

revenue results from the abolition of the customs line, it must be met by taxation of other kinds, and nothing can be more certain than that any tax is lighter than exclusion from natural markets. But parsimony is proverbially a copious source of revenue, and Canada might well save half the cost of her multitudinous governments and the whole cost of her political railways. The serious attention of our people ought to be given to the one question which vitally concerns their material interests and compared with which the issues debated so passionately at the polls, are often but controversies about straws. Unfortunately in questions which touch, or are supposed to touch, the system of separate government with all its places, legislative and administrative, the natural bias of the politicians is not identical with the interest of the people.

To frame a Reciprocity treaty amidst the conflict of jarring interests and theories is difficult, as was seen when last the attempt was made; and when it has been framed its existence is precarious: one party or other is always assailing it, if for no better reason, because it was made by their opponents, and the first blast of international hostility blows it over, as the treaty between the United States and Canada was overturned by the affair of the Trent; while the industries which have been founded in reliance on its stability are dragged down in its fall. Commercial Union alone is really worth having, and when once it is fairly brought before the minds of our people, though there will be a political resistance, the ultimate result can scarcely be doubtful.

THE extraordinary fury with which the four by-elections were contested was due, no doubt, not only to the wavering of the scale in Ontario, but to the feeling on both sides that the result would be taken as showing whether the tide had turned against the Government at Ottawa. That the tide has not turned, but is on the turn, seems to be the fact indicated by the not very decisive victory of the opposition. Not only were the most desperate efforts made, but the worst means were used, probably on both sides, but certainly on the side of the Conservatives, who sent into the constituencies branded agents of corruption. It has been the fault or the misfortune of Sir John Macdonald to have constantly about him men who can be employed for no honourable purpose, and whom no man of honour would employ. Those who are most friendly to him deplore connections which cannot fail to leave a deep stain upon his name. Can any one remain blind to the effect which these must produce on the character of our people, or to the ruin which they must ultimately bring on elective institutions? Can any one continue fixed in the belief that a system of which such things are a necessary part, is the best, and not merely the best but the only possible form of government? A mode of bringing the agents of corruption to public justice, irrespectively of any question as to the election itself, for an offence than which there can scarcely be one either more injurious or less insulting to the nation, is what morality demands and politicians will never concede.

THE Arithmetic of Party is as curious as its morality, and in the case of Mr. Mowat's majority exhibits the usual discrepancies. Mr. Mowat, however, is safe for the session, though the Opposition will happily be effective instead of being a shadow as it was before. For the purposes of the party game a moderate majority is proverbially the best. If the majority is very large its cohesion is apt to be loosened; if it is very small, a mutineer becomes master of the situation. The Whig Government in England long held power with a majority considerably smaller in proportion to the total number of the House of Commons than that which, upon any tenable calculation, will be commanded by Mr. Mowat. Apart from opinions, with regard to which there is no substantial difference between the two parties in the present case, the interminable continuance of the same party in power must be considered a public evil. Every hole and corner of the administration is filled with partisans who are also wire-pullers, a standing army of place-hunters is formed, and every set of ideas but one is shut out from the public service and from legislation. Nor are the general disadvantages of exclusiveness likely to be tempered by any personal liberality on the part of the present Premier, who embraces the "Spoils" principle with as much frankness as the decorum of Christian statesmanship permits. On the other hand Ontario may consider herself fortunate in not falling into the hands of any one who as a henchman of the Ottawa Government might be under the controlling influence of Quebec. It is probably this feeling, quickened by the mistaken conduct of the Opposition on the Boundary question, that has snatched Mr. Mowat's ministry from the jaws of death.

