

them. I am told in *La Minerve* that every page of their history has a record of compromise—even of concession. That may be, and yet leave my statement unrefuted. Cases are cited, such as when the majority, "pour vivre en paix et en bonne intelligence," gave the minority the control of public education, and the privilege of changing the boundary lines of a dozen counties, and two seats in the Cabinet of Quebec, &c.; but that only proves that they are not at all indisposed to have regard to the rights of a minority, and that they are logical, and that they are generous. I do not see any proof of the possession of that sense I called "common" in the fact that concessions have been made. That they should be made was inevitable; first, from the humanitarian nature of the French themselves,—and second, from the habit the British have always had of taking a few things they think they have a right to. I did not say that the majority in this Province have never made compromises and concessions; I simply said and do maintain, and call the French use of the British Constitution as my proof, that the system of give and take in matters of government is not understandable by the general French mind. MM. Joly, Langelier, Letellier, Chapleau and others may be taken as illustrations of the whole case. What is happening now has happened before and will happen again, unless some radical change shall be brought about.

To my mind that radical change must be in the direction of Legislative Union. I can but admire and respect the French-Canadian's love for France and all that is French, and I hope I shall not be deemed as deserving anything but kindly judgment from the French when I say that, as an Englishman, I can but regard it as a pity and a blunder that a French-Canadian nationality should be so carefully preserved here. The Anglo-Saxon has taken possession of this continent; his language, his customs, his forms of government must ultimately prevail here; and if this is to become a nation there must be a fusion of the population into one compact whole. Instead of fostering what is merely sectional as French, English, Scotch and Irish, we should strive to form what is Canadian. The interests of all the people are identical. In order to promote those interests there must be a union of the whole. Legislative Union is what we want, and must have, to bring that about.

EDITOR.

### IRELAND.

It is nearly 40 years since Lord John Russell, on resigning office, warned Sir Robert Peel, the incoming minister, that the chief difficulty of the new government would be Ireland; verily, history does reproduce itself, for notwithstanding all the efforts at a more just legislation, the Irish are still "to the fore" with their grievances, and still, like *Oliver Twist*, "asking for more."

The disease appears to be chronic, and a very mild form of it has appeared at the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, just concluded at Belfast, at which meeting we are told some very large questions were considered—the Suez Canal; light-houses in Turkey; the depreciation of silver; the bankruptcy laws; free trade and reciprocity—and all were fully talked out during a session of three days in the commercial capital of the country. In the course of the sitting the injury sustained by commerce and agriculture in these countries, because there is no responsible Minister of the Government charged with looking after these important interests, was dwelt upon, and it was resolved to urge upon Her Majesty's Government the necessity of appointing a Minister of Commerce and Agriculture, with a seat in the Cabinet. This is a pretty extensive programme, but harmless enough on the face of it, nevertheless it appears that the Home Rulers are throwing up their hats over two "pronouncements" emanating from this meeting of merchants. All private-bill legislation is conducted in London at enormous expense. If a little town in Ireland, or any other part of the Kingdom, desires to get a supply of water for domestic purposes, an inquiry is had into the proposed scheme before a select Parliamentary Committee, and if the committee approves of it, a bill for the purpose is sent before Parliament for confirmation. The Associated Chambers of Commerce have resolved that these inquiries should be conducted in the districts in which the questions arise, and where the facts are generally known and where evidence is easily and cheaply obtained. This declaration was originated by delegates from England, and adopted unanimously by the meeting, and the Home Rulers are jubilant over it as an important concession in favour of their principle.

There was also a declaration in the Home Rule direction as regards Ireland specially. All proceedings in bankruptcy matters in Ireland are now conducted at Dublin. Belfast, Cork, Limerick and other large towns are agitating for the establishment of local courts of bankruptcy, so that they may be able to do their own business in this line cheaply at home, instead of, as now, being com-

pelled to go up to Dublin at great expense. The Associated Chambers of Commerce have unanimously declared that this system of home rule should be given to Irish towns.

