

could have carried out its plans, a fact which shows how a high tariff favors these monopolizing combinations.

LORD SACKVILLE'S INDISCRETION.

Minister West's connection with the Washington Government has come to a sudden end. A trap was set for him by some party schemer, and he fell into it with his eyes open. His correspondent, writing from a place called Pomona, California, pretended to be a recently naturalized Englishman in doubt how to vote at the presidential election so as best to show his affection for his native land. In spite of Mr. Cleveland's Retaliation message, the correspondent said he would vote for him if he were satisfied that after his election he would favor England's interests. The correspondent, who wrote under the name of Charles F. Murchison, promised inviolable secrecy if the British Minister would only help him to resolve his doubts. If this promise had been kept, it would have been impossible that the answer, also marked private, could have been used for campaign purposes. Murchison, if there be such a person, could have given his own opinion to others who had such doubts as he professed to have, but he could not have used the name and authority of his correspondent, and his own opinion would not have been likely to have much weight with doubting electors. Still, the answer of Lord Sackville was a grave indiscretion; he should have replied that it was not permissible for the British ambassador to give any advice to electors in the presidential contest. If he had been a private gentleman he might have given his opinion freely. We have no doubt that what he wrote was the result of his observation and reflection. But it does not follow that his view of the action of the two political parties was the correct one. He conceives that both yielded to political exigencies, the Republicans in rejecting the Fishery Treaty, and the President in threatening retaliation, and that after the elections were over these pretences might vanish. Each party had interpreted the action of the other in the sense of Lord Sackville. West's letter; but while politicians are at liberty to express their opinions, the duty of a British Minister is silence. The tendency of the answer was to suggest a preference in favor of the Administration. The opinion was expressed that "the Democratic party is still desirous of maintaining friendly relations with Great Britain, and is still desirous of settling all questions with Canada which have unfortunately been reopened since the rejection of the treaty by the Republican majority in the Senate, and by the President's message to which you allude." On the strength of this implied preference, the Republican journals denounced the President as the British candidate. This meant a possible loss of votes; and the President was obliged to do something to pull up the lee-way.

Minister Sackville, after his letter was published, was plied with all sorts of questions by interviewers. An ambassador allowing himself to be interviewed is an anomal-

ous thing. He was naturally desirous to explain; though any defence of his indiscretion was almost certain to be treated as an aggravation of the offence, and was in fact so treated. No satisfactory explanation of the incident was possible, and all attempts to explain only made matters worse. The offence imputed to the Minister by Secretary Bayard is aspersion of the Government to which he is accredited, and interference in the domestic affairs of the Republic, by advising naturalized citizens how to exercise the franchise; and he is declared to be no longer an acceptable representative of Great Britain at the seat of the American Government, and it is intimated that no further official communication will be held with him. The impugning of the motives of the Senate is apparently not put on the same footing as aspersion of the Government; the Administration having a natural desire to represent itself as the principal party injured. To express the opinion that the Government would act fairly is a new way of aspersing it.

There are some truths which it is not the prerogative of foreign Ministers to proclaim, but which nevertheless deserves attention, and this is one of them: "Any political party [in the United States] which openly favors the Mother Country at the present moment would lose popularity," and "the party in power is fully aware of the fact," no less so than the Republicans. This indicates a state of feeling of which it may be well to take note, and to contrast it with the state of things which formerly existed in the Republic. In former times, even in the heat of the war of 1812, there was a party in the Republic that was not afraid to say when they thought so that, on any given question in dispute, Great Britain was in the right. This was true of the embargo, non-intercourse, the causes alleged for the declaration of war, its continuance after the obnoxious orders-in-Council had been withdrawn, impressment, expatriation, the effect of naturalization. On all these questions the policy of the United States was keenly criticised by the party in opposition to the Administration of the day. The British view of every one of these questions was openly advocated in Congress and in the press. Criticism of the acts of the Administration is still indulged in; but on no question does it involve the open justification of British policy. The courage to say that England is in the right, when America is clearly shown to be in the wrong, is wanting; it has vanished with the past to which it belongs. This is a lamentable fact and anything but a desirable omen. Still it cannot be doubted that the rancour left by the revolutionary war and subsequent disputes is diminishing, and is much less than it was seventy years ago.

Lord Sackville's offence is perhaps the mildest of all those for which the representative of a foreign power has ever been declared unacceptable to the Government to which he was accredited. Among the precedents for discarding an unacceptable Minister, which Mr. Bayard mentions without specifying, it is fair to assume the case of M. Genet would be found. But Citizen Genet, who represented the passions and

pretensions of the French Directorate, asserted the right to arm French vessels in American ports, to enlist the citizens in the service of France; and denied the right of the Government to restrain him or punish them, and he appealed to the people against the Government. Nor did he stop at words. He issued commissions to privateers in the port of Charleston and enlisted men for service in the Republic of France, and in his correspondence with Jefferson he raved like a tiger. He proceeded to fit out two expeditions against Spain. Under his direction French consuls set up Admiralty Courts in the United States, and exercised Admiralty jurisdiction over vessels taken by French cruisers. This consular authority was a usurpation, pure and simple. His recall was asked by the American Government, and when it came was accompanied by censure. The exequaturs of the French consuls who had assumed Admiralty powers were withdrawn. Another case which readily comes to mind is that of a British Minister who enlisted men for the British service within the confines of the Republic. Lord Sackville's venial offence bears no comparison to either of the other causes of recalling a foreign Minister.

It is possible that the persons who set the trap for the British Minister may find that it is capacious enough for themselves as well as the destined victim. Mr. Bayard points to an existing statute which visits severe penalties on any citizen who "commences or carries on any verbal or written intercourse with any foreign Government or any officer thereof, either with intent to influence the action of such Government in relation to any disputes or controversies with the United States," or with intent "to defeat the measures of the Government of the United States." The Attorney-General's attention has been directed to this statute, and an attempt will be made to discover the perpetrators of this election fraud. But the strength of party feeling would be likely to prevent a conviction under this statute.

STORE-KEEPING.

A subscriber signing himself "Medio" writes to suggest that while much of our advice to retail merchants is well enough in its way, yet that we do not allow for many of the difficulties this class have to encounter, and are too apt to lay down rules which are impossible to follow. He says with respect to our frequent warnings that there are already too many shopkeepers in city and country: "Is there not always room, anywhere, for a trader who knows his business, and how is a man going to show what ability there is in him as a store-keeper if he does not get a chance or take one?"

We reply, No, there is not always room for even a good man to succeed, as the tribulations of numbers of decent struggling retailers attest. If there are already more shops established in a town or district than there is trade to support, a new comer, however well he may know his business, must have a hard time. Of course, if he has sufficient capital, good capacity, and plenty of "staying power," he can, by dint