

to the conviction of these men was carried on mainly by a committee of the "Bar Association." Of the four members of this energetic committee, three were Democrats. The above and similar facts go to mark what we may hope will prove to be but the commencement of a great awakening to the wickedness and danger of political fraud. It will probably bear good fruit in days to come.

The very worst enemies of the destitute are the lazy impostors who go about seeking whom they may impose upon with their harrowing fabrications. These constitute a real danger at the present time. A little while ago our city papers were filled with stories of destitution and suffering such as might move the heart of a miser. Just now a reaction seems to have set in, and every one we take up has some tale of imposition practised upon some large-hearted citizen. It is right that these cases should be published, by way of warning to the impulsive and indiscreet. But there is great danger that they may do much to close up the channels of legitimate charity and cause indifference to the sufferings of the honest poor. When some of the evening papers, with doubtful generosity, were bestowing food and clothing indiscriminately, it was necessary for anyone of ordinary discernment only to stand for a few moments within view of the crowds gathered about the points of distribution and study the features and movements of the expectant waiters, in order to convince himself that the percentage of impostors among them was, to say the least, large. There is little room for doubt that all such methods are unwise and injurious. They become doubly mischievous when they lead many to the illogical conclusion that because there are so many undeserving who are ready at any moment to make a trade of their poverty, there is little real distress in the city. The deserving poor do not flaunt their poverty on public thoroughfares. It is beyond question that there are many industrious and honest families in the city to whom even a day's work would be a most welcome boon. The experience of those who have found a labor-test effective in causing the disappearance of numbers of those who pretended to be in search of work, may be offset by that of others who have found skilled workmen ready and eager to do any work, no matter how rough or menial. The moral is, that those who are able and willing to give employment to the destitute should enquire amongst the respectable laboring classes, who know of neighbors' hardships. Such enquiries would quickly reveal hundreds of half-famished ones eager for work of any kind. Try it.

The able and well-informed writer of the series of letters on Canada, which are appearing in the *London Times*, says in a recent letter:

"There seemed to me to be a consensus of opinion throughout the North-west, in the agricultural communities of the East, and among men of independent thought everywhere, that the first object of Canadian statesmanship should now be to make the Dominion a cheap country to live in. A large inflow of population to the unsettled areas, the greatest good of the greatest number in all parts, seem to depend on this. Even manufactures, which have made great strides under the impulse of protection, now feel a still greater need of the wide market which only a large and prosperous agricultural population can supply."

These are wise words. A large and prosperous agricultural population is the first and great need of the Dominion. It is needed, not only for the filling up of the North-west, but for the proper development of the resources of the older Provinces, which have a wealth of undeveloped possibilities in agriculture, as well as in the products of the mines, forests and fisheries. With the progress of agriculture all other industries will keep pace. It provides the soundest of all bases for building up trade and manufactures of all kinds suitable to the country. Though the writer of the letters thinks that the protective system was not a mistake, we need not stay to argue that question with him, seeing that he now admits so clearly the necessity for tariff reform. He is of opinion that "the great and dominant trading interests of Canada lie with Britain rather than with the United States"—an opinion with which no one need quarrel. So fair and broad-minded a writer cannot fail to realize that this is no reason why we should not also cultivate to the fullest extent our trade with the United States, and in fact with every other accessible part of the world. Open up as widely as possible the channels of trade with all the world, and the intelligent self-interest of business men may be depended upon to find out in which direction their true prosperity lies. The trouble with some of those who have had the direction of affairs in Canada has been that they were afraid to trust our people to choose markets for themselves. Let them free the commerce of the country from its fetters, thus making it a cheap country to live in, and so encourage the influx of population and capital, and the laws of commerce will do the rest.

One somewhat curious passage in Sir John Thompson's speech in reply to Mr. Laurier's criticisms on the Address challenges attention. We refer to his defence of the practice of the Government—which had also been, he said, the practice of their predecessors—of receiving deputations from the representatives of various business interests in private, while the interviews with farmers, conducted by the tariff Commissioners, were open to the public. The secrecy accorded to the conferences with manufacturers and business men was defended on the ground that it "often happened that the conference was

with regard to these men's private business affairs, to their profits and to their capital." Now it must be confessed that there is something anomalous, or at least unbecoming, in the fact of the Government of the country which, under a system of high taxation such as now prevails, has the power to make or mar the fortunes of individuals, holding private conferences with the representatives of various industries, with a view to the readjustment of the tariff. It seems to connect the processes of the Government which stands for the whole people and should know nothing of personal influences in the discharge of its duties, with the private interests of individuals, in a way that is well adapted to awaken jealousies and suspicions. The Government want information with reference to the operation of the tariff, of course. But why should a manufacturer's private affairs be any more sacred than those of a farmer? If he is making only a fair profit from his business, why should he object to having the fact known? And why should one man's personal interests be considered of greater importance than those of another?

Suppose, for instance, that the Government is influenced by the representations of a few men, engaged in a given business, to retain a higher rate of duty upon their special products than they were otherwise disposed to do. Suppose, even, that these interested parties should succeed in convincing the Government that the welfare, not only of themselves as proprietors, but of a few dozens or hundreds of their employees, will be promoted by the higher rate of duty. May it not be, is it not even highly probable, that a thousand or a hundred thousand consumers of those products may, by the same tariff, be compelled to pay a higher price for them? These have no similar opportunity of stating their side of the case and bringing their personal influence to bear upon the Government in favour of the reduction of tariff which would be in their interests, because they have no means of knowing what has taken place between the producers and the Ministers. Is this fair? Is it just? Is it becoming in a free state? Whatever may have been the practice of any or all past governments, we are inclined to believe that Mr. Laurier's objection was well taken, and that all conferences between Ministers of the Crown and private individuals, in regard to trade and tariff questions in which the whole people are interested, should be carried on in the light of day, and in the hearing of the whole people.

Those in Canada who are trying to follow the course of affairs in the British Parliament, especially with reference to the Home-Rule question, must have been sorely puzzled by the cabled extract from Lord Rosebery's speech in the House of Lords, coming as it did so immediately after his