

## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

We note that the Government proposes sending Mr. Cunningham Stewart, of the postal department, across the water to study the postal systems of Great Britain and the continent of Europe. This is a move in the right direction, for in no department of the public service is thorough reform more needed than in our postal system. If he takes with him a power of intelligent observation, an ability to discern a real improvement when he sees it; if he is imbued with a desire to faithfully perform the duties which are the ostensible object of his mission; and if he is capable of absolutely divesting himself of all prejudices in favor of what his official training and habits have made customary to him; it is in his power to render services that will be of incalculable benefit to this country. There is no doubt that he may learn much in Great Britain, for we are in many respects behind the mother country in our postal methods. But in Continental Europe he will find that the greatest strides in the line of improving and perfecting the postal service have been made. In France, Russia, and Germany—especially the latter—the subject has been carefully studied by the best minds, and the highest perfection has been attained that the science has reached.

Among the many points which we would respectfully suggest to him to study may be named the German system of insuring letters with valuable contents, instead of the crude and practically useless plan of registration in vogue here. Another, is the plan of the post office undertaking the forwarding of goods, *c. o. d.* from place to place, and advancing to the shipper a proportion—say two-thirds—of the face of his bill on shipment, and the balance on the delivery to and acceptance by the shippee of the goods, thus allowing the shipper the immediate use of a portion of his capital. A portion of Mr. Stewart's time might be profitably employed in enquiring into the subjects on which candidates for appointment to the postal service are examined. He will find that in most European countries candidates are not examined on absurdly irrelevant topics such as history, abstruse mathematics, etc., as they are here, but they must be thoroughly conversant with at least two modern languages besides their own.

He should not be content with merely visiting post offices and interviewing postmasters concerning the objects of his mission. He should go to the men from whom the postal authorities of other countries are not too proud to acknowledge that they obtain the ideas which they put into practice. Philatelists and philatelic societies have made matters connected with or related to the postal service their constant and absorbing study for many years. They have mastered the science—if such it may be called—and can better than any other men point out the excellencies and the defects of the various existing systems. We can assure him, that from these men and these societies he will obtain more practical information, and derive more useful instruction, than from any other class; and if he applies to them he will be courteously treated and assisted in every possible way. Our own impression is, that a practical philatelist would make the best commissioner that the Government could send on such a mission, because he would necessarily possess nearly, if not quite, all of the desirable qualifications for the performance of the duties that would devolve upon him. Among those whom we know to be thus specially qualified for this mission may be named Major Todd, of the Governor-General's Foot Guards, one of the assistant Librarians of Parliament, and Alderman Hechler, of this city. Both of them are enthusiastic philatelists, good linguists, have studied postal matters for many years, and being on corresponding terms with all European philatelic societies, would render splendid service, if they could be induced to undertake the work which is particularly adapted for specialists.

## "BLUE-NOSE GRUMBLING."

The tenor of Mr. Addison F. Browne's article, under the above caption, in the *Philadelphia American*, renders unnecessary any apology to our readers for continuing our discussion of it.

Speaking of the deficit of the Finance Minister's budget, Mr. Browne continues:—"If this excess of expenditure over income has been occasioned in the legitimate development of the country, patriotic Canadians will find no fault, and by every means in their power will cheerfully assist the ex-high commissioner to square up his books. In this matter, as in all others that pertain to the general government, *we*, who are not ambitious to be called Canadians, have to bear *our* full share of the expenses, although *our* income from the Dominion treasury, beyond radiant promises, is not worth describing."

We put the plural personal, and possessive pronouns in italics, because we cannot help remembering that the gentleman who waxes pathetic over the woes of Nova Scotia, is not even a naturalized British subject, and this fact strikes us in the way of evidence of the extreme artificiality of the whole special pleading. "*We*, who are not ambitious to be called Canadians," is the key note to which the Jeremiad is carefully attuned. It is curious that so many people do not see through this sort of thing. We have, *aforsime*, said that American abuse and depreciation, pessimistic augury, and what not, were the measure of the national value of the C. P. R. Americans well knew that the completion of the C. P. R. was the building of a nation. The C. P. R. is a *fait accompli*, and our cousins, aided by Canadian annexationists, are now doing their best to insert the thin end of the wedge by means of "Commercial Union."

But, to revert to Mr. Browne, patriotic Canadians do not find much fault. There is, no doubt, a goodly (or otherwise) array of *un-patriotic* Canadians, but we may be excused for believing that they are not a majority.

Mr. Browne taxes Sir John with hoodwinking a meeting of manufacturers just before the last general election, and sneers at their facility of belief.