Still another trouble arises out of Irish butter, about which "we are growing very much in earnest," with a view, if possible, of retrieving its damaged reputation. A deputation of three gentlemen has left Dublin, commissioned by the Royal Agricultural Society, to travel through Germany, Norway and Sweden and to enquire into and report upon the manufacture of butter in those countries.

These subjects, with emigration, obstruction, and Mr. Parnell thrown in to boot, furnish a wide field for discussion; but a new crusade against landlordism assumes a far more serious aspect, and it seems that evidences of a defiant temper among the farming classes are encountered in every direction, and the old trouble of absentee landlordism is regarded as the great grievance. The land system in Ireland is an anomaly; the English is founded on freedom of contract. The demands for its reform are really cries for further liberty; but in Ireland it is an arrangement under which a tenant first hires a farm and then claims its ownership.

We have the old painful story now again, in Mayo; the old rents are insisted on, notices to quit have been threatened, and bailiffs can scarcely be found to run the risk of serving them; in many cases the tenants defiantly answer that they will not be evicted, but will hold their farms by force. The Government is not ignorant of the agitated state of the public mind, and are taking extraordinary measures of precaution. Soldiers and police are constantly being moved about, as a warning to the people that the Government is prepared to adopt vigorous measures of repression. The province of Connaught especially is said to be in a very excited state, and a "genuine reign of terror has been established." Public meetings have been held at Castlebar and elsewhere, at which violent speeches have been delivered, and the entire movement reminds us of times which we hoped had passed away for ever.

The stormy petrel of Irish contemporary politics (Mr. Parnell) has given in his adherence to the movement, and the power of the obstructionist minority in the House of Commons is likely to be increased, and the scenes of last session are likely to be repeated next session, only that Mr. Parnell will have a larger following from fear, if not from love.

The fact is that the recent policy of England towards Ireland has been produced by a cause which has hardly ever before had appreciable effect in national affairs. The modern Irish policy of English statesmen has sprung from simple repentance for supposed past wrong. But why this marvellous intensity of repentance which leads the English of our day to grant everything which the supposed victim of cold "atrocities" chooses to consider good for himself? What earthly ground can there be for granting to Irishmen more than equality with Englishmen? While English public men are ever relieving their conscience by perpetual concessions, Irishmen are repeating the demand for fairness and redress of a wholly different character, and a knot of Irish M.P.'s put a stop to all legislation, and make free and ancient institutions the derision of the world.

They claim the rights of a "nationality." The word is peculiar, and nobody can be very sure what it means. What sort of a nation might it not be which places the confiscation of ownership in land at the head of the reforms to which its legislation would be directed, and of which the undeveloped statesmanship is represented by Mr. Parnell? The truth is, there is but one safe prediction of a quasi-independent Ireland,—that it would be eager to do mischief to England and its Empire, and that its favourite political leaders would be men who promised to injure England at the most critical moment.

### THE SCOTTISH STUDENT ON "ARGUS."

In the last number of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR that has come to hand I find that your correspondent "Argus" severely criticises the view of Mr. Blake on Free Trade. It may well be that Mr. Blake may have conclusively answered the objection of "Argus" before this is received by you, or, on the other hand, "Argus" may have laid down the foundation of Protection broad, large and stable. Yet, in virtue it may be of my very insular stupidity, I fancy I may be able perhaps to suggest difficulties to accepting "Argus's" position, which will enable that gentleman to make his explanation yet clearer—to break his information into crumbs yet smaller so as to suit the swallowing power of such a very small titmouse as you present correspondent, who is but a "Scottish Student."

"Argus" asserts that Free Trade means the hindering and defeating of ordinary economic laws. He instances a case where an American manufacturer is attempting to drive a Canadian manufacturer out of the market by underselling him—nay, going to such an extent as to sell the goods in Canada at the half of what would be a remunerative rate in the United States. To my untutored gaze the whole thing seems a very ordinary case of business competition. That they are living under different *governments* does not seem to put the affair at all into another category from that in which it would have been had the competitors been simply under different *hats*.