

This is the ideal condition of affairs. We unfortunately have to deal with the real. But the indications are that this continent is about to turn its course in the direction of commercial freedom. In the United States the Protectionist party is still ascendant, but the advocates of a reduced tariff are steadily gaining ground. The enormous surplus which is being rolled up each year, and which the Government do not know what to do with, is an immense lever in the hands of those who are endeavouring to lead their country in the direction of sound economic principles. Therefore, though we have to deal with things as we find them, and make all our calculations on the basis of a tariff-collected revenue for many years to come, yet one thing we may confidently rely upon in all estimates for the future, and that is that the United States will adopt the policy of a gradual and steady reduction of their tariff. If the Congress agree to the principle involved in Mr. Butterworth's Bill, and a Commission is formed to adjust a common tariff, it is safe to affirm that that tariff will be lower than the existing tariff of the United States. It is equally safe to conclude that if a readjustment of said common tariff is afterwards sought by the United States Government, it will be in the direction of a further reduction, and not an increase.

If these be the facts, then we can make our calculations accordingly. It will be satisfactory to Canadians to have a common tariff lower than the present American tariff. Indeed it is one of the objections urged in many quarters to Commercial Union that it will involve too high a tariff; therefore we have nothing to fear from the first common tariff. American policy and Canadian interest will run parallel in this regard. But suppose that American policy, which is likely to prevail under a common tariff, should seek a still further reduction in the common tariff, in the course of a few years, as we feel quite confident it will, how will this affect Canadian interest? Would it not be entirely in line with it? Have we anything to fear from a reduced tariff? We have always the alternative of direct taxation, and I believe this to be the very best means of collecting a revenue. Sound and enlightened opinion the world over is tending in this direction. Every educated writer on the subject plants himself upon this solid basis.

Therefore I sum up the whole objection thus: The common tariff likely to be formed is one which will exactly suit Canadian interest, and all probable changes will inevitably be in the direction of sound policy, which no intelligent and patriotic Canadian will ever be afraid of. It will not improbably happen that Commercial Union may teach both countries the folly of custom-houses; then indeed will it prove a blessing to this great continent.

I come now to the fourth and last radical objection to Commercial Union,—that it will tend to separate Canada from the British Empire. I wish above all things to be frank in the discussion of this vital question, and therefore I am compelled to admit that there is a large basis for this objection. But the relations between Canada and the British Islands are not very close at this present. Recognising that we are part of the great Empire of which we may justly feel proud, we are loyal to the British Crown, and, what is more important, loyal to the British race. The accident that we are at this moment Colonists, in my judgment does not exercise a very powerful influence in moulding the sentiment of the Canadian people toward Great Britain. We are practically independent at this moment. We make our own laws, frame our own tariffs, and in no sense accept any interference with our affairs from the British people. It is true that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is our final Court of Appeal, but this is only because that it is so, not because there is any necessity, advantage, or philosophy for this tribunal; therefore the point I wish to make is that the Colonial relation between Great Britain and Canada is essentially a slender one, must necessarily come to an end some time, and does not now have a very marked effect upon Canadian policy.

It cannot be disguised however that there exists an enormous sentiment of loyalty and affection for Great Britain in this country, and nothing can occur to eradicate this. Surely no man with any spirit or sense would wish to abate this one jot or one tittle. Who can fail to be proud of the achievements of the British race and the glory of the British Empire? Who is so dull as not to recognise that Great Britain stands to-day as the foremost representative of civilisation and enlightenment in the Eastern Hemisphere? Who fails to appreciate the reflected glory of the race in the development of North America? The second point then which I wish to make is that if the Colonial relations between Great Britain and Canada were to terminate, either as a result of Commercial Union, or for any other reason, this would not make the Canadian people less devoted to the interests of the Empire, or less impregnated with sentiments of loyalty and veneration.

But it must not be inferred that I admit or believe that Commercial

Union with the United States would involve Independence. On the contrary, I am fully persuaded that Commercial Union would be the easiest and best settlement of the fisheries dispute, and at the same time would be entirely in line with British interests. The common tariff, which would be called into existence under Commercial Union, would undoubtedly be more favourable to British trade with North America than the multiple of the two existing tariffs of the United States and Canada. Therefore, notwithstanding Mr. Chamberlain's ill-timed and injudicious remarks, I apprehend that the proposition to make a permanent settlement of the fisheries difficulty on the basis of Commercial Union will meet with no serious opposition in Great Britain, neither will it cause an abrupt termination of our existing relations.

