

away with the objectionable discrimination, it will by no means follow that it will be bound to submit quietly to any failure on the part of the United States to observe its obligations. On the contrary, when we shall have put ourselves in the position of scrupulously observing our own obligations, in the letter and in the spirit, then, and not till then, shall we occupy a coign of vantage from which we can urgently and persistently call upon our neighbours to do the same. We have before commented on the conspicuous absence, so far as appears, both from the minutes of Council made for the information of the British Government and from the unsatisfactory reports of the interviews between our own and American Ministers, at Washington, of any evidence of serious remonstrance or complaint in regard to the alleged breach of faith in the matter of the Erie and other New York canals. When our American neighbours have, or think they have, a grievance, they do not cease to press persistently for its removal. Why should not our own and the British Governments do the same thing in the case in question? What do the Ottawa Ministers propose to do in the matter? Let them take the public into their confidence and they will have its support in all right and dignified measures for the assertion of Canadian rights. If they have seriously remonstrated through the proper diplomatic channels, what is the answer and the position of the Washington authorities?

"EVERYBODY concedes," said the New York correspondent of the London *Daily News*, writing at the time of the Homestead outbreak, "that Mr. Carnegie and his associates must be given possession of their property and protected in their right to operate it with non-union workmen at reduced wages, if they insist upon exercising this right; but there is a widespread feeling of sympathy with the men when they say that this is not the kind of 'triumphant democracy' they were promised when they were asked to vote for the high tariff on the ground that it would assure them the highest prosperity." There is a species of contradiction underlying this statement of the case that is worth thinking about and trying to analyze. The same conflict between the notion of right and the feeling of right, if we may so express it, is revealed in much of what has been said and written in connection with this affair. Nearly all the more reputable journals, secular and religious, have agreed in declaring that the rights of property must be held sacred, and that in order to this end, the Carnegie Company must be protected in its resolve to lock out the striking workmen and supply their places with cheaper men, if they insist on their right to do so. And yet many of these same journals have expressed sympathy with the strikers, and would evidently be gratified to see them succeed by peaceful and lawful methods in keeping out the non-union men and carrying their point with the company. Now what is the meaning of this? The idea of justice and the instinct of justice are evidently at variance. Can both be right? If not, which is the safer guide? Or, since that is rather too large a question for these columns, let us content ourselves with seeking some explanation of this dissension in "the little state of man." Is it the outcome of any speculative doubts concerning the right of property in the abstract? Surely it cannot be that the aphorism of the communist, "Property is Robbery," is laying hold of the staid and law-abiding public. No. The law of property is the safeguard of civilization and progress, and those who express sympathy with the Homestead strikers in their cause, though not in their methods, would be the last to doubt it. They would be the first to see, too, that to deny the right of property, or to fail to protect every citizen in the exercise of that right, would be to strike as fatal a blow at the workman as at the capitalist, for both have property rights, and the little belongings of the one are quite as dear to him and quite as essential to his well-being as the great possessions of the other. Evidently we must look further for the explanation of the seeming anomaly.

"PROPERTY" in its ordinary as well as in its etymological sense means that which is one's own peculiar and exclusive possession. But what makes any particular article of value the peculiar and exclusive possession of one or more individuals? In other words, what creates or constitutes property? We mean, of course, not simply legally, because laws may vary indefinitely, but morally, rightfully? This is the question which underlies, if we mistake not, the whole controversy. Let us suppose a

case. Suppose, for argument's sake, that it were possible to show that two-thirds of the whole income derived by the Carnegie Company from the Homestead works, after making liberal allowance for interest on capital invested, remuneration for the time and brains devoted to the business, etc., are the product of the labour employed and that, under the scale of wages hitherto paid, but one-third of this sum is actually distributed among the labourers in the form of wages, the other third going to swell the enormous income of the millionaire members of the Company, in addition to the returns which are rightfully theirs in view of the capital invested and the time and thought given to the business. Suppose, further, that at the end of a given period the one-third thus appropriated by the Company from the products of labour, over and above their just proportion, amounts to one million of dollars, and that this million of dollars has been invested in the works in the shape of new and improved machinery, how would this affect the moral aspects of the right of property question? Let it be assumed that the same workmen have been continuously employed during this period. Can the Company justly, of its own will or caprice, cut down the scale of wages, giving the employees the option of accepting the reduction or leaving their employment? If this would be a violation of moral right, or the first principles of justice, ought it to have the sanction of the laws? Can a thing which is unjust and morally wrong be legally justifiable? These questions indicate, as we understand the matter, the grounds on which the more intelligent and upright of the champions of labour base their agitation and defend the use of all lawful means to thwart the action of the employers in such cases. Whatever force there may be in the considerations suggested, they of course afford no justification of illegality or violence. But, taken in connection with the fact that with an unlimited franchise and a constantly improved organization the labouring masses are likely to become the dominant force in legislation, they pretty clearly foreshadow an important if not a radical change in the laws relating to and defining the right of property. Wisely or unwisely, rightly or wrongly, nothing is much more certain than that the old policy of *laissez faire*, which left the whole question of wages to be settled by the law of demand and supply, that is by an unequal contest between the purse of the capitalist and the necessities of the labourer, is doomed. By what system of co-operation, or arbitration, or confiscation, it is to be succeeded, depends very largely upon the foresight and statesmanship of those who may happen to be at the head of the State during the period of transition. The one thing that is clear is that those who are clinging fondly to the old notions of political economy, crying out that the legal rights of property must be respected, according to the old definitions, and taking it for granted that if Mr. Frick and other managers, in the interests of their companies, choose to scout all questions of abstract moral right and to insist on their pound of flesh according to the laws, laws which the representatives of labour declare have always hitherto been made by representatives of capital who naturally saw but one side of the case, there is nothing to be done but to let them have their way—the one thing that is clear is that those who thus reason fail to see the real seriousness of the situation and are reckoning without their host.

