

good many of the statements in that report touching the immense bonuses paid to Canadian railways from the public chest are grossly exaggerated, or that they may be matters with which our neighbours have really nothing to do. On the other hand, it is not so easy to refute the logic which claims that under a protective system the railways have as good a claim as other enterprises to be protected. But irrespective of argument, or even of the abstract right and wrong of the thing, there is manifest danger that the Canadian railways operating in the United States may be placed under restrictions which will greatly interfere with the success which has hitherto attended them. The Senate Committee preserves a judicious silence in regard to the failure of the United States Government to secure for Canadian vessels the privileges in respect to their canals which were promised in the Treaty of Washington, but it does not fail to complain bitterly of the manner in which, by imposing certain entrance and clearing fees, and canal tolls upon all vessels navigating the lakes and using the canals, and then making rebates in favour of Canadian vessels in the one case, and in favour of cargoes destined for Montreal in the other, the Canadian Government manages to discriminate against American vessels in each case. Though we should be sorry to admit the grave charge that "the settled policy of Canada appears to be to overreach the United States in all matters relating to the conduct of commerce," we have never been able to acquit the Government of what seems too nearly akin to sharp practice in the matter of these rebates. The spirit of the Treaty of Washington in this matter certainly is against the idea of discrimination of any kind. But the fact is that a very real and effective discrimination is made. It matters not that it may be alleged that the lesson has been learned from certain very sharp practices on the part of our neighbours. It is proverbial that two wrongs cannot make a right. We should like to see the conduct of Canada in all international matters above suspicion. It is devoutly to be wished that the foreshadowed negotiations at Washington may lead to a better understanding and a more friendly feeling in commercial matters.

MAY DAY has passed without any very serious disturbances and the timid in Europe again breathe freely. It is impossible to form any sure conclusion as to how much of solid foundation there was for the fears which led to such extraordinary precautions in Paris and other great European cities. If the Socialists of the lower and destructive order seriously intended, at any time, to commence on the First of May the work of pulling down the structure of civil society and burying law and order beneath the ruins, it is to be hoped that the lesson may not be wholly lost upon them. They must now see that the forces which uphold the fabric of modern civilization are all too strong for them, and are likely to continue so. It may be doubted whether the overawing presence of the military with their terrible implements of war, or the unsympathetic attitude and action of the labour organizations, the true representatives of labour, may have had the greater effect in deterring the lawless from any attempts at premeditated violence. Certain it is that the manner in which the labouring classes in Europe and America are perfecting their organization, and the self-restraint and discipline they are rapidly acquiring are among the marvels of the age, and, bid fair, at no distant day, to make them masters of the situation. The conduct of the vast armies of London workmen, a large portion of whom are supposed to be among the most ignorant and unmanageable to be found anywhere, was simply wonderful. Whether we regard their general abstention from disorderly demonstrations on May 1st, or the remarkable order and decorum of their Hyde Park meeting a few days later, we cannot fail to admire their rapid progress in the art of organization, and in mastery of the methods and weapons of Constitutional warfare. The same thing is observable on a smaller scale in the management of the strikes now going on in Toronto and other cities, Canadian and American. International concert, the absence of which has hitherto been one of the main sources of weakness to organized labour, seems now to be becoming an accomplished fact. When the labourers in different countries learn to work together for the accomplishment of common ends, and when, in addition, the members of the various trades combine their resources, while sending but one regiment at a time into the field, victory is not far off for them. Surely the time must be near when employers and employed will cease their exhausting struggles and learn to settle their disputes in a more sensible and Christian fashion.

POLITICS.

THE announcement of an approaching provincial election must excite reflections in those who have an interest, as all should have, in the good government of the country. There can be little doubt that, in the eyes of persons who are by no means mere alarmists, the subject is getting one of seriousness and of some anxiety. We may stop far short of the Carlylean "Shooting Niagara," and yet entertain some apprehension as to the future of our government and our country.

The last number of the *Bystander* draws attention to an important article in the *American Forum* on the "degradation of politics," and we imagine that no candid and well-informed citizen of that great country will be found to resent the imputation contained in the phrase. The political machine is now brought to such perfection that individual opinions and convictions have to go for almost nothing in presence of the exigencies of a party. While the Americans are thus judging themselves, they are at the same time interesting themselves in Canadian politics. The *New York Times* is publishing a series of occasional articles with the complimentary heading: "Government by Bribery: The Dominion of Canada ruled by Corruption."

We have no present intention of examining the truth of the charge thus made against us. It is tolerably certain that corruption of some kind has always existed in connection with politics; and we are not sure that the form which it has assumed on this side of the Atlantic is more beautiful than its appearance in the old world. It was remarked, some time ago, by one who had had opportunities of observing both forms, that, whereas, in England, candidates for office were ready to bribe their constituents in order to obtain election; on this side, men get into office for the sake of putting their hands into the pockets of the public. The honour is thought enough among those unenlightened subjects of tyrannical rule. We are more enlightened. We prefer solid cash.

It would be harsh and exaggerated to say that these statements are widely true of either side of the ocean; but it is no mistake to say that these statements represent tendencies, and tendencies of serious import. It has often been said of late, that representative institutions are on their trial; and, whether this be true or not, we cannot be absolutely certain that democratic government will be entirely free from evils which have undermined other systems, or that it will not develop destructive elements of its own.

One of the most difficult problems to deal with in the sphere of politics is the problem of party. No one doubts that the present working of party politics is lamentably bad; yet it must be owned by those who are most hostile to this mode of conducting the government of the country that it is not easy to supply a remedy. If all the representatives of the country or even a majority of them were merely and purely patriotic, the case would be different. But the amplest charity will not allow the belief. Do men go into parliament merely to promote the well-being of the country? There are many other reasons even if this one is to be reckoned in the number.

Party, it has been said, is organized opinion, and this is its justification and the proof of its necessity. If any number of persons share a conviction, it is reasonable that they should unite to realize it. Quite so; but is it equally reasonable that the organization should continue, when there is no longer any basis for it to rest upon? And this is not all. Even suppose we grant that party organization may be necessary for the conduct of public business, can we continue our approval when party becomes an end instead of a means? An eloquent English bishop remarked some time ago, that we were now governed, not merely by party, but for party.

It appears to some among us that party lines are on the way to destruction since the appearance of a third party among us, the Equal Righters. But we are not quite sure of this. This new party will certainly, to some extent, disarrange the calculations of the old party leaders, and constituencies which have returned a man of one stripe may now occasionally send up one of another. But it seems doubtful whether the Party itself will have much representation in either the Provincial or the Dominion Parliament. And even if it should obtain some shadow of power, it is difficult to see how its action would be much more beneficial in Canadian politics than a certain third party in English politics.

We believe we are expressing the common belief of educated men, when we say that the great mass of those who care to think on political subjects are sincerely desir-

ous to see the country well governed, and yet that they have not full confidence in the politicians of either party. In other words they believe in the at least partial degradation of politics in this country; and they are not willing that this state of things should get worse, or even that it should continue. Now, if we are right