

order that all may share in an indirect way in the somewhat intangible blessings which result from the labours and discoveries of a few of the highly educated.

Connected with the objection above indicated to the alleged unfair liberality of the Government to the High Schools and Collegiate Institutes, was another which is so often heard from the lips of the uneducated, but which we should not have expected to meet with in the speeches of educated men in the Provincial Legislature, or in the editorial columns of leading newspapers. It is the old-fashioned cry of "over-education!" Tell it not in England, whisper it not in the United States, that in Anglo-Saxon-Canada, and even in the city which is proud to be sometimes called its intellectual centre, there are men of intelligence and influence who are fearful lest the masses shall be spoiled for the practical work of life by too much learning. It may be, it probably is, true that too many of our young people are shunning the manly toil of the farm and of other pursuits which require a mingling of manual with brain work. It may be true that this mistaken tendency is largely due to the belief fostered in the minds of those who have got a little learning at the High School or elsewhere, that they can do better for themselves in some other pursuit than that of their fathers. But if there is no way of correcting this mischievous mistake save by withdrawing from the many a part of their educational opportunities, and keeping them in old-time ignorance and darkness, the remedy is surely far worse than the disease. The fact is that the trouble is due, not to too much education, but to too little of it. To abolish the High Schools, or even to lessen their number and efficiency, in order to keep the country boys in their places on the farms, would be to fight against enlightenment and progress. The true remedy for the evil is more education. And, then, as we have asked before, why should the country youth be held responsible above all others for the tilling of the soil? Why do not some of the merchants and manufacturers and professional men, who bewail this tendency to forsake the country for the city, do something to restore the equilibrium by educating their own sons—according to the view we are discussing, they should, we suppose, keep them uneducated—for the country and for farm life? When we all become better educated many of the city-bred children will be trained as carefully for agricultural and horticultural pursuits, as they now are for trade or the learned professions. Such interchange of blood and development of muscle are the very things needed to keep the manhood of the country at a high average in respect to both muscle and brain.

Sow good services; sweet remembrances will grow from them.—*Mme. de Staël.*

THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

One of the curious features of the Tariff debate now going on in the Commons at Ottawa is the wide difference of opinion as to the present state of Canada. In the eyes of speakers on the Government and Protectionist side, the country is on the whole in a satisfactory condition; its people prosperous; business generally at least fairly active and remunerative. To the eyes of speakers on the Opposition and anti-Protectionist side, on the other hand, the whole country is under a cloud, and the masses, the farmers in particular, are very far from being in a comfortable, much less a prosperous condition. We see no reason to call in question the sincerity of either class of speakers. No doubt the majority, at least, on both sides persuade themselves that they are not only honest in their convictions, but that those convictions have been reached by the royal highway of impartial study and investigation. Of course both parties see more or less through the distorting medium of party predilections and purposes. Politicians not less than others, many will say even more than others, have the facility, so unfriendly to truth-seeking, of seeing what they wish to see and of failing to see what they do not wish to see, so far as the bearing of facts upon their views and arguments are concerned. Yet it is evident to the careful reader of the tariff speeches that this consideration falls far short of accounting for the extreme difference of opinion upon a question of fact, in regard to which the evidence is within the reach of every one who cares to examine it. Beneath all, it is pretty clear, lies the primary source of the divergence in conclusions, viz., the want of a common standard of comparison. The members of one party apply a standard of prosperity quite different in kind from that used by those of the other party. A wide divergence in conclusions is the natural result.

The first thing required, then, if both parties were really anxious to know the exact truth, would be agreement upon a common standard, or test, by which to determine the result. In what does the prosperity of a people situated as the Canadian people are really consist? With what kind and degree of prosperity should they be satisfied? Is it sufficient that the people actually resident in the country at a given period should enjoy a fair share of the comforts of life, or that their condition in relation to the possession of such comforts should compare favourably with that of the people of other countries with which theirs may fairly be compared? It is but too evident that, applying the first test, there are many in Canada at the present moment who cannot be said to be in possession of the means of enjoying even reasonable comfort. There are many citizens, willing and anxious to be industrious, who

are quite unable to find remunerative work. Yet, comparing our condition in this respect with that of our kinsmen over the border, or with that of the masses in almost any other country in America or Europe, it is pretty certain that the percentage of those among us who are in distressing poverty is smaller, and the percentage of those who are able to live in tolerable comfort is larger, than in most other countries with which we are acquainted. The almost universal business depression rests upon the Dominion more lightly than upon almost any other country that can be named. From this comparative point of view, the people of Canada, that is, the people actually resident in Canada at the present time, are decidedly well to do.

But when we come to enquire into the causes of this happy state of things another standard of prosperity is suggested. Tested by it, if it be admitted to be a fair test, the state of the country takes on a very different aspect. Why is it that there is comparatively so little absolute distress in Canada at the present time when industrial and commercial disaster is almost world-wide? May we not answer this question by another? What would have been the condition of Canada to-day, had the hundreds of thousands of young men and young women—yes, of citizens of all ages—who have crossed over, temporarily or permanently, to the United States, within the last ten years, been obliged to remain in the country? In other words, can it be that our comparative immunity from great distress is due in large measure to the fact of the existence upon our southern border of a country of vast resources and immense wealth, affording a great variety of employments, peopled by a kindred nation, speaking the same language and having institutions and modes of government based on the same general principles as our own, to which our people, especially our young people, whenever unable to obtain remunerative employment at home, have freely migrated, thus preventing the pressure which must otherwise inevitably have resulted? Let it not be said that we are disparaging our country in making such a suggestion. We are simply paying our readers and the members of both political parties the compliment of supposing that they wish to arrive at the truth and the whole truth, on every question affecting the condition of the country and the effect of the rival commercial policies between whose claims Canadians will soon be called upon to decide.

Let us illustrate by supposing a case which has, we are sure, been realized in the history of thousands of families in all parts of central and eastern Canada during the last decade. Here is a farmer, or a merchant, or a professional man, who, by dint of economy and industry, finds himself able to bring up his growing family in tolerable comfort, and to give each of his