

exercised, and which has given them virtually absolute control over the utterance of newspapers and other periodicals, and, in fact, all publications intended for circulation amongst members of the Roman Catholic Church in the Province. Its failure, on the other hand, would mean that the rule of the Archbishop of a Roman Catholic in his diocese is as absolute as that of the Russian Czar, save only that the weapons by which he intimidates and punishes are spiritual instead of material, and that there remains always the remedy of an appeal to Rome, whatever that may be worth to a private member as against a powerful prelate. But then, there is, on the other side, the question whether the fact that the forces invoked to produce the intimidation, which is the subject of complaint and action, are of the class designated "spiritual," removes the case from the purview of the civil courts, is one which will demand careful consideration. In case of a similar "boycott" by the chief of a trade organization, or other secular body, there would be no room to doubt the result, in the light of well established principles and precedents. The analogy of law respecting clerical intimidation in elections and its enforcement by the courts is close and seems to favour the case of the prosecutor, who no doubt has suffered grievous pecuniary damage. The outcome of the trial will be awaited with great interest and anxiety. Far-reaching issues are involved.

The Toronto Trades and Labour Council does not often adopt so futile a motion as that which it passed on Friday evening last, in favour of asking the Dominion Government to submit to popular vote the four possible destinies of Canada—a continuance of the present colonial status, independence, annexation, or Imperial federation. It seems scarcely possible that any one even of those supporting the motion could have for a moment supposed that any Government could stultify itself and expose the whole country to ridicule and contempt by complying with such a request. So far as we are able to judge, the chief interest in the debate was in the practical proof it afforded that whatever little vitality there may have at one time been in the "political union" movement, it is now dying of inanition. Tariff-reform agitation on both sides of the line has, we believe, more than anything else contributed to this result. It was notorious from the first that no one desired the change for its own sake, but only for the sake of the large measure of continental free-trade it would bring. We do not mean to imply that the continuation of the McKinley or any other possible tariff could ever have brought about the end sought by the annexationists. But we have no doubt that the reaction against protectionism which manifested itself so powerfully and unexpectedly on the other side of the line in the Presidential election, and

which simultaneously began to work on this side, has materially hastened the end of what at no time seemed likely to become a very powerful movement. Though we regard Independence as the only goal worthy of the ambition of the Canadian people, and the only one which can ever develop a genuine Canadian patriotism, its most ardent advocates cannot shut their eyes to the fact that there is as yet no such feeling in its favour as would warrant an attempt to make it a question of practical politics. The same remark is still more obviously true in regard to Imperial Federation.

The cause of the United States before the Board of Arbitration in Paris will not suffer for the want of a courageous as well as an able presentation of its case by the gentlemen who are pleading it. The forty-hour address of Mr. Carter was no doubt as complete and forcible an argument as could have been constructed, while if sprightliness and wit can be supposed to influence the judgment of so grave a tribunal, Mr. Coudert seems likely to leave nothing to be desired on that score. It is of course impossible to guess what effect the line of argument followed may have upon the Court, but the query must have suggested itself to many minds whether a more modest claim might not have carried greater weight with a body of jurists who understand the importance of any precedents they may establish in international law, and who may be expected to look after as well as before. The admission of the claim made on behalf of the United States to a right of property in the seals wherever found, not only in the Behring Sea but in the North Pacific, and by parity of reasoning, in any part of the great ocean—a claim which would be futile if it did not carry with it the right also contended for of search and capture of trespassers wherever found—would involve some startling corollaries, as the attempt to enforce it would be likely to create some ticklish situations. So far as the logic of the claim is concerned, it seems to turn mainly on the point whether the seals can be regarded as in any real sense domesticated animals, though, even should that rather large proposition be established to the satisfaction of the arbitrators, a further troublesome point might perhaps be taken as to whether their owners should not be called upon to keep them either within an enclosure or under surveillance by herdsmen, during their peregrinations. In the latter case, again, there might arise a further question as to the ownership of the fishes upon which they feed and the right of other nations to some compensation for their share in the great "common" which is the ocean pasture of Cousin Jonathan's immense seal-herds.

The *entente cordiale* which has so often been manifested between the United States and Russia has always seemed to us one of

the puzzles of history. Standing, as they would appear to do, at the opposite political poles of democracy and absolutism, it would seem more natural to expect that these two nations would look upon each other with a disapprobation verging on mutual aversion. Yet it is probable that the great northern despotism has a warmer place in the sympathies—we do not say of the American people but—of a large class of the American politicians, than it has in those of any other civilized nation, even France not excepted. An instance of this strange affinity is just now visible in the extradition treaty which is attracting so much attention. The treaty has been sanctioned by the Czar and awaits only the signature of the President to become law. Whether Mr. Cleveland will either care or dare to bring it into operation is just now doubtful, though to refuse to do so at this stage would probably be regarded as a serious affront. That the business should have proceeded so far before public indignation was aroused is due to another anomaly in the working of the institutions of the great Republic, the secrecy in which the Senate is permitted to wrap up the most important international transactions. In view of what is known of the administration of justice (?) in Russia, there are several provisions in the treaty, if the version of its contents now current may be relied on, which it might be supposed would be repugnant to the genius of American freedom, but that which is arousing widespread hostility is the clause which makes "forgery and the utterance of forged papers, including public, foreign or governmental acts," an extraditable offence. Should the President conclude to ratify the treaty with this provision included, it may be confidently predicted that the first occasion on which the Government is called on to surrender some poor refugee, accused of some religious or political offence, who may have escaped prison, Siberia, or the gallows by means of a forged passport, will witness such an outburst of popular indignation as will tear the treaty to tatters in much less time than has been spent in its construction.

President Cleveland having discharged one of the first duties of his high office by dismissing Republican office-holders and supplying their places with good Democrats, is said to have now time to devote his attention to such minor matters as the tariff-reform, for the purpose of which he was elected. But, to do him justice, the present President seems to have sinned in this matter much less grievously than President Harrison, who in turn made considerable improvement upon the record of his Republican predecessors. The most glaring, and, we may add, the most ridiculous exemplification of the working of the "spoils" system, under the present Administration, is in the dismissal by wholesale of the fourth-class postmasters. And yet, though these have been decapitated by the thousand,