all, and many times more than all, the present products of the colonies and all they are likely to produce under the most favourable conditions, for many years to come. Of what possible benefit then could a British tax upon foreign imports be to Canadian farmers, save by increasing the price of their products in the British markets, a result which the British labourer is constantly assured would not follow, and which he would be likely to say very emphatically must not follow? Sir Charles Tupper's singular theory that the price of grain may be raised without any increase in the price of bread, the amount of the tax being either borne by the generous bakers or diffused in some mysterious way into space between the passage of the grain from the docks and its emergence in manufactured shape from the ovens, is, we fancy, rather too rarified to find many adherents.

DEATH is making prodigious and relentless strides these winter months, and is claiming his victims with an impartiality which recalls strikingly the familiar words of the old Roman poet. Not only does he knock with equal boldness at the hut of the labourer and the palace of the king; he shows likewise that he is no respecter of the plain cloth of the parson or the prelatical purple. The disappearance from the stage within a few weeks of each other, of the two men who, in widely different spheres and by broadly contrasted methods, wielded perhaps more influence respectively in religious circles than any other two men in England, affords much material for reflection and comment for those whose province it is to deal with religious matters. Though the secular journal may scarcely feel at liberty to enter into this province to any great extent, it may not be amiss for even it to note the great gulf which separated these two men, albeit both of them professed to be servants and disciples of the same Master, and to draw their instruction and inspiration, in a large measure, from the same book. That necessary modifying clause, "in a large measure," covers, it is true, what was probably the chief source of the very different views held and the very different methods adopted by the two men. While the one recognized a living personal authority as co-ordinate with the inspired volume, the motto of the other was always "the Book! and nothing but the Book!" We think it was Cardinal Gibbons who was reported at one time as saying that the Roman Catholics and the Baptists stood at the two extremes of religious thought, all other denominations occupying intermediate ground at a greater or less remove from one or other of the two poles of full sacerdotalism and absolute individualism. Be that as it may, it would not be easy to conceive a more complete contrast than that between the Baptist Minister standing up without surplice or stole—we are not sure whether he retained to the last the white necktie which in the earlier years of his ministry he wore as a slight mark of the clerical calling—on an unadorned platform, preaching in the simplest Anglo-Saxon, with no accompaniment in the service but that of congregational singing, and the gorgeous robes and elaborate ceremonial of the mass as celebrated by a Cardinal of the Romish Church. When we come to the closer test of deeds in the service of humanity, it is perhaps less easy to distinguish between the two species of clericalism by their fruits. Each was earnest in good works, self-denying, devoted. If Spurgeon was the more active in deeds of charity, even consecrating the means given him for his own personal use to the work of feeding the hungry, clothing the destitute and educating the ignorant, it may be said that Manning, on the other hand, was broader in his sympathies with the masses in their struggle against the tyranny of capital and caste, as was evidenced by his great services to the dock-labourers in their life-and-death struggle a year or two since. In one most important respect, however, it seems difficult to doubt—though of course the adherents of Manning's ecclesiastical system will more than doubt—that the general influence of the dissenting preacher's life and teaching tended much more powerfully to the permanent freeing and uplifting of the downcast and oppressed of every class than that of the great Roman prelate. The one stood for the fullest individual freedom of thought, the other for absolute authority in religion. By consequence, the influence of the one was wholly on the side of universal education and intelligence, the other on that of unquestioning intellectual subjection. The question which