

his trade is leaving him, and that his profits are reduced to a minimum, it follows that the workmen depending upon him must suffer in like proportion, and, as a consequence, the rate of wages must come down, or employment must cease—strikes, lockouts and painful and undeserved distress are the inevitable results. Granted that the theory of free and unrestricted commerce with all quarters of the universe is as bold as it is magnificent; granted that the idea, by whomsoever originated (and advocated by no one more consistently than by our good and wise Prince Consort), is both grand and glorious in its conception; granted that to give effect to it has been the aim, as it has been the long accepted policy of successive Governments; it cannot be denied that the slogan of "want of reciprocity" has, from the first, checkmated our philanthropic efforts, and obliged us now to confess, after 30 years of trial, that in practice our free trade is, at best, but one-sided; and that while we are opening our ports to the commerce and manufactures of the world, free and unrestricted, other countries, without conferring upon us any reciprocal benefit, are taking advantage, without scruple, of our magnanimity, but disastrous (because one-sided) liberality. * * * We have tried free trade, and it has been found wanting. We have done our best to impress other countries with the reasonableness of our policy, and in return they scoff at our blindness, and turn a deaf ear to our remonstrances. In the meantime, partial ruin and wholesale depression and distress are staring us in the face. Our local burdens are increasing, our exports diminishing. Our working classes, unsettled, are waging open war in the cause of labor against capital; discontented, because unable to find the real cause of their discontent; clamoring for their participation in the profits, which can hardly be said to exist, and yet unable to account for the hesitation and inability of their employers to accede to what they consider are only their just demands."

Other extracts might be given from other authorities, all tending to show the growing feeling in England in favor of some change of policy. The effort in the meantime, is directed chiefly to induce foreign countries to modify their tariffs in the interest of English manufacturers; but, failing to accomplish this, there is no doubt that the great question in the almost immediate future in England, will be this question of free trade and protection.

The Great Issue.

The issue, as we have said, is a very square one. Canada has immense and varied resources; she has an enormous sea line, great deposits of coal and iron, and other minerals facilities for foreign and domestic trade, and immense territories awaiting settlers from the old world. The question which we have to decide is: how can all these resources be best developed, all those hidden mines of wealth be best made to subserve the growth and future greatness of our Dominion? Mr. Cartwright has announced in the most formal manner that Government can have no influence in promoting

the commercial and industrial prosperity of the country. He has declared that he has no more influence in that direction than has a fly on the wheel in promoting its revolutions. His policy has been a policy of drift, a policy of utter indifference to decaying commerce, to our closed factories, to the steady destruction of those home markets for our agricultural productions, without which we can have no solid agricultural prosperity. If the sun shines and the showers come and the crops are good,—well. These are matters of Providence, and Mr. Cartwright believes that through their influence the country may prosper. But if otherwise, then, the country may go to the dogs, and Mr. Cartwright stands by with folded arms, nurses his economic theories, and practically illustrates his "fly on the wheel" doctrine. The Opposition, on the other hand, take a different view. They look upon it, that their country has its own special peculiarities and resources, on account of its geographical position, which requires for it a special policy; and that the duty of a wise Government is to watch carefully every influence which is calculated to militate against the prosperity of the country, and to meet it by such wise legislation as will neutralize its injurious effects. They hold, in fact, with Junius, that "the ruin or prosperity of a State depends so much upon the administration of its Government, that to be acquainted with the merits of a Ministry, we need only observe the condition of the people. * * * If we see a universal spirit of distress and dissatisfaction, a rapid decay of trade, * * * we may pronounce without hesitation that the Government of that country is weak, distracted, and corrupt." Holding these views, the Opposition arraign the Government of Mr. Mackenzie with having, by its policy, or, rather, want of policy, destroyed commercial confidence and ruined commercial interests, and they promise, if honored with the support of the people, to pursue a different, and, as they believe, better policy which recognising the peculiarities of our position in relation to the United States would be calculated to protect us against the injurious efforts of our neighbors, and to build up for ourselves those industries and that prosperity which, under a wiser administration, we enjoyed in the past. It is for the people to decide by their votes at the polls, which policy they prefer.