

France, in Italy, in Russia, even in little Greece, which recently defied all Europe as long as she could, in the assertion of her national position and aims, truckling to foreign countries provokes a storm of indignation and disgust. It is left to Canada alone to discredit itself by supporting a section of its Press, which, disaffected to its country, and afraid to put trust in its spirit, openly parades preference for institutions distasteful to the majority of its countrymen. Apropos of this subject, we subjoin an extract from a leading Republican journal on a recent speech of Mr. Laurier. Comment is needless:—

"If an American were to say what Laurier says about his country they would tie a stone about his neck and throw him into the lake. The Americans get back at Canadians over here in great shape whenever they see anything like this. We have a hard enough task to hold up the end of Canada over here, and when we find one of our statesmen at home giving up the Canadian case, there is nothing left for us to do but to crawl under the barn."

BRAG AND BLUSTER.

The Press of Canada is almost an unit in denouncing the obnoxious tone of the *Standard's* article, which has drawn so much attention. Its mischievous tendency was promptly demonstrated by a fierce retort from the *New York Sun*, which, it must be confessed, was fairly provoked. In a subsequent article, the *Standard* seems to have backed down, but the rashness which could allow of the production of the original article is almost incredible in a journal generally remarkable for the sobriety and excellence of its editorial columns. There has not been much tendency in Canada to follow this example, and it is above all things desirable that any such tendency should be promptly repressed.

No conceivable calamity could compare with that of war with the United States, and every responsible person must shrink from any utterance calculated to engender the idea. The speeches of the inveterate tail twisters are, no doubt, aggravating enough, but even Mr. Blaine's speech puts the action of the Senate on grounds which are not insulting, and Mr. Bayard has expressed himself on the rejection of the Treaty in the spirit of a Christian and a gentleman—in accordance, indeed, with the tone of courtesy which is characteristic of his despatches.

When Mr. Ingalls disgraces himself in his place in the Senate by bawling that "England has always been a ruffian, a coward and a bully," imputations, like curses, come home to roost, and cheap blackguardism, like a boomerang, returns on the head of the thrower. It is a case in which ignorance may excuse falsehood, but in which no excuse remains for coarseness and ill-manners. Under insufferable provocation, and for the sake of that honor which, win or lose, is, after all, above all things, England and Canada might have to fight, but we have a lively faith that the sober sense, and, let us say, the Christianity of both, or, we might also say, the three nations, ought to suffice to repress all provocation.

Courage is mostly forbearing and conciliatory, and in nine cases out of ten, it is fear which blusters. Let us be above a weakness which is ever a source of eventual embarrassment.

SHOULD A BACHELOR BE TAXED?

This question from time to time has protruded itself upon public attention. As far back as 1884, a bill was introduced into the Legislature of Georgia, providing for the taxation of bachelors, but was defeated. A short time since, Vienna wrestled with the subject, and now the question has cropped up in Paris. It is an excellent theme to consider, as it may in time to come be as great an economic question of free or taxed as—say wool or anything else.

Let us in candor, and with due respect for the feelings of that sensitive being, the bachelor, ask why he should not be taxed. We are in the habit of taxing luxuries. We tax whisky. We tax cigars. We tax wines. We tax silks. We tax works of art. We tax carpets, and we tax innumerable other articles of daily use on the all-sufficient ground that they are "luxuries" and not "necessaries" of human existence. Why should not a tax be also levied on the unmarried man? It will, of course, be here pointed out that such a tax would yield (if collected) a municipal revenue only, which would not accrue to the finances of the nation. But what of that? If the principle is a correct one, the tax should be imposed regardless of where the money goes. There seems to be no good and valid reason why the bachelor should not be taxed. It is a principle of responsible government that the vices of a people should be mulcted, in order to support the virtues in proper shape. We do not mean to class celibacy among the vices. Perish the thought! But as luxuries and vices are both drawn upon to support the needs and virtues of society, we do not see how the bachelor can escape.

Is the state of "single blessedness" as regards men a vice? We have no doubt that it is always a luxury. Even in what might be called the tadpole stage of his existence it is a luxury. From the chrysalis stage of young bachelorhood to the butterfly existence of bald-headed maturity, it is likewise a luxury.

The bachelor has no cares. His sun rises and sets in his own comforts. There are no babies who manifest an alarming propensity to get more wind into their little stomachs than they can bear. The bachelor has no walking up and down at hours when graveyards are popularly supposed to yaw, in the vain hope to jolt the wind out of his unfortunate offspring. There is no sudden demand for him to rush out into the black night, perhaps into a driving rain or a blinding snow storm, to get the doctor for his wife or for some of the children. There is none of this for him. Once in bed, he sleeps "the sleep that knows no breaking," to paraphrase from Sir Walter

Scott. There is nothing to disturb the delightful monotony of his home repose. And when he wakes up in the morning it is as a new and an invigorated being.

