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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

WE remarked in effect recently, in a paragraph suggested by "Father" Huntington's crusade, that whatever doubt might exist as to whether the poor are growing absolutely poorer, there can be none that they are becoming relatively so, by reason of the fact that the rich are becoming richer and thus widening the gulf which separates the luxury of the few from the destitution of the many. This in itself is a sufficiently sad comment on the professed Christianity of the age, and goes far to justify Professor Brigg's statement in his inaugural address the other day, in Union Theological Seminary, that "the greatest sin against the Bible has been the neglect of the ethics of the Jesus," if not Tolstoi's stronger declaration that "the Christians think that Jesus did not mean what He said." The picture drawn by "Fidelis" in another column is both harrowing and appalling, but is unhappily true to the life. We can think of no class of readers who would not do well to study it. Too long it has been the custom of even philanthropists and Christians to look on it with a kind of dull despair, as an inevitable outcome of inexorable law, or natural depravity, and pass on to more cheerful scenes and occupations. The one great merit of Mr. Booth's scheme, even if it had no other, is that it, for the first time, so far as we are aware, refuses to believe in the submergence of the wretched tenth as a fatalistic cure, necessity, and boldly proposes to attempt a radical cure. Whether his particular scheme succeed or fail, in the comparatively narrow sphere within which it is to be tried, it is no small thing that he has dropped the seed germs of a divine discontent, and a belief in the possibility of radical cure, into the soil of many a good and honest heart. "Fidelis" indicates the two great and widely divergent sources from which the deliverance must come, if it come at all. The two, though not necessarily antagonistic, stand in no obvious relationship to each other. The one star of promise is the hope that the wealthy in the Christian churches and congregations may be coming gradually to see that their Master did mean what He said when He laid down the laws of His Kingdom, and that obedience to those laws would make it simply impossible for His followers to live in the luxury described by "Fidelis," while those whose toil coins their wealth are labouring to the utmost of their strength for a bare subsistence, perhaps living in the squalor and wretched-

ness which are the lot of so many. And one of the first and most potent forces in effecting this great reform through the agency of the rich will be the discarding of the old law of "supply and demand," and substituting for it the law of "brotherhood." Whether deliverance shall come to any extent from this source must depend, of course, entirely upon the capitalistic and employing classes. The only way in which the labouring poor themselves can contribute to their own uplifting lies along the lines of union and co-operation by the use of which so much has already been effected, and by the misuse or abuse of which true progress is so often retarded. There can be no doubt that the labouring classes, the many, have the power within their reach. But they need the two qualities of higher intelligence and larger unselfishness, in order to convert this latent potency into the active energy by which alone great industrial and social changes can be wrought. Few thoughtful persons can doubt that in the single-tax scheme the masses have caught a glimpse, in dim and shadowy outline, of a great principle, which may yet be wrought into the fabric of a social system built on a foundation of natural righteousness. To wrest that principle from such a use and make it a lever to overturn the God-given rights of property, destroy the structure of civil society and do away with the grounds of confidence between man and man would be to overwhelm rich and poor in one universal ruin, out of which would speedily emerge some form of the cruellest despotism.

THE independent enquirer, desirous of knowing just what is the new policy, or proposed policy, which the Canadian Government is asking the people to ratify in advance, naturally turns for light to the addresses delivered by the Ministers of the Crown. Of the four Ministers who addressed the citizens of Toronto a few days since, Sir John Thompson especially undertook the task of unfolding the Conservative policy. Positively, that policy was explained as in accord with the document previously published in the press. It involves, Sir John Thompson tells us, an offer to the United States to consider the renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, with such modifications as the altered circumstances of the two countries might call for, to reconsider the abortive treaty of 1888, which settled the fishery dispute along with trade questions, to enter into negotiations which would settle the Behring Sea difficulty and all questions upon the Atlantic coast with regard to fisheries, and to reciprocate in the coasting and wrecking business between the two countries. Negatively the Minister of Justice proceeded to explain—and in this case his negative definitions are much more clearly defined and tangible than his positive—the policy of the Government does not mean that Canada is ever to lose the control of her own tariff under any circumstances; nor that the tariff legislation of Canada shall discriminate against the parent country; nor that resort shall be had to direct taxation for revenue purposes. There is undoubtedly much in these announcements that appeals to Canadian sentiment, and that is likely to be approved by those who pride themselves on their loyalty to the Mother Country. But from the practical point of view they are less satisfactory. These statements are made, it must be remembered, not simply as a declaration of Government policy, but as the reason why the Government has seen fit to advise His Excellency the Governor-General to dissolve Parliament a year before the period fixed by the Constitution and appeal thus prematurely to the people for a new lease of power. Does any impartial observer who understands the situation suppose that there is the remotest probability of negotiations for reciprocity being conducted to any successful issue along the lines indicated? We fear not. To say nothing of Mr. Blaine's disavowals, explicit almost beyond the limits of diplomatic courtesy, no one who has watched the trend of thought and feeling in the United States from the days of the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 until now can have any reasonable hope of a renewal of reciprocity on any such basis as that indicated. We find it hard to suppose that the members of the Government themselves have any such expectation. It would have been, in our opinion, much more candid to have made the appeal to the country on