THE London *Spectator* had, a few weeks since, an article in which a glowing picture was drawn of the career upon which the United States would enter should the free trade principles of the Democratic party prevail at the approaching Presidential election. The possibilities of commercial expansion, as conceived by the London journalist, are astounding, yet it would not, perhaps, be easy to show in what respects they are overdrawn. Take, for instance, the effect that such a policy would have upon agriculture, the greatest of American industries, and the one which is probably in a more languishing condition at present than any other. It is beyond controversy that, as the *Spectator* says, the fact that English ships now cross the ocean to fetch American corn in ballast must be an immense restriction upon trade. "Let them go full and return full, and American farmers will find the demand for their corn very greatly increased." "But," the American protectionist will say, "this means that the British ships will come across full of manufactured cottons and woollens to compete with our own manufactures and lessen or destroy them." By no means, the free-trader replies in effect. The British products will, of course, displace some of the American, for the manufacture of which, from clima-

tic or other causes, Great Britain has peculiar advantages. But, on the other hand, think of the immense expansion which will follow when American industry and ingenuity are set free to enter into competition with Europe in the great markets of the world and especially in the East, in India and China. Can any one doubt that "as soon as she can enter those markets on terms of equality, she will begin to beat all rivals," and that the "hegemony that the United Kingdom has hitherto enjoyed in matters of trade" will be threatened and soon overthrown? "We shall never," says the *Spectator*, "be able to compete with a free-trade America, and in fifty years, or perhaps sooner, we shall be, compared with our offspring, an inactive volcano of commerce." But is not that a sinister consummation for a loyal Englishman to predict, not to say desire? Not at all, seeing that it would mean only relative, not absolute decadence on the part of British industry and commerce. Britain's traffic with the United States would be enormously increased with mutual profit. If and in so far as the vast natural resources of the latter would render it impossible to keep pace with her in the path of progress, there could be no cause for jealousy, for the Mother Land could not fail to share largely in the prosperity of her republican daughter, and her own position, at the end of a given period, would be positively more advanced and prosperous than it could have been but for the still greater progress and prosperity of the latter.

THE leading article in the New York *Independent* of the 4th inst. is a somewhat remarkable one by the Hon. Thomas L. James, ex-Postmaster General of the United States, giving seven reasons why the Republican party should remain in power. There may be many good and sufficient reasons why our neighbours should retain the Republican party in power, and it is quite possible that some of those advanced by Mr. James are cogent and valid. But if this writer's statements of fact in regard to other matters are based upon no better information than the following, his countrymen will do well to take them with more than the proverbial grain of salt. "Her (he is speaking of England) leading statesmen now admit, after a trial of the free-trade policy, that it is a failure and predict that before long England will have to protect its labourers against the lower wages paid in France and Germany." Such a statement, viewed in the light of recent events in England, surely betokens a poverty of information, or a reckless intrepidity in assertion, not often found in the deliberate utterances of prominent public men in any country. A general principle laid down by Mr. James, in another part of his article, as the corner stone of an argument drawn from the reciprocity attachment to the McKinley tariff, is also worth quoting as a plain statement of the fallacious premise upon which very much of the logic of protectionism rests. He says: "I do not believe that nations any more than individuals can afford to do something for nothing. If we allow sugar from Cuba to come into this country free, we have a right to insist, and should insist, on Cuba opening her ports for the products which are peculiar to the United States." Here we have in a nutshell the singular protectionist postulate that to permit our merchants or those of other countries to bring us something which they have to sell and which we have to buy, is to give something to those countries. We do not suppose that any one would buy an article at any time if he did not find it to his advantage to do so. Why should he be deprived of this advantage because the country of the person from whom he purchases is too short-sighted to permit its subject to reap for himself a similar advantage, by buying in turn what he needs? Of course the first buyer would reap a double advantage could he sell as well as buy freely, but shrewd business men do not usually refuse one advantage because they cannot have two.

ONE of the peculiarities of the new political situation in England is that with the narrow majority which is all that is possible for Mr. Gladstone's administration, provided there is no miscarriage in his programme for assuming the reins of office, the Irish Home Rulers are not the only section which holds the balance of power, and so the means of enforcing its will upon the Government, which will exist on its sufferance. We see no reason to suspect the slightest inclination on the part of Mr. Gladstone to palter with his pledges in regard to the Home Rule Bill, but if there were, it is evident, as Mr. O'Brien boastfully pointed out the other day, that the Irish have it in their power to take speedy revenge for any breach of faith, or undue dilatoriness. Nor is there any reason to