

this as of every other league, be common armaments, to which each member of the league will be required to furnish its contingent; and the question will at once arise what these contingents are to be. It is pretty easy to fortell the response of the Canadian people to any requisition of the kind, as Sir John Macdonald must know, though he and other Canadian politicians or financiers have often fed the British imagination with flaming pictures of our military zeal and of the legions which we have ready for the field. It is not less necessary that there should be a common Tariff, without which this world-wide Empire would rest upon foundations not of solid interest but of air. Yet Australian Federation, though embracing only a group of colonies identical in commercial circumstances, as well as contiguous in position, has just miscarried through disagreement about Tariffs. The Committee to which the Association has delegated the task of clearing away the haze from its ideas and of framing a scheme for it includes, it may be taken for granted, the best heads of the Federationist Party. If the Committee fails, the failure will be decisive. There will be an end of the controversy and of the dream. Everybody will then acknowledge that the political re-absorption of adult colonies into the Imperial country, even if it were desirable, is impracticable; the necessity as well as the value of self-development will be seen; and the multiplication of Englands will be recognized as an object not less generous and far more attainable than the Expansion of England.

THIS does not happen to be the moment of Sir John Macdonald's career at which the bestowal of honours on him will be most salutary; for he has just been marring the best part of his record, and doing the greatest possible injury to the country by a reprehensible appointment to the judiciary. It was a matter of course that the "Bystander's" independent remarks upon that subject should call forth angry replies from representatives of the political interest in which the appointment was made. The "Bystander" can have no opinion of his own, or none worth publishing, upon a question of professional qualifications; he merely gave utterance to what he had reason to believe was the general opinion of the legal profession, without distinction of party. Indeed, the strongest expressions of regret which he heard were from the lips of Conservative lawyers jealous for the reputation of Sir John Macdonald. To say that dislike of Roman Catholics or of self-made men had anything to do with the general feeling of condemnation is preposterous. Defenders of the appointment who find themselves constrained to begin with an admission that it was "not the most fitting" can hardly be said to controvert the "Bystander's" position; and the allegation that no fitter person could be induced to take it is in the last degree improbable in itself and is unsupported by anything that appeared. The real motive for the selection is doubted by no human being, and it is one the influence of which threatens the integrity of the most vital and hitherto the most uncorrupted part of our institutions. Appointments which it was impossible to justify have sometimes turned out better than was expected; if that should be the case in the present instance, all will rejoice. But a lucky result which could not have been foreseen will not absolve the wrong-doer; nor will it condemn the journalist who, satisfied that he was speaking in perfect accordance with the sentiment of the legal profession, has tried to repel the rapacious hands of faction from the Bench of Canadian Justice.

PROHIBITIONISTS, if they really care to assure themselves of the soundness of their position, should read the article on "Moderation and Total Abstinence" by Mr. Sutton Sharpe in the current number of the *Fortnightly Review*. They will find in it some reason for doubting whether the authority of medical science is really on their side, and whether it is not rather in favour of those who believe that a moderate use of alcoholic drinks is good for the majority of mankind, especially for those who have to undergo severe labour either of body or of brain. They will at least see that the point is still debatable. The assumption upon which their action is based, and which forms their sole justification for coercing their fellow-citizens on a question of private health and taste, is that moderate use must lead to abuse; and this is contradicted by the experience of hundreds of millions. They will be glad at all events to find that the truth of the hideous charges of intemperance against Englishwomen is challenged, as it certainly may be with good reason if the charges rest on no more trustworthy foundation than the work of the American, Mr. Gustafson, with its claptrap title, "The Foundation of Death." While they are on the path of research, they may be induced to look back to the account of Prohibition in Vermont, given by Mr. Edward Johnson in the *Popular Science Monthly* of last May. They will there find that the law having been passed at first by a small majority, and having failed in operation, as under those circumstances it was sure to do, enactment has been heaped