the real issue involved; that of the present protective system as opposed to the Liberal programme of unrestricted reciprocity, with at least partial assimilation of tariffs as its almost inevitable outcome.

IF any further proof than that afforded by the speeches of Sir John Thompson and his colleagues in Toronto were needed to show that the question is not really between a lesser and a larger measure of reciprocity, as the London *Chronicle* asserts, but between the National Policy and unrestricted reciprocity, that proof would be abundantly supplied in Sir John A. Macdonald's own address to the electors of Canada. From the present point of view that is, certainly, a most astonishing address. When the announcement was made that Parliament had been dissolved because of certain negotiations looking to reciprocity that had been opened, and in order that the Government might be clothed with full power by the people of Canada to conduct those negotiations on their behalf, what was more reasonable than to expect that the Premier would take the earliest opportunity of unfolding to the electors the views and purposes of his Government in that regard? Who could have deemed it possible that, immediately after dissolving the House on the ground of alleged negotiations for reciprocity, Sir John A. Macdonald should address the people in a Manifesto in which the subject of reciprocity is not once mentioned? It is not for us to say whether this is flattering to the intelligence of Canadian electors, or the kind of appeal they had a right to expect. All this, however, regards merely the pretext on which the premature appeal is made to the constituencies. The question of vital interest and importance is that of the real principles and policies of the two rival parties. Nor is there any great difficulty in discovering these. The question before the electors of Canada is clearly that of the National Policy, or protection, as against unrestricted reciprocity, which, in the opinion of most of those who have studied the subject, means really commercial union. Not for many years have the people been called on to decide between two policies so broadly distinguished. It is not the province or purpose of THE WEEK, as an independent journal bound to keep its editorial columns free from party bias, to take one side or the other on what is now so clearly a party question. We have never concealed our opinion that, if it were attainable on terms consistent with her own self-respect, and with the duty owed to the Mother Country, unrestricted trade with the United States would be a great boon to Canada, bringing her the wealth and population needed for the development of her resources more speedily than she can hope to gain them in any other way. While not without admiration of the patriotic and hopeful tone of the Premier's stirring address, we are unable, on a calm review, to admit that the state and progress of the country are so satisfactory as therein claimed. While it may be true that on the average the Canadians now in the country are as comfortable and prosperous as their neighbours, we cannot lose sight of the fact that whatever degree of prosperity is enjoyed by those who have remained in the country has been to a large extent made possible by the expatriation of hundreds of thousands of Canada's most enterprising sons who have gone across the lines to seek, and in many cases to find, the remunerative employment they were unable to find at home. On the other hand we hold that the greatest material prosperity would be purchased at a ruinous and disgraceful cost, if gained at the sacrifice of national independence and self-respect, or of base ingratitude to the Mother Land. These are, in our opinion, the main considerations which every Canadian who is independent enough to do his own thinking is now called upon to set in the balance of his judgment over against each other. There are, of course, unknown conditions attached to each which increase the complexity of the problem; such as, for instance, on the one side the uncertainty whether unrestricted reciprocity is attainable even if Canadians were unanimous in asking for it, and on the other the uncertainty whether Great Britain might not deem the settlement of outstanding quarrels, and a treaty of peace and concord with the United States, a satisfactory