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THE United States Government has acted well in the matter of the last Behring Sea seizure. It would have been better if the seizure had never been made, if the United States' revenue cruisers had been instructed not to comply with the wishes of the Alaska Company by treating all foreign vessels in the Alaska Seas as interlopers in an American lake; but, the mischief having been done, the prompt release of the seized vessel and the admission that the seizure was illegal is all that can be expected at present. The United States ought, however, to give up definitively the untenable claim that the Behring Sea is a closed sea. The United States Government disputed that pretension when Russia owned all the territory on both sides of it; and now that the territory is divided between Russia and the States it is doubly impossible for the latter to maintain the claim.

M. MERCIER had an admirable reply for the deputation of bankers who waited on him the other day respecting the Quebec Commercial Tax. He was in Opposition when the Government, that had been maintained for many years by the English capitalists of the Province, proposed this tax, and he strenuously opposed it; now that it had become law he could do no other than enforce it; and if the English capitalists desired to see the policy that imposed the tax reversed they must, in common consistence, lend support to him and his Government. That was the only way indeed in which it was likely the tax could be dispensed with: supported by the influential men of the Province in the coming Provincial Conference, his Government might receive the additional revenue that would enable them to repeal the Commercial Tax Act. M. Mercier is evidently master of the situation. The tax is a monstrous imposition, designed, as a first step in the process, to shift the cost of government from the shoulders of the *habitans* to those of the moneyed classes and institutions, which are mostly English. It was resisted, but instead of taking ten test cases into court, one for each class of corporation, as urged by the then Opposition, and, indeed, by many friends of the Government, no less than four hundred and thirty-two cases were pushed through, at a cost of \$100,000, evidently for no other purpose than to give employment to a firm of Conservative lawyers connected with the Government. The present Government is in nowise responsible for this, nor for the existence of the tax; and when they are asked to repeal it M. Mercier has too good a reply not to drive it home. The class represented by the deputation is largely responsible for the state of things that produced the tax, and if they wish another state of things to prevail they must support another system of government.

THERE is one way, it appears to us, in which the deplorable ruin that, according to Mr. Wiman and the Commercial Unionists, and according to these alone,—is coming upon us, may be postponed at any rate, and that is the method usually adopted by a prudent person whose expenditures are growing too heavy. Instead of striking at the source of his income, as recommended by the Unionists, and thereby running the risk of leaving himself without any, such a person would turn to the other side of the account to see whether the guinea of expenditure cannot be reduced so as to fit the pound of income. We do not admit that Canada has any need yet to take to this cheeseparing; on the contrary, the public expenditure is well within the revenue; and in spite of the doleful arithmetic of our would-be helpers, we are of opinion that this country as a whole is in a better condition financially than any similar part of the United States. Still, we own there is one direction in which waste is going on that, as waste, ought to be stopped. We are far too much governed. We are not an uncommonly lawless people; yet it takes nearly 600 legislators to keep us supplied with laws and represent our interests in the Parliament and Legislatures of the Dominion and the Provinces, while about 150 Senators and Legislative Councillors besides are employed at the public expense in the purely ornamental function of buttressing the viceregal and several gubernatorial thrones. This is a too expensive luxury for a young nation to indulge in overmuch. It costs, we see, for Legislation \$1,195,037 a year; and for Governors and Ministers, \$324,600. Every soul in Canada pays 35 cents a year to keep itself and some four and a half million other souls supplied with fresh laws and the splendour of guber-

natorial display. Does that pay? Could it not be done at a cheaper rate by condensing the too numerous Legislatures into three or four, stopping the pay of the Senators and Councillors, and electing as Governors, with a small salary sufficient to pay the office expenses incident to the position, men of fortune who would consider the honour an equivalent for the outlay any display might entail?

THE pressure of competition from foreign imported labour in the manufacturing and mining districts of the States is so severely felt by the native workmen that the Knights of Labour are apparently going to make the restriction of immigration a live question in the near future. The indications are that a good deal will be heard from the Knights on this subject within the next few months; and we trust that in the discussion it will be conceded that Commercial Union would confer such benefits on the States that they can afford to leave the door open to admit the vast body of Canadian artisans and workpeople whom the adoption of Commercial Union would probably throw out of employment here. The current *Forum* contains an article by Professor Boyesen proposing to restrict the immigration of persons likely to be dangerous to the State by reason of their character; but the Knights' proposal is to restrict, not on account of character, but on account of quantity. The argument of Professor Boyesen is that the foreign element is of necessity a discontented population which remains unabsorbed and alienated, and threatens society with Socialistic danger; while the Knights' objection to more immigrants is that their arrival in such numbers tends to lower wages, and to prevent those already here from obtaining a fair compensation for their labour. But it appears to us that there is much to be said against both positions. If, for instance, the lower class of foreign immigrants is to be shut out inexorably, the business of mining and other kindred industries must suffer, for the native Americans, even Americans of one generation only, will not use the pick contentedly; the farm, the shop, the merchant's warehouse, is what they look to, leaving the hewing of wood and drawing of water to the unskilled foreigner. And on the other hand, while, however foolish it may appear, it is perfectly logical, after having by excessive Protection stimulated wages to an abnormal height, to prohibit the operation of the laws of supply and demand by preventing the inevitable inflow of competing labour attracted by the high rate of wages; yet, in fact, an open door admitting all comers is, in the long run, the best protection for the working man, as a means of preventing the worst extravagances of Protection, and saving him from its ill effects, which ultimately fall on him most heavily.

It would be rather a startling development of the McGlynn case if that excommunicated individual should turn and prosecute the Roman Catholic Church for boycotting. If excommunication were as effective to-day as it used to be, it would be a severe boycott; and that is a punishable offence in the States; but fortunately, or unfortunately, it is hard to say which in this case, the times are against the force of excommunication; and the only effect of the thunders of the Church now will be to reduce Dr. McGlynn from the *status* of a semi-socialist clothed in some sort with the authority of the Church, to that of thousands of seculars who will not now be overtopped by the priest. This will strip him of much of his influence, but that influence ceased to be his by right the moment he disobeyed his ecclesiastical superiors, and he now has to fall into the ranks of other citizens, and stand on his merits alone. Meanwhile he has published through Henry George's paper, the *Standard*, a version of his controversy with the authorities of the Church that does not help his case a whit with impartial observers. He has been excommunicated, not for any political opinions he held, but for refusing to obey a summons to Rome to confer with the supreme authorities of his Church and explain his opinions. As a priest he owed that obedience, and nothing can excuse his refusal—certainly not the excuse he makes through the *Standard* that he dare not make the voyage because he is troubled with a serious heart affection, and that he had not the necessary pecuniary means. It is well known that these means would have been furnished him by his friends for the voyage if he had chosen to undertake it; and as to the heart affection, a voyage to Rome would certainly not aggravate it so much as his recent active participation in a Socialistic crusade, and his threatened contest with the Church and usurpation of its rites, "in spite of bishop, propaganda, and Pope."

MR. GLADSTONE is naturally much elated at the evidence apparently in his favour furnished by the bye-elections, and he is right to make the best use of it he can in his present struggle; but he will do well to remember that his great rival Lord Beaconsfield was lured to his destruction in 1880