

Englishman, we can scarcely conceive of ourselves as feeling one-half so thankful as the *Times* seems to be, for such an offer as that contained in the resolution passed the other day by the Dominion Parliament. We should rather, it seems to us, have been disposed to think it a decidedly cool proceeding on the part of one of the colonies to first impose a high tariff on the goods of the Mother Country, while enjoying free access to her markets, and then graciously say to her: "Now, if you will give up the free-trade principle under which your trade has expanded so immensely, and consent to impose taxes upon the productions of all other countries of the world, in our selfish interests, we will reciprocate by lowering our taxes on your goods." However, if the proposal strikes the nation generally as favourably as it seems to have done the *Times*, it is not for Canada to complain. But as the *Times* points out, the difficulties to be overcome before such a policy can be inaugurated are so stupendous, and the period of its earliest possible adoption, consequently, so remote, that it can hardly be considered a question of practical politics. First, the concurrence of the other great colonies in the offer must be had before the Mother Country can begin to take it into serious consideration. Then, in the second place, her people, long accustomed to buy in the cheapest markets, are to be persuaded to consent to give up the boon of untaxed food and clothing in order that they may "lay imposts on Norwegian timber to give an advantage to Canada, on wool and hides from South America for the benefit of the sheep farmers and cattle owners of New South Wales and Queensland and the Cape, on wheat from the United States and Russia to protect the growers of South Australia and Manitoba." These difficulties overcome, there is yet the formidable risk involved in "incalculable disturbance to trade," the breaking up of long-standing treaties, and the possibilities of retaliation by the nations discriminated against, in favour of business rivals, with whom the competition is now becoming constantly more keen. Perhaps, after all, it would be more to the point to say that the Canadian advocates of the measure, who are delighted with the *Times'* article, are grateful for a very small meed of encouragement. Leaving, however, the merits of the proposed new departure for fuller consideration hereafter, what a comment on the reliability of cablegrams and the honesty of correspondents is afforded in the comments of the *Times* on the resolution in amendment of Mr. McNeil's motion, which was moved by Mr. Davies and supported by the Opposition. The amendment was as follows:—

Inasmuch as Great Britain admits the products of Canada into her ports free of duty, this House is of opinion that the present scale of duties exacted by Canada upon goods mainly imported from Great Britain should be reduced.

The following is the shape in which it appeared in the *Times*, and which led to the pointless and mysterious comments of that journal:—

Mr. Davies moved an amendment that Canadian goods should be admitted free into Great Britain, British goods being allowed a reduced duty in Canada.

We do not know how sincere the Opposition may have been in committing themselves to the policy outlined in Mr. Davies' resolution, which is not easy to reconcile with their unrestricted reciprocity programme, but it is evident that the course proposed would do much to promote enlarged trade and to cement the connection with the Mother Country.

EARL GREY'S treatise on the "Commercial Policy of the British Colonies and the McKinley Tariff" is entitled to the respectful consideration due to the matured opinions of a statesman who has for half a century been conversant with the public affairs of Great Britain and her dependencies, and who during a portion of that period occupied the responsible position of Colonial Secretary. The knowledge of colonial affairs which his experience in the Colonial Office could not fail to give him, and the interest in the growth and prosperity of the Greater Britain beyond the seas, which is the natural result of that knowledge, certainly constitute a sufficient apology, if any is needed, for his tendering to Canadians, to whom his pamphlet is especially addressed, advice in regard to matters concerning which they might naturally suppose themselves to be better informed and in a better position to form correct conclusions than the most astute statesman across the ocean could possibly be. A careful perusal of the treatise convinces us that it is also well worth careful consideration on its merits, and we venture to express the hope that it will not be dismissed by those who aspire to

influence Canadian legislation and policy, with the cursory glance which is all that seems thus far to have been given it. Earl Grey's repeated expressions of regret that the British Parliament should have surrendered its authority "to maintain one uniform system of commercial policy for the whole Empire"; in other words, that the right of managing their own trade policy should have been conceded to the larger colonies as a part or corollary of the semi-autonomy so wisely conferred upon them, may be passed over as a pardonable anachronism in a politician of the old school, though the suggestion of the alternative policy was undoubtedly a serious tactical mistake, adapted to prejudice the Canadian reader against the cogent reasonings which follow.

LORD GREY'S appeal is a carefully-wrought argument in favour of a policy of free trade for Canada, as opposed alike to any reciprocity agreement, restricted or unrestricted, with the United States, and to any such project as that of the Imperial Trade League for discrimination in favour of the Empire. The pamphlet was evidently written some time since, as several events have occurred within the last few weeks, which, had they been known to the writer, would have materially strengthened his case. The failure of the attempted negotiations between the delegates of the Dominion Government and the representatives of the Washington Administration; the consequent declaration by the Canadian Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Government, that all attempts to secure a renewal of reciprocity with the neighbouring Republic are at an end, so far as the Canadian Government is concerned; the reply of the Colonial Secretary to the address of the Canadian Parliament, touching the "favoured nation" clauses in the treaties with Germany and Belgium, a reply which shuts the door in the face of all proposals looking to preferential trade arrangements with either the Republic or the Empire; and the recent resolution proposed by the Canadian Opposition, by way of amendment to the Government resolution in favour of a mutually preferential policy between Canada and the Mother Country—which amendment, though ostensibly in the interests of trade with Great Britain, looked in the same direction as the policy advocated by Earl Grey—all bear directly upon the subject of the pamphlet under consideration. The contents of the pamphlet itself may be roughly classed in three divisions. It contains, first, a statement of the general argument on behalf of free trade; second, a strong plea in favour of that policy as best adapted to meet the peculiar circumstances in which Canada is placed by the operation of the McKinley Bill; and third, an argument to show that the policy of free trade would operate more powerfully than any other to bring about a change in the narrow and unfriendly system on the part of the United States of which that Bill is the expression and culmination. We have already, in previous numbers, shown that the free admission of British and foreign goods into Canada could not fail to produce a powerful effect in the last named direction, by reason both of the great difficulty which the United States Government would find in guarding the long frontier against the natural desire of its own citizens to buy in the cheaper market, and of the educative influence of the ever present object-lesson which would be placed before the eyes of the people of the Republic. The London *Times*, in an article to which we have referred, has laid down the doubtful principle that "expediency must be the measure of right in questions of imports and exports as in other things." Lord Grey has an undoubted advantage in that his advocacy of the policy he recommends is based upon the broader basis of a universal scientific law, which, if capable, as all free traders maintain it to be, of logical or moral demonstration, can never be shaken by any consideration of fancied expediency.

ONE of the most remarkable utterances that has been made by any British statesman in modern times was that made the other day by Lord Salisbury, in a speech on the question of Home Rule for Ireland. It is bad enough for the Protestants, or perhaps we should rather say, the Orangemen, of Ulster, to be dealing in open threats of armed resistance to a proposed constitutional change, though that change is to be brought about, if brought about at all, by the deliberate vote of the majority of the people of the United Kingdom, as an act of justice to one member of the Union. But when the Prime Minister of Great Britain and Ireland, placed by the suffrages of a self-ruling people at the head of its constitutional Government, and bound,

one would suppose, by every principle of duty and loyalty to uphold constitutional methods, adopts the same rôle in a public address, and openly encourages and incites a section of the population to armed rebellion, in case the voice of the nation should decide to try the experiment of allowing the Irish people, the Ulstermen of course included, to manage their own local affairs under such conditions, restrictions and safeguards of the rights of minorities as the wisdom of Parliament may provide, things have surely reached a pretty serious pass. Unless they are strangely misrepresented by their historical records, or have wonderfully deteriorated in recent years, the people of Great Britain are little likely to be deterred by such threats from carrying out a policy which they have deliberately, whether wisely or unwisely, decided to be in the interests of unity, fair-play and good government. Suppose that the coming elections should result in a change of Government, followed by the passing of a Home Rule Bill, and that the Ulstermen should carry out their threats, as they are not unlikely to do, will not Lord Salisbury be morally responsible, to the extent of his great personal and political influence, for the bloodshed and other evils that may follow? And if so, can his words be justified on any sound principle either of statesmanship or of morality? Of course not even majority rule, or the right of the franchise, can deprive an oppressed people, or section of a people, of the sacred right of revolution. Should the Protestants of Ulster, at some future day, find themselves suffering intolerable injustice and oppression under the Home Rule system, and fail utterly to obtain deliverance by constitutional methods, no one could seriously blame them for trying the virtue of armed resistance. But it is one thing to revolt against actual injustice and oppression. It is another and a very different thing to take up arms to prevent the making of a constitutional change which may have been decided on by the voice of the people constitutionally expressed, and which is on the face of it an extension rather than a restriction of the autonomy of the rebels themselves. No one should be more able to see the force of the distinction than the veteran Premier of Great Britain.

IT is reported, on how good authority we have no means of judging, that the United States Government proposes to impose a tax upon Canadian vessels passing through Sault Ste. Marie canal, on the Michigan side, in retaliation for the alleged violation of the Treaty of Washington by Canada, in the matter of the Welland Canal. The statement before us gives as the cause of complaint the imposition of toll by Canada upon American vessels passing through the Welland Canal, but as this same toll is taken from Canadian vessels it cannot afford a ground of complaint. The real cause of the threatened retaliation is no doubt the discrimination, not directly against American vessels, but against American ports, which is effected by the rebate granted to vessels taking their cargoes to Montreal, but withheld from those which stop short of that destination. This discrimination is defended, we believe, by the leaders of both Canadian parties, on the ground that no distinction is made between American and Canadian vessels. If the latter proceed to Montreal with their cargoes, they are entitled to the same rebate as Canadian vessels. If Canadian vessels unlade at a lake port on either side, instead of proceeding down the St. Lawrence, they lose the rebate just as American vessels do. To us it has always seemed, and we are unable to modify the opinion, that this is a subterfuge unworthy of the Canadian people. Probably it is not a violation of the letter of the Treaty, but can any candid man doubt that it is a violation of its spirit? Can we suppose for a moment that this clause of the Treaty would have been agreed to by the representatives of the United States, had it been clearly understood that it would be so interpreted in practice as to become what it unquestionably is, a means of discriminating in favour of a Canadian as opposed to an American port? From the higher point of view it only makes the matter worse that the Washington authorities have stooped to a very similar quibble. When, in accordance with the counter provision of the Treaty, the State of New York opened its canals to Canadian vessels on equal terms with American, the United States Customs Department rendered the supposed privilege worthless and nugatory by compelling Canadian barges which sought to take advantage of it, to discharge their cargoes at the first port of entry they reached in American territory. Thus both nations in turn "keep the word of promise to the ear but break it to the hope." A sorry spectacle, truly,