

ASSERTIONS NOT FACTS.

At a recent meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Fyshe, of the Bank of Nova Scotia, referred in a somewhat general way to the present condition of the country, and stated that we now were face to face with one of the greatest depressions in the history of the Province. Coming from such a source, a statement of this kind cannot fail to injure Nova Scotia, and lower her credit in our sister Canadian Provinces; but while we admit that Mr. Fyshe should be in a position to speak with authority upon financial matters, we cannot, by any means, support his assertion that the Province is going behindhand, and is threatened with general bankruptcy. If the Halifax Manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia could spare sufficient time from his business to visit the agricultural and mining localities, both east and west, and learn for himself the condition of the farmers and miners, as compared with that of twenty, ten, or even five years since, we think he would find good reason for believing, that as a Province, we are enjoying a fair degree of prosperity. We understand that traders in the country districts meet their notes in the local and city banks with promptness, and this, we believe, implies that the consumer pays in cash for his groceries and other necessities. We note that our industrial classes in the towns and cities are adding, month by month, large sums to their deposits in the Savings' Banks, and that the price of real estate, especially in farming lands, holds at steady figures. Our great fishing industry, it is true, is at present much depressed, and this, no doubt, has a direct effect upon the trade and business of Halifax; but from Annapolis, Kentville, Windsor, Truro, Amherst, Pictou, New Glasgow, Antigonish, and other Provincial centres, come reports of a fair year's business for 1885, with a bright outlook for the new year. Mr. Fyshe should certainly be cognizant of these facts; at any rate, he should make himself familiar with the present and past condition of the Province, before giving publicity to his views. The country may, according to his idea, be fast going to the dogs, but it will take more than mere assertions to convince us of the fact.

ADULTERATION OF FOOD.

An order-in-council has been issued, putting in force the "Act respecting the Adulteration of Food, Drugs, and Agricultural Fertilizers," passed last July. Under this Act, the Government appoints a chief analyst for the Dominion, and a number of district analysts; while the Municipal authorities are empowered to appoint one or more inspectors of food, drugs, and agricultural fertilizers. These inspectors, like the officers of Inland Revenue, have power to procure samples of any articles used as food, drugs, or fertilizers, and submit them to the public analyst. The Dominion analyst decides all appeals against the decision of the district analysts. Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island form one district, of which Mr. Maynard Bowman, of Halifax, has been appointed analyst.

The regulations of the Act are as stringent as the nature of the crime requires. Food is deemed to be adulterated, under the Act, if any substance has been added to it, in order to lower the cost of production, or to lessen the strength of the article; if any valuable constituent of the supposed article of food has been removed; if the article sold is a counterfeit of another article; if it contains any poisonous ingredient. A drug is held to be adulterated, when, being offered for sale under any name to be found in the British or United States Pharmacopœia, or, failing these, in any other recognized Pharmacopœia, it differs from the standard of strength or purity laid down in such work; or, if a proprietary medicine, when it falls below the standard under which it is sold.

The penalty for the first violation of the Act, if substances injurious to the health are added to articles of food is to be not greater than \$50, or less than \$10; subsequent offences are more heavily punished. A heavy penalty is also imposed upon all sellers of adulterated food. Watered milk is specially mentioned as coming within the scope of the Act; and skimmed milk is not to be sold, except in vessels, and with measures, distinctly labelled "skimmed." With so uncompromising a law, if our inspectors are vigilant and active, we may have pure food and unadulterated drinks.

THE OUSTED BLEUS.

An independent onlooker must indeed find the present position of the two great political parties in Canada a most interesting study. For years, Sir John MacDonald and his colleagues have received the support of a strong French wing of the Conservative party, and his Government has been openly and repeatedly accused of being subservient to French influence. For years, the French Bleus have, upon one pretence or another, forced from the Government material acknowledgments of the party loyalty which they vouchsafed. It was quite evident that such a state of affairs could not long exist; and when the Government took its stand upon the law of the land, and declared its determination not to interfere with the just sentence passed upon Louis Riel, then the ultra-Bleus realized that the day of French domination, under Conservative rule, had passed, and that the time had arrived for allying themselves with the opponents of the present Premier.

The Hon. Edward Blake, who is acknowledged to be as able in debate as he is pure and honest in his motives, has, for the past seven years, been leading an Opposition, which has failed to impress the country favorably. The Liberal party, as a party, no doubt, has glorious traditions, but at the present juncture, it seems content to fly the banners under which former battles were fought, rather than raise a standard, around which are entwined the living issues of to-day. Liberalism and Toryism are now meaningless terms; they are relics of the past which cannot be correctly applied to either of the parties led by the Hon. Edward Blake and Sir John A.