THE son of Lord Chief Justice Coleridge has brought to the Bench and Bar of Canada the renewed apologies of his father. As Lord Coleridge had personally accepted the invitation, and the preparations for his re-

ception were far advanced, his sudden change of plan naturally caused not only disappointment, but anger, which was increased when he skirted Canada in his visit to Niagara. But it is now generally understood that he gave up a cherished intention only in obedience to a warning from the Home Government, which virtually amounted to a prohibition, and which, in his position, it is impossible to disregard. We must regret that Canada did not feel his impressive presence and hear his eloquent voice. We must also regret that he did not see a judiciary which vies, we may hope, if not in historical majesty, at least in purity, with the British Ermine, and a Bar of which Ontario has no reason to be ashamed, either in respect of ability or of professional honour. We have the consolation of knowing that in the United States the Lord Chief Justice of England made a most favourable impression and that he made it in the best way, not by fulsome flattery or by turgid rhetoric, but by high though courteous bearing and the sincere, simple and manly language which become alike the dignity of international friendship and the character of an English gentleman.

OUR leading book firm is once more in the list of business failures. That the high-class book trade should flourish in Canada under the present conditions is impossible, because by the customs line between Canada and the States, the book-seller is cut off from his centres of distribution. A customs line drawn between London and the Province would soon ruin all the provincial book-sellers of England, who would find little compensation for such a disadvantage in the liberty of filling the orders of their customers by sending over to New York. It is obvious that the absence of high-class book stores must tell heavily against the intellectual progress of the country. But, as Mr. Collins showed, the evil extends to Canadian literature generally, in its commercial aspect. The Canadian writer has no copyright of any value on his own continent; his works may be pirated in the United States under his nose; and his copyright in Great Britain is little better than a mockery; while the Canadian publisher has to struggle against a torrent of English works reprinted in the United States, being himself restrained by the Imperial Copyright, from sharing in that traffic.

In a state of things which is not only abnormal but unjust may, perhaps, be found an excuse for a practice prevalent in Canada, and in itself by no means healthy, that of selling books by subscription, instead of bringing them out in the regular way and putting them on an open market. In the *Rural Canadian* is heard the indignant voice of farmers who think themselves overreached by the publishers of *Picturesque Canada*, and to whose charges the Messrs. Belden, if they value their own commercial honour, will deem it necessary to reply. There are works so erudite or peculiar in their character that they can only be brought out by subscription, unless there is some body like the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which will bear the charge of printing them in the interest of learning. But, generally speaking, this mode of publication can be chosen only with a view to decoying the unwary into the purchase of that which it is known they would not buy if it were laid before them in the ordinary way. Too often the subscription-book agent is the emissary of gross imposition, and large sums have been swept from Canada in this manner by American swindlers who generally contrive to mask their identity under some Canadian connection. In the cities people ought to be able to take care of themselves, but the rural book-buyer, in his Arcadian simplicity, is as a sheep in the hands of the shearer. In nine cases out of ten, when the book-agent calls, wisdom bids us tell him to put his goods on a fair market, where, like other goods, they will be bought if they are worth the price, and then courteously to speed him on his way.

THE martyrs of old avowed their act and gloried in it. O'Donnell disavowed his act and tried to escape its consequences by telling a story which is believed by no human being, least of all by his own partisans, whose interest in him entirely depends on his having done with his hand that which his tongue denied. More pity might be felt for him if Carey had been the betrayer of a great cause, instead of being, as he was, merely the betrayer of the dastardly miscreants who butchered Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. The most serious part of the matter is the sympathy shown by a whole race, or a large portion of it, not in this case only, but in other cases with homicide. When the sixth commandment was promulgated and the decree was pronounced that whosoever shed man's blood by man his blood should be shed, the first stone of civilization was laid. If human life ceases to be sacred, if we relapse into private revenge and the blood feud, barbarism will return. The other day in a city of the United States an Irishman committed a murder for which he was justly executed; but his obsequies were celebrated with the utmost ecclesiastical pomp and his body was escorted as that of a patriotic martyr to the grave by thousands of his fellow-countrymen. How much firmness has the Roman Catho-