

I have received and carefully read Prof. Goldwin Smith's essay on "The Political Destiny of Canada," with which is given a reply by Sir Francis Hincks, and some notes in criticism of that reply by the author of the essay. Professor Smith reasons the thing out and comes to a logical conclusion, that of annexation to the United States, leaving the temper of Canadians out of the question. Sir Francis Hincks states what is the present temper of Canadians, leaving the reasoning out of the question; and there—so far as I can judge—is the difference. Sir Francis is absolutely correct at this present time—the Professor must wait until time shall have worked out his problems. The Professor assumes the part of a prophet—the Knight assumes the part of a preacher. The first is right now; will Mr. Smith's thought become a thing? Nothing is more probable than the unlikely.

What the movement in Canada in aid of the ruined shareholders of the City of Glasgow Bank will result in no one of course can tell; the Scotch are enthusiastic, and when they take any matter up always succeed well, and there is no reason for believing that they will not manage to raise a good sum of money; but I think that along with the money they should send an expression of opinion about the compromise which has been so generally suggested. The creditors ought, in all fairness, to accept the offered fifteen shillings in the pound, and not claim the pound of flesh. The depositors in an unlimited bank must be content to run some risk for the advantage of having a higher rate of interest than limited-liability banks can give. If this composition were accepted, the affairs of the bank would soon be settled, and the poor shareholders have a chance of seeing the end; but pending that acceptance it is doubtful whether any outside effort should be made. Canada is poor, and no portion of the community can be expected to tax itself unreasonably. Let the creditors show their willingness to help in the matter, and then the appeal would come with much better grace.

And I agree with the remark made by Mr. Buntin at the meeting in Montreal the other day; a protest should be made against the existence of these unlimited-liability concerns. They are a delusion and a snare.

When will Canadian daily papers drop the notion that reporting is done "in the interests of the public," and so make an end to the nonsense that reporters are "public servants?" Reporters are the nonsensical of the newspaper proprietors, and their work is done in the interest of those same. Newspapers vend their wares like any other trader, catering for public patronage just as a grocer or bookseller would do; but reporters have got the idea that in some way or other they are employed by "the public." At any rate, until they do get to understand what their calling is they should give correct and carefully prepared reports of what is transpiring. At present that is just what they do not aim after, as I can testify from personal experience. It is evident enough that they have to make the paper sell. I do not complain of that, but of the absurd pretension that reporting is done "in the interest of the public."

Here is a clipping from the *Toronto Mail* of Saturday:—

PLAGIARISM.

To the Editor of the Mail:

SIR,—*Apropos* of the usual "courtesies of journalism" which the *Globe* claims for itself as a sort of right:—

"I am Sir Oracle, when I ope my
Lips, let no dog bark,"

it might have been as well if Mr. Brown acknowledged that the ballad "Canada," which may be found on the third page of this morning's *Globe* appeared originally some months since in the CANADIAN SPECTATOR.

Yours, &c.,

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD.

Toronto, Dec. 20th.

The *Globe* will not notice that; the *Globe* never does notice things of that sort. But if this were followed-up, there would be not only "a voice from the crowd," but a crowd of voices, for articles are often taken from the SPECTATOR *verbatim et literatim* and not acknowledged. One paper the other week took "The Times" and inserted them bodily, the first personal pronoun singular and all. It had an odd effect by way of contrast.

Mr. Edwin Booth, the actor, has written a very admirable letter to one of the Editors of the *Christian Union* in answer to the query "shall I go to the Theatre?" It puts the whole question in a nutshell, thus:

My knowledge of the modern drama is so very meagre that I never permit my wife or daughter to witness a play without previously ascertaining its character. This is the method I pursue; I can suggest no other, unless it might be by means of a "dramatic censor," whose taste or judgment might, however, be frequently at fault.

If the management of theatres could be denied to speculators and placed in the hands of actors who value their reputation and respect their calling, the

stage would at least afford healthy recreation, if not indeed a wholesome stimulus to the exercise of noble sentiments. But while the theatre is permitted to be a mere shop for gain—open to every huckster of immoral gimcracks—there is no other way to discriminate between the pure and base than through the experience of others.

Yes, Mr. Booth has it; "the theatre is permitted to be a mere shop for gain—open to every huckster of immoral gimcracks," and those hucksters pander to the lowest passions of the people, so that what might be, and should be, a general good, is turned into a most destructive evil.

Mr. Orby Shipley has discovered at last what ordinary mortals knew long ago, that the legitimate and logical conclusion of Ritualism is going over to Rome. Mr. Shipley has long been declaring his profound attachment to the Church of England—has written a volume and no end of essays in proof of it, but his last move is far away more reasonable and honest than anything else he has done for some years past.

It sounds strangely in our ears when we are told of the English Government's proposal to appropriate public money for the relief of the sufferers in Turkey; it means in reality a Protectorate. England itself is in dire distress, which reaches from the iron workers of Northumberland to the Cornish miners; relief committees are being formed; urgent appeals are being made for private charity; want overlaps famine, and yet it is proposed to send English money to Turkey. Surely we have not heard the last of the old proverb which says "Charity begins at home," or else "home" is getting to have an extensive meaning for England.

Judging from an article which appeared in last Friday's *Gazette* the writer had found it quite easy to decide upon whom the blame for the present war with the Ameer of Afghanistan should be laid; but then it is probable that the *Gazette* writer reads only one side of the question. As to the question of morality involved in the confessed effort of the Russians to create a difficulty in India in order to distract attention from affairs further west, or perhaps, avert war—that may be allowed to pass for an ordinary thing in these days, but the question of which party is right in England is not so easily settled. The Afghanistan papers have been published which tell the story of the controversy between Lord Lytton and the Ameer, but that story is hard of interpretation. All that *The Times* can say is, "when the accidents of the story are removed, it seems to justify, on the whole, the view which has been taken by the Government" "it is not unsatisfactory as regards our conduct." That is timid language. *The Times* is afraid to speak with its accustomed boldness.

But the *Daily News* declares, with confidence, that the documents issued clearly expose the mis-statements which Lord Cranbrook has made about the negotiations between Lord Northbrook and the Ameer's envoy at Simla in 1873. One thing is certain, the *Gazette* notwithstanding, that year after year the present Government was giving assurances to Parliament that no change had taken place, or was contemplated in British relations with Afghanistan; members of the Cabinet declared that in their opinion a change was not desirable; which appeared to be an endorsement of the Liberal policy. But a change was attempted at least, for Lord Salisbury tried to establish a British Agency at Herat before he was in office a year.

Russia has been foiled in Afghanistan—her mission there has been recalled—and now she is turning her attention once more to a definite Turco-Russian policy. General Todleben has called home 100,000 of his men, and altogether friendly terms are being established. Russia can hardly be condemned for making alliances anywhere. She has won a victory which was almost as bad as a defeat. She has failed to find friendship where she confidently looked for it, and if now she has sought a friendship where she only found enmity before, none can blame her. But it does seem a grim fate that has handed Turkey over to Russia after the championship of England had been extended to her during so long a period.

At any rate it looks as if Turkey intends to give the new champion and friend a trial, for General Khérédine, who has become Grand Vizier, is said to have strong opinions and influence against the movement lately set on foot to promulgate western ideas at the Porte. The General sent out a work awhile ago of considerable eloquence and force, urging that the cause of progress will be best furthered by the exclusive predominance of Mussulman agency in Turkey; he holds that the Turks can renovate themselves, and need no help from the western world. The drawback is that the General, when in power as ruler at Tunis, did not very conspicuously improve the government of the country.

EDITOR.