MacDonald, but the leader of the Opposition is having forced upon him by the Bleus, a policy which, if he accepts their support, he must be prepared to adopt. It is the policy of Canada for the French, the policy of race domination. We do not believe that Mr. Blake will accept upon such conditions the allegiance of the refractory Bleus. Their allegiance to Sir John's Government they have forewarned, and in their attempt to oust the Premier, have apparently been successful only in ousting themselves.

THE BLOT OF SLAVERY IN BRAZIL.

History repeats itself. Less than a quarter of a century since, the world was shocked by one of the most terrible civil wars ever waged within the borders of any great nationality. In the American Republic, side by side, were States that encouraged or discountenanced slavery. Every effort to free the bondsmen was met by the slave-holding States in a defiant spirit, but the abolitionists having at length gained the ascendancy in the Republic, slavery was effectually stamped out. Fifteen years since, the Brazilian Government succeeded in passing a law, declaring that on and after July 1st, 1871, all children born of slave parents should be free. The Act further provided for the gradual emancipation of adult slaves; but the Southern Provinces of Brazil, in which slave labor upon the coffee plantations is largely used, have evaded the law; and through their combined efforts, a bill introduced into the late Federal Camaras—having for its object the immediate emancipation of the slaves—was defeated by a majority of seven. The Camaras was at once dissolved, and an appeal made to the country upon the question at issue, which resulted in an overwhelming majority for the abolitionists. The Emperor Don Pedro, in his recent speech before the Camaras, referred to the defeat of the bill in the preceding House, and recommended that it be made the first consideration of the new Camaras. The members from the Southern Provinces threatened secession, should the bill become law, and it is not improbable that we shall have repeated, in the great Empire of the South, a conflict similar to that which took place in the American Republic. Provinces and States may have rights, but their people can have no right to oppress their fellow-human beings.

IRELAND.

The self-styled "Loyalists" of Ireland—and by the "Loyalists" is really meant the following of the Irish landlords—are proclaiming that they will commence a civil war in Ireland if the demands of the Irish people for a Home Parliament be conceded. They assert that if necessary they can put sixty thousand men in the field, and can and will "make short work" of the plans and following of Parnell. This means (1) that these "Loyalists" are unwilling to bow to the voice of the majority in political matters; (2) that they will, if necessary for their ends, resist the will of the British Crown and of the British Parliament; (3) that they are loyal so long, and only so long, as everything is as they wish it, even if their desires have to be gratified at the expense of the welfare of their fellow-countrymen. Remarkable indications of loyalty, these!

To what and to whom are the "Loyalists" loyal? Not to Ireland, for they have for long been a curse to it, not only by their unreasonable exactions, but by their fomenting of discord between the Orange and the Green. Not to the British constitution for they threaten to resist, by means most unconstitutional, reforms which are asked for and are only to be obtained in a constitutional manner. Not to the general interests of the Empire, for they propose to frustrate the intentions of men that propose to advocate the granting of some form of Home Rule to Ireland simply because the general interests of the Empire imperatively demand such a measure.

These very strangely "loyal" people affect to fear that, if plenary powers of legislation be conceded to an Irish Parliament, the Catholic majority will oppress the Protestant minority. What grounds are there for such fear? Two Presbyterian clergymen are among Mr. Parnell's prominent supporters. At the late elections thirteen Protestant gentlemen asked for election as pledged Home Rulers, and the majority of them were triumphantly returned. Whence then in this age of tolerance and intelligence arises the fear of Catholic intolerance in Ireland? Perhaps the Irish landlords may reasonably be expected to do all they can to weaken the power that intends to curtail their income; but they should use more moderate language and more respectable tactics.

On the American prairies, the scarcity of wood and coal has long been felt, but the ingenuity of the Yankee is always turned to good account. Blocks of compressed straw are now used for fuel with most satisfactory results.

This is an age of progress. The Palace of the Royal Family of Corea is now illuminated by the electric light. The comforts of civilization follow closely upon the steps of the Christian missionary.

The sorrows of the poor and impecunious poet have been sung in many a clime by many a tongue, but the writer of the "Idylls of the King" has turned his powers of versification to good account, the poet Laureate now being worth \$400,000.

The natives of Zululand have formed themselves into a temperance league, the members of which are pledged not to drink the white man's grog. This commendable self-denial upon the part of the Zululander, cannot fail to have its moral effect, and will, doubtless, be fully appreciated by the white man.