It scarcely presents itself to us in this light. On the contrary, it seems to us the plainest common sense that a body of gentlemen, who, collectively, have sunk millions in native manufactures, should by every means in their power fight against ruin in the shape of American competition, abetted at home by those who are too faint-hearted, or too sullenly discontented, to stand by their own nationality.

In the eyes of this class, the following passage will, doubtless, have weight. In the matter of the increase of duty on pig iron—"The iron miners," says Mr. Browne, "and those directly connected with them, will join in temporary advantage. But at least 400,000 of *our* 450,000 of population cannot hope for anything save severe hardships without compensation."

Well, if one-ninth of a population is benefited by a fiscal measure, it is a population not to be sneezed at. And what is the extent of the "*severe* hardship," (elsewhere, we have seen it is "*cruel* hardship"), foreshadowed to the rest? Will it amount to more than a cent or two enhanced price on any individual tool, or a few cents on any machine? Truly, a heart-breaking tyranny.

We also fail to see that the amount of \$380,000, *our* "income from the Dominion treasury," is not worth describing. It may be convenient to evade the description of it, as it is only natural to suppose that some small, but still worthy, portion of it finds its way into Mr. Browne's pocket, in the shape of honorarium for his advocacy of annexationism.

But iron is not the only mining in Nova Scotia. There is coal, and let us see what is the amount of "*cruel* hardship" which has been inflicted upon the Province by the diminution of the export of that article to the States, and whether or no that diminution is not compensated by inter-Provincial consumption.

The "Report of the Department of Mines" of Nova Scotia, for 1886, gives (p. 50) a table of export to the United States from 1850 to 1886, inclusive, 37 years. The largest export to the States in any of these years was 465,194 tons in 1865; the next largest, 404,252, in 1866. Following these figures in gradation, are 347,594 in 1864; 338,492 in 1867; 282,775 in 1863; and so on, in diminishing quantities in various years, down to 34,483 in 1885, and 60,646 in 1886.

On the other hand, the sales to the Province of Quebec (p. 46) amounted, in 1885 to 493,917 tons; and in 1886 to 538,762 tons.

Again, we have reached our limit of space, but we have yet some instances to cite of the progress of the manufactures of down-trodden and deplorable Nova Scotia under the regime of protection from American slaughter.

## PRIMOGENITURE ABOLISHED BY THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The Irish Question has so absorbed public attention that little heed has been given to other important legislation that has been passed by the British Parliament. The House of Lords, composed as it is, of the great titled landlords of the Kingdom and the Bishops, (the latter influenced, perhaps, by the fear of disestablishment, being more opposed to reforms than the temporal lords), has earned for itself the reputation of blocking, until forced to yield to the irresistible demand of the public, all legislation tending to weaken the powers or privileges of the landed classes. It was with genuine surprise, then, that it was learned that this most unprogressive branch of the British Parliament had passed a bill abolishing the law of primogeniture in Great Britain. This, as we understand it, does not directly interfere with the law of entail, but it strikes at the root of the principle of that law, and effects a radical improvement outside of it.

Hitherto, with one or two notable exceptions, as in the County of Kent, where the ancient gavelkind tenure, of which a principle branch was the joint inheritance of all the sons, has been zealously preserved, the law of the United Kingdom declared that when any person died intestate—that is without leaving a will otherwise regulating the succession—then the eldest son or his heir should be entitled to all the heritable or real estate, however valuable, and that the personal property should be divided among the other representatives. Where the heir considered it to his interest, he had the option of collating with his brothers and sisters, or other representatives, in other words, to throw the real and personal property into one lot, and have it divided equally among them. Briefly stated, this was the much decried law of primogeniture, and the effect practically of its abolition now will be, that collation will take place in all cases of intestacy.

The new law will not interfere with the power of any testator devising his property to such persons as he may desire, but in striking at the principle that mere precedence of birth gives rights of itself without the express sanction of the parents, the bill is a significant democratic victory.

The general press has contained repeated accounts of the remarkable case reported by Dr. M. H. Lockerstein, of Chicago, in the effects of nitro-glycerine in resuscitating life. His patient was a woman, who sank rapidly and was apparently dead. An action of the heart was imperceptible, the temperature of the body had fallen to 92 deg. F., and every indication of death was present. A solution of nitro-glycerine was administered hypodermically, when there was a gasp, followed by three others within a minute. During the second minute six respirations were noted, with a faint fluttering of the heart, but no wrist-pulse was discernible. During the third minute eighteen respirations were evident and a feeble pulse. During the fourth minute the pulse rose to 180 and above, the face was flushed, the eyes rolled, the muscles slowly relaxed, and the patient became comfortable. These data are quite unique in character, and, if substantiated by later researches by Dr. Lockerstein and others, may lead to most important and valuable applications of the drug.