There are other phases of celibacy which are yet stronger arguments in favor of the assertion that that state should be taxed as a luxury. There is no demand for spring bonnets, which comes with such frequency that the husband is led to believe that spring must be perennial. There are no seal skin sacques, dolmans, or cloaks, to buy, no diamonds, corals, pearls. He is not made to understand how miserable a man's existence may be, if he does not at once put in a stock of silk hosiery, fancy garters, fine shoes, fine handkerchiefs, and gloves that reach nearly up to the shoulder. Again, there is no call for the finest linen, with dainty laces, which is carefully covered, but must give supreme satisfaction to the wearer. There are no "Saratoga waves" to buy, no "Langtry bangs," no switches, no false teeth, no rouge, no powder, no enamel for the complexion. He has to buy no bracelets, no parasols with solid silver handles, no solid silver card cases.

Anything more? The bachelor's establishment is simplicity itself, compared with that of the benedict. He has one room—maybe two. He satisfies the cravings of hunger in an adjoining restaurant. He has no lace curtains to buy; no expensive parlor and bedroom suites; no servants to employ. Again, in the case of a bachelor, there are no hungry mouths as big and as ravenous as the maw of a pelican to fill. There are no little feet to be shod; no little bodies to be kept warm; no medicine to be bought to remedy or ward off disease. If the bachelor is sick, some one is always found who has sympathy enough to care for him. He wants little. What he gets, he gets at a very low rate—for sympathy and kindness are not paid for at the market rates for other grades less valuable.

With all these solid facts staring them in the face, will any person have the temerity to say that celibacy is not a luxury? What is a life of luxury but a life free from care? Has the bachelor any care beyond himself? And does not that very care minister to his own happiness? True, in the absence of a loving wife and pretty children, the bachelor may miss more than his freedom from burdens can compensate him for. But, so far as he is concerned, never having enjoyed either wife or children, the old bachelor cannot miss them. He does not know what he could have had, and is more happy in his ignorance.

Bye-and-bye the conditions of society may become such that the bachelor will have to be taxed. Men are too apt to sacrifice their matrimonial desires to their love of ease. The municipality, by taxing them heavily, would be merely using its police power to club them into the matrimonial traces. Think of the gentle hearts that are left to pine away! Think of the sweet souls that gradually wither and pine away for the want of congenial companionship! Who is responsible for this woman-slaughter? Is it not the old and young bachelor, who, because of his selfishness, deprives these yearning beings of that right which nature has made part of themselves? Verily, the bachelor should be made to pay every year for the tribulations that he causes. He should be roundly taxed for the luxurious existence he enjoys.

What should be done with the revenue which will be derived from a bachelor tax? It will not do to throw it into the general fund. It would be more reasonable and just to apply it to some specific purpose. The best plan would be to provide and maintain from it a home—comfortable and convenient in its appointments—where the weary spinster, after years of more or less persistent angling for "a man," might find a haven of rest and happiness. There would be a flavor of poetic justice in that that should commend itself to all such spinsters and to many other persons.

TREATY RELATIONS.

We do not know exactly when the Blue Book of the diplomatic correspondence of 1887 on the Fishery contentions was issued, but it is only a week since it came into our hands. Its contents throw a good deal of light on the subject. One point which impresses itself is the fact of a considerable amount of sincerity in the American belief that Canada has acted in a narrow spirit. We by no means acknowledge this, yet it would seem that concessions on one or two points might have been reasonably made. The denial of rebate of Canal Tolls to American vessels savors of sharp practice. It does not, of course, discriminate against American vessels, but it does discriminate against ports, and would therefore seem to contravene the freedom of privilege which, it may be supposed, was intended.

We cannot believe that American fishing vessels have really experienced undue harshness in the assertion of Canadian rights, but we are impressed with the idea that the very treaty limitations to wood, water, shelter, and repairs, constitute anything but a generous hospitality, while the prohibition of the purchase of supplies is calculated, not only to inconvenience foreign fishermen, but cuts off a source of profit to our own people. We are inclined to think that bait should be the sole article prohibited, if that prohibition be really a necessity.

With regard to the transmission of American catches from Canadian ports, Canada must be allowed to stand justified in her present attitude, as the United States may at any moment obtain that privilege by allowing the importation of our fish duty free.

It would, perhaps, be well if the Government at Ottawa, putting entirely aside the irritation of a few irresponsible and cheap-popularity-seeking American Senators and Congressmen, were to consider these matters in a free and liberal spirit.

There could be no more serious mistake than the suppression of an honorable spirit of conciliation by a false estimate of honor. There is no humiliation, but, on the contrary, the truest dignity in fairly meeting the reasonable wishes of a friendly power; and, allowing for the strength of opinions which have come to somewhat of a difference, there is no deep reason to consider the United States as otherwise than friendly.