

opposition of the consumers in the Maritime Provinces. The same object would have been accomplished by a reduction of the duty on wheat, but this again would have been opposed by the farming interest. The result is that the Canadian millers are to be treated as heretofore with great injustice. It is really amusing to read that branch of the discussion which relates to the loans obtained in London. It would be imagined that the price obtained for Canadian debentures in that market was governed by the Minister of Finance for the time being, and that he is entitled to the credit of placing a loan on better terms than his predecessor. It is well known that the rate of interest has been gradually falling, but there is no reason to doubt that all our loans have been placed at the fair market value of the day.

The discussion of the National policy question has been exhausted. As we have frequently pointed out, there are no free-traders in Canada, and it is impracticable to ignore altogether the fiscal policy of an adjoining nation containing a population twelve times as large as our own. One of our most important articles of import, and which contributes largely to the revenue, is sugar and the Minister of Finance takes great credit to himself for the cheapness of that article which is causing the greatest distress in our West India Colonies, and which is owing to the competition of beet root sugar. The present administration has done all in its power to encourage the competition of beet root with cane sugar, although we learn that Germany has imposed a discriminating duty on Canadian rye, which it could not have done had Canada accepted the German treaty. The most serious question for consideration at the present time is the general demand on the part of the Provinces for better terms. It may be safely affirmed that all are in the same category, and that any concession to one will lead to strong protests from the others. The charges on the revenue are already quite as great as it is safe to sanction, and it may be hoped that a check will be given to the mania for public improvements.

THE SILVER QUESTION.

The President of the United States, Mr. Cleveland, has written a most excellent letter on the subject of the silver coinage in the United States in reply to certain members of Congress, who are favorable to the maintenance of the present law, which requires that a certain amount of silver shall be coined

monthly, and which has had the effect of heaping all the vaults of the federal treasury with silver coins, which are worth less than 85 per cent of the gold dollar prescribed as the unit of value. The consequence, as pointed out by Mr. Cleveland, is that the flow of gold into the treasury has been steadily diminished, and that silver and silver certificates have displaced and are now displacing gold. The result is that the sum of gold in the Federal treasury now available for the payment of the gold obligations of the United States, if not already encroached upon, is perilously near such encroachment. It is the opinion of the President that such facts can lead to no other conclusion than that danger is impending and that it is the plain duty of Congress to avert that danger.

Unfortunately, a large majority of the Democratic party is unfavorable to the wise recommendations of the President of their choice. The question of silver coinage has led to a complete party split. The Republican majority with a Democratic minority sides with Mr. Cleveland, while the Democratic majority with a Republican minority seem bent on bringing about what must be the inevitable result of the present policy, a silver standard. Mr. Cleveland avows that to maintain and continue to use the mass of the gold coin, as well as the silver already coined, there must be a suspension of the purchase and coinage of silver, and that it is not possible by any other method to effect the object. He warns the nation that "prolonged and disastrous trouble" would fall on the people in every State and city of the union, while, "saddest of all, in every workshop, mill, factory, store, and in every railroad and farm, the wages of labor, already depressed, would suffer still further depression by a scaling down of the purchasing power of every so-called dollar paid into the hands of toil." The people of the United States seem to be infatuated on the subject of maintaining silver as a standard, and are lending their aid, without perceiving it, to the gold monometallists who would desire nothing better than that the United States should be driven into the adoption of a silver standard.

It is hardly possible that a perseverance in the present policy of Congress can have any other result than that predicted by Mr. Cleveland, and when the time arrives, which cannot be far distant, when there will be practically a silver standard in the United States, Canada will necessarily be considerably affected by the change. We have reason to believe that of late United States notes have been

circulating much more extensively in Canada than for many years previously. At present their value is at par with Canadian notes, but, should a silver standard be adopted, there will be a loss of fully 15 per cent to the holders. All debts due by parties in the United States will likewise be decreased in value, so that those who have business transactions with our neighbors would require to exercise great vigilance. It is to be regretted that President Cleveland can exercise little or no influence over the national policy in regard to the standard.

It is highly probable that the result of the practical adoption of a silver standard in the United States would be advantageous to the countries which adhere to the single gold standard, as it would lead to the exportation of the large stock of gold now held in America. Our neighbors will learn, too late in all probability, that their policy in regard to the silver coinage is not likely to accomplish the desired object, which was the adoption of a double standard by the civilized nations of the world. There is no doubt that, strong as are the prejudices which exist in England in favor of the single standard, caused in a great measure by the fact that it is a creditor nation, and has gained considerably by the appreciation of gold within the last few years, many converts to the double standard have been gained. If the United States had adopted the policy of France and stopped the coinage of silver it is highly probable that the common interest of the nations generally would have led to a solution of the difficulty.

THE RIVAL RAILROADS.

Although no intimation has yet been given by the Government that there will be any proposition for further assistance to the Canadian Pacific Railroad submitted to Parliament during the present session, yet on the assumption that such a demand will be made the opponents of the company which is engaged in the construction of that great public work are indefatigable in their efforts to injure it. It is much to be regretted that our respected contemporary the *Herald* is equally unsparing in his abuse of the Grand Trunk Co., which is not an applicant for aid from the public chest, and which has conferred benefits on the people of Canada to the full extent of all the assistance that it has received. We do not propose to notice at any length the attacks on the Grand Trunk Co., but we think it only just to point out that the early embarrassments of that company, from which its shareholders, residing