upon enactment and penalty upon penalty, till at last the exasperation of the baffled Prohibitionists has trampled on that which all freemen hold most dear by empowering the police, if they suspect the existence of liquor, to break without a warrant into any citizen's home. The infamous trade of the informer is of course encouraged by abundant bribes. And what is the result? According to Mr. Johnson, the free and open sale of liquor, notwithstanding spasmodic and futile efforts to enforce the law. The number of places in which liquor is sold seems even to be on the increase. Legislation is forced through by moral violence and by the fears of politicians who stand in awe of the Temperance vote; but public opinion does not support coercion; and, as Mr. Johnson says, of enforcing the laws as the laws against burglary and larceny are enforced no one dreams for a moment. Unfortunately the attempt, though abortive, is not without consequences. The people learn disregard of law; the taverns being unlicensed are no longer regulated; ardent spirits being most easily smuggled are substituted for more wholesome beverages; and the moral agencies by which intemperance has been greatly diminished, are weakened by the fallacious confidence reposed in legislative coercion. But when people are careening on the wings of a supposed principle they think as little of practical consequences as they do of inconvenient rights.

A WRITER in *Macmillan*, apparently of some mark, tries to vindicate the House of Commons from the imputation of decadence. That it is hopelessly overloaded with work he admits, and he pronounces a large measure of devolution indispensable accordingly. But he denies that it has been growing of late more disorderly, unmannerly, or unbusiness-like in its habits. Here, however, he encounters the practical testimony of its leader, who declared its state chaotic and introduced the clôtüre in the hope, vain as it has proved, of restoring order to the chaos. It is true that in former days there were occasionally scenes of violent excitement, such as those which marked the debates on the first Reform Bill; but social law prevailed and could not be violated with impunity as it is constantly violated now. Suspension of members is a new necessity. The waste of time both in asking questions and in purely personal debates such as the Churchill-Chamberlain fracas has certainly increased. Obstruction till lately was unknown; Peel or Russell, as leader of the Opposition, would have repudiated it with disgust; but it is now practised openly and avowedly by a section of the Tory Party as well as by the Irish and their allies. The writer in *Macmillan* does not see, or fails to notice, the vital point. Party has been hitherto the organization of the House, and the authority of the party leaders over their followers has been its security for order and for the progress of business. But the great parties are crumbling to pieces, though the spirit of faction is unhappily more intense than ever. On one side the Whigs and Radicals are barely held together by the personal ascendancy of Mr. Gladstone; on the other the Tory Democrats have broken away from all control and the nominal leadership is a farce. What then is to be the organization, what the controlling authority of the future? Can an assembly of six hundred and fifty men without organization or controlling authority govern a country? That the state of the French Chamber is worse than that of the House of Commons, as the writer in *Macmillan* says, may be the fact; but the state of the French Chamber, and of France as the country governed by it, is dangerous in the extreme. Irish disorder the writer sets aside as entirely exceptional. "Civil war," he says, "operates as a necessary suspicion of all the countries of peace;" and "though we may condemn rebels as foolish, we do not waste words in complaining of their want of courtesy towards the government of society they are seeking to subvert." True enough; but what confidence can be placed in the character of a governing assembly which helplessly permits such "civil war" and such "rebellion" to be carried on within its halls, nay encourages and fosters them by its factiousness and has actually brought the nation into serious danger of dismemberment? Besides, when will Irish disorder cease, and this exceptional state of things come to an end?

SIR LEPEL GRIFFIN's pasquinade on the Great Republic amuses everybody by the liveliness of the style, and must be particularly pleasant reading to all those who cultivate gentility by parading their antipathy to Yankees. As sober criticism the work is worthless. Not only is it written with utterly insufficient knowledge, the writer having evidently confined his observations to the cities, and seen the farms and villages, which are the core of the Republic, from the window of a drawing-room car; but it is instinct with a prejudice which may be said almost to have been proclaimed in the title "Visit to Philistia," under which the substance of the book first appeared. Sir Lepel protests that he has no ill-feeling against the Americans. Very likely he speaks the truth: he no more hates the