

commercial standard, this has succeeded. The Editor has made a fortune by constant and unscrupulous hard work.

But the *Globe's* style of writing is manifestly out of date. While Mr. Brown has made no progress in education and the cultivation of courtesy in either himself or his staff since he started the *Globe*, Canada has made great headway, and now demands, and expects from its press, at least, fair argument couched in decent language. The *Globe* is falling behind, and fast losing that enormous influence it once wielded. And no wonder. What can idle calling names do in the real work of building up a nation? Abuse of persons who have the interests of Canada at heart, and who care for Canada first as surely as Mr. Brown cares for the *Globe* first—abuse of the American nation and constitution and administration—what can such puerilities accomplish that is worth the doing? Nothing at all.

Now, what was the apparent and avowed purpose of the Political Economy Society at its first meeting? After its usual manner the *Globe* ascribed motives and ends which were never expressed, and so wrote on "An Annexation Bray." At the request of the leaders of the movement I made a statement as to the objects of the Society, which was to the effect: that as our young men are losing all intelligent interest in politics, and as we are anxious to bring them back to a study of this important subject, freed from the violent partisanship of our party papers, it is expedient that they have the opportunity to discuss, and hear discussed, all questions that come within the range of political economy.

Society is being agitated by questions which relate to the future of this Dominion—the *Globe* may be ignorant of the fact, but it is a fact, nevertheless—and for many others in this Political Economy Society, I said: Let us discuss these questions fairly and reasonably. We are told that Provincialism is a failure—let it be put under the strong light of rational criticism; there is talk of Imperial Federation, of Canadian Independence, even of Annexation to the United States—let us talk these matters over; we are capable—let us do it. There was nothing said that could lead any reasonable mortal to believe that we contemplated such a thing as annexation. For myself, I carefully abstained from the expression of any opinion whatever as to what the future may or must be, but only asked for a fair and free discussion of Canadian affairs. It was particularly and pointedly stated that no one would be expected to give up his opinions or his party by joining the Society, and the fact that all parties, and almost every phase of political and social life was represented, might have assured the *Globe* that no treasonable designs were entertained. I have quite as much right to talk of "An Annexation Brown" as the Editor of the *Globe* has to talk of "An Annexation Bray," and I think that the really "short-sighted noodles" are the men who imagine that abuse is going to pass for argument, and that thinking people are going to put their interests, their intellect, and conscience under the intolerable despotism of the *Globe*. Mr. Brown would deny us the right of free speech if he could; he cares for the *Globe* first, for Gritism next—for party after that, and then Canada comes in anywhere. While professing a fervent loyalty to England, he does all that in him lies to disfavour and ostracise every Englishman who comes to this colony; he is opposed to every scheme for social, or political reform which does not emanate from the *Globe*; he fears and hates an able man as he detests an honest politician; he stamps his prodigious feet in the face of progress, and cares for nothing but subscribers and political slaves. In one column he whines about Christmas day, and in the next vilifies his neighbour. And this fossil—this political fatalist—this dazed "fly on the wheel" hopes to stop the current of free thought and deny men the right of free discussion. The hope is as flimsy as the logic of the *Globe*, and the Political Economy Society will flourish in spite of what Mr. Brown can say or do to the contrary.

SIR FRANCIS INTERVIEWED.

It is certainly extraordinary that the unostentatious and altogether harmless meeting of a few men to form a society for the discussion of important public questions should have created so much excitement in political circles on both sides of the line. The *Globe* says it is nothing—has no significance, yet calls upon itself and public opinion to crush it in the bud. The New York *Herald* has published sensa-

tional reports and quite ecstatic prophecies concerning it; while Sir Francis Hincks has been betrayed into the expression of sentiments which clearly indicate how entirely he has ceased to know the thought and life of the country. What Sir Francis said about the financial failure of the SPECTATOR was of course ungracious, irrelevant and untrue; but it is a fair illustration of the reckless manner in which the aged knight talked. He knows as much of the financial affairs of the SPECTATOR as he does of the tendency of Canadian thought, and that is—nothing. It is quite true, as Sir Francis was careful to explain to the *Herald* reporter, that I have been but a comparatively short time in the country; but then, during that time I have thrown myself into the general life of the country, while Sir Francis has been entirely given over to more personal matters. When of two men one walks rapidly ahead and the other stands still, three years will mark a great difference in their relative positions.

But everything considered it is difficult even to guess at the reasons Sir Francis had for indulging in the kind of talk to which he evidently treated the reporter. He seems to have gone out of his way to belittle his friends and create false impressions. The letter to the *Herald* of the following day giving "a few explanations" acknowledges that the report "was wonderfully accurate." So, Sir Francis said the meeting of the Political Economy Society was annexationist—it was nothing of the kind. Sir Francis said only one member of Parliament attended—there were four present. Sir Francis gave the impression that Mr. Goldwin Smith was one of the company—Mr. Smith knew nothing of the movement or of the meeting. Sir Francis said the CANADIAN SPECTATOR was—well, we will let that pass, since, at least, a word of approval has been penned to the *Herald*. But why should Sir Francis have introduced the question at all? Why was Mr. Macmaster scoffed at as being "too young to accomplish anything." He has for some time past been old enough to accomplish a good deal in one way and another. Being a young man, and at the same time a lawyer, he is of course "a young lawyer," but Sir Francis himself—when in Montreal—has been known to speak very highly of this "young lawyer," and to acknowledge his ability and position. When Sir Francis corrected the interviewer, it would have been to his credit if he had also corrected himself—for he was wide of the mark and unfortunate in almost everything he said, and on reading the report with the letter which partly corrected and partly supplemented it, many of us were forced to the painful conclusion that Sir Francis has arrived at that time of life when it would be well for him to rest from his great and manifold labours in calm and hopeful anticipation of a prolonged period of freedom from newspaper interviewers, banking difficulties, and political controversies generally.

The prospects of the revival of trade in England are not very encouraging so far; it is true that some slight improvement has been visible, but it will yet be some months before any sensible increase is probable. The uncertainty of affairs in Afghanistan, and the likelihood of a dissolution of Parliament soon after Easter, when the Budget and other urgent measures have been disposed of, with the consequent excitement of a general election, will all serve to keep business unsettled for a considerable period.

Reports from the agricultural districts show there is considerable distress, and relief works may yet be necessary. The latest news from Ireland shows that the distress is very general and is increasing, and frightful suffering is anticipated during the winter.

THE TAY BRIDGE DISASTER.

Another railway horror startled the community on Monday, reaching in its effects families even residing in this city. A fearful storm on Sunday night passed over Scotland, and it is surmised overturned the mail train when passing over the Tay Bridge, carrying with it a large portion of the bridge. The train fell from 80 to 100 feet, and, of course, all the occupants of the carriages were doomed to a sudden and horrible death. Even the carriages themselves have not, so far, been found by the divers. I am informed by one of the best authorities in Canada that the Tay Bridge was a wonderfully well built structure of masonry and iron, and the fact of its giving way is unaccountable.