

In the United States nearly the first thing the newly returned prosperity did was to go mad. After the frantic scenes of depression through which American merchants and traders and brokers had passed, they seemed to think that it was in the order of things that better times should be exaggerated into best times; speculation broke away from all reason, and the end of it is not yet. What I am afraid of is that we in Canada are going to follow the reckless lead. Undoubtedly a time of prosperity is at hand for the people of this Dominion; industries are reviving on every side, although the *Globe* continues to make wild assertions to the contrary. We should launch out again carefully; keep down expenses; give short credit, and generally be reasonable.

IRISH FAMINE AND FEVER.

Ireland is again visited with the plague of discontent. The plagues of Egypt occurred once and were done with for all time, but plagues in Ireland are periodical. The average Irishman is always and everywhere "agin the Government," and if it happens to be English, he is a little more so. So of course it is British rule that has ruined Irish crops and paralyzed Irish energies. The country is in a state of semi-rebellion, roused to it by a few agitators who have assumed that rôle as the easiest possible way of obtaining notoriety. Mr. Parnell first proved himself an able obstruction—the same might be said of a mule, or a camel, or an elephant, however—and now shows that he can work upon the unreasoning passions of a half-starved Irish crowd. No doubt they think well of him, and no doubt he thinks well of himself; but what is the wild theory he is advancing worth when reduced to the reasonable and the practical? The farmers must be owners of the soil, he tells them; but will they eject the landlords, or compel them to sell at low prices? Surely proprietorship has some rights even in Ireland. Mr. Parnell advises wholesale dishonesty, but he seems to forget that there are laws, and powers to enforce them. The tenants may decline to pay rent, but that is not a safe and easy way out of the difficulty, and Mr. Parnell would advance the real interests of his countrymen if he would teach them the art of accepting disaster without thought or threat of rebellion.

It is cheering to find that all the leaders of opinions in Ireland are not given over to folly. The Archbishop of Dublin has issued a pastoral to the clergy of his diocese, denouncing the men who are going about the country disseminating doctrines which strike at the root of good faith and mutual confidence,—which, after all, are the only firm foundations of social life; and tells the people, through the clergy, that if just debts, fairly demanded, are not honestly paid, a principle will be established which, sooner or later, must prove fatal to the best interests of Ireland. The Archbishop is a better and safer guide than Mr. Parnell.

This movement may end, as other agrarian uprisings have ended, that is, in a speedy return to the old order of things,—an oppressive landlordism and a discontented tenantry; or, it may lead to general and much-needed reforms in the land-laws of the country. I say in the land-laws of the country, for it must be that the discontent on the part of the farmers arises from the unsatisfactory relations which exist between landlords and tenants. Bishop McNamara, of New York, speaking on the condition of Ireland, last Sunday, said: "What is the cause of the distress in Ireland? The failure of the crops and excessive rents? Not at all; there is a deeper underlying cause, and that is, that for centuries the country has been enslaved by the Church of Rome, which betrayed Ireland into the hands of the English Government. Ireland is the only country to-day on the face of the globe that remains a slave to Rome." The Bishop sees in this movement an attempt on the part of the Irish to throw off the yoke of Rome; but the Bishop has lashed himself into a furious hatred of "the Italian," and although, as he says, he is "an Irishman first and a Christian afterwards," he knows but little of the real mind and condition of his countrymen at home.

Changes are inevitable, and whether this shall inaugurate them must depend upon the leaders. The beginning was bad. It was an open defiance of law based on palpable dishonesty, for in the one particular case on which the excitement first arose, the tenant was

either able to pay the rent himself or to get others to do so for him, for the rent has been paid. The mob which gathered, with banners and sham pikes, to resist the eviction was very Irish, but not likely to bring about any good result. Any attempt at violence will give the Government an excuse for employing the most effective measures at its command for its suppression, and the work will be short and sharp. But if the leaders are wise and prudent they can easily bring about a better state of things. Already the Government has engaged to lend some money to the distressed farmers on easy terms, and to give employment to others on public works; but all this can only half meet the present emergency, making no provision for the bettered condition of the people in the future. If the Irish would only unite they might get almost any kind of legislation for Ireland they want. A "solid Irish vote" in the House of Commons would be such a power as no Premier could venture to defy—and if he did, an alliance with the Opposition would bring him to a different state of mind. The Irish have quite as good an opportunity in the Parliament of Great Britain as the French Canadians have in this Dominion; and as we all know, the French Canadians practically hold the balance, and get a full share of the good things going. But the Irish are almost destitute of the sense of unity—they are very "brilliant," as Beaconsfield said—very poetic, very witty and good natured—but always a bellicose impracticability.

MR. GLADSTONE.

"The people's William" has opened his political campaign in Scotland, with every prospect of achieving a great success. Crowds gathered at wayside stations to greet him on his way to his elect Scotch constituency; and, at Edinburgh, the people gave him a grand ovation, and he gave them one of his best speeches. Edinburgh was always Liberal, but it was also always proper enough not to run far ahead of the times, and the effect of Mr. Gladstone's presence there may very well be taken as indicative that the tide of popularity is flowing for him again. The Earl of Beaconsfield has lately been more than usually disappointing to his friends—his most ardent admirers are bating their enthusiasm for him, and the wavering have turned to opposition.

The New York *Herald* winds up an article on "Canadian Prosperity" by saying what very many Canadians will fully agree with:—

"The Canadian market is not large enough for manufacturing industry to flourish. Manufactures must be on an extensive scale if their products are to be cheap, since small establishments cannot practice the economies of large ones. Canada as a manufacturing country will be what New England would be if shut out from the other markets of the United States."

THE PAPER PUZZLE.

SIR,—It is true that the "rag baby" is not *specie*; yet it does constitute a new species, of which there are several varieties.

It "evolves" from *Savagery*. Its motive "force" is plunder. It says: *I* shall call anything, or nothing, a dollar, and *you* shall take it and give me what I want.

Then it grows *Monarchical*. It says: *I* shall pay, but *I* shall pay just when and how *I* choose. *I* will force men to take my word as value.

Then it develops into *Parliamentary*. It consults as to *when* it shall pay, and hints at thirty years hence, as a convenient season. That is dawning sanity; for its value can then be definitely measured against goods or gold.

It takes yet a further step in advance. It becomes *Republican*, and offers its promises-to-pay in thirty years, only to those who *choose* to labour or supply, material for public works for the public good, trusting to these to pay both principal,—and interest, if any be promised.

So it gets slightly civilized; but to whose good? The value of such promises must be measured against competing rates of labour elsewhere, and cost of material. These must meet on some basis, and that basis is the universal one of gold. Most contractors for labour or material would be apt to perceive this, and permit it to form an element in their calculations before tendering. Possibly the average head of the benevolent Canadian contractor may be softer than is common among mankind; but *I* take leave to doubt it.

The "rag-baby" has evolved with great rapidity to the point indicated. It has not been born wise, but has had wisdom thrust upon it. Its evolution must go on till it completes the republican in the rational and christian stage of existence. Then it will evolve a scorn of attempted *fraud*, and love of goodness and truth eventuating in a realizing sense of the usefulness of gold as the only settled and economical measure of values.

But then the *baby* will be a *man*; for it will have put away childish things.

EDITOR.