It is not wise or sensible to make our calculations of the future entirely on existing lines. Canada is assuming national proportions, and her future is still a matter of doubt and uncertainty. Important changes must come with time. Imperial Federation is simple madness, and not to be seriously entertained in Canada. The only true policy for us to pursue is to seek to promote our own material interests by the most natural and palpable method. Anything which tends to the prosperity of Canada will not be resisted by the British people. Our destiny is in our own hands. Let us work it out with patriotism and manliness. J. W. LONGLEY.

### A VISIT TO A CARMELITE CONVENT.

LET us walk awhile first. We shall find plenty along these narrow streets to repay us for exercise we are unaccustomed to in flat Ontario—pedestrianism at an angle of forty-five degrees. The first thing one looks for on arriving in Montreal is lodgings and a laundress; the next an alpenstock. By the time the first two are satisfactorily got we don't want the alpenstock. We are accustomed to the hills, and like them.

Dozens of loveable, habitable-looking, fine, old stone houses! That one especially, there on the corner of Bleury and another street that we must not mention, because we can easily see from the outside of it that the inhabitants do not love publicity. Is not that very good to look at with its suggestion of strength and endurance and comfort, and all the sentiment that gathers about a home! In architecture unpretentiously square, not at all grand in size but big enough to suggest comfortable capacity. Wide, hospitable eaves and old-fashioned projecting porch, tiny panes in the windows that make the people behind them feel as if they were indoors. Hard to keep clean? I suppose so; but few things that are worth having are got very easily. You think your broad sheets of plate-glass an improvement perhaps? Well, I don't. I like best the many broken pictures that the narrow panes make. Plate-glass is for invalids. If healthy people want all out-of-doors they can put on their hats and go out and get it. And of course there are trees about our old house, and places where flowers bloomed, I suppose, in June, and a barn that is as solidly built as the house itself. There is this advantage about the Quebec climate: it compels people to build houses that future generations may comfortably live in, and put their money into strength and solidity instead of ornamentally hideous exterior kickshaws, which lose even their tawdry worth in ten or fifteen years.

Judging from appearances the human boy is not the reviled member of society in Montreal that he is elsewhere. He is, in fact, conspicuously "wanted." Every other shop window bears the placard "*garçon demandé*"—which limited advertisement the boys disdain to notice apparently, for it remains there week after week. It appears to the sojourner that the Montreal *garçon* declines almost all his legitimate occupations. He does not cry the papers to any extent; he is no bootblack, nor crossing-sweeper, he! Nor does he drive grocers' carts nor run errands nearly so much as with us, which is perhaps owing to the fact that his father is content to do it. Altogether, unless the factories swallow him up, the small boy of Montreal may be believed to lead a life of enervating and luxurious leisure.

Next to the oft-quoted *Fameuse*—which by the way is neither more nor less than our own more modestly christened "snow-apple"—the fruit of the land appears to be the oyster. One does not require much capital to start in the bivalve business in Montreal. A pile of shells on either side of the door, to attest public appreciation and a flourishing trade; inside, half a barrel of stock, a broken knife and castor that has seen better days, and perhaps a wooden chair on which the proprietor sits and smokes his native tobacco at ten cents a pound and ponders, doubtless upon the advantages of unrestricted trade. The shells are the only indication the intelligent public requires, but some ostentatious firms scrawl the additional legend, "*huîtres*," in chalk above the door. This is the humble beginning of the business; it ends somewhere in the magnificence of the Windsor, and all the way up one is struck with the diversity of its forms. Oysters not only at the fruiterer's and the fishmonger's, but in the market, at the grocer's, the confectioner's, the little woman's who sells odds and ends of buttons, lace, and the evening papers; oysters by the glass, quart, gallon, peck, small measure, basket, and barrel. I have not yet seen them in the millinery shops by the yard, but am willing to believe that they are sold covertly even there.

But we are a long way down St. Catharine Street, and our car is coming. Where are we going? To Hochelaga I think, to see the convent there. Our guide, who is a lively little French-Canadian lady, and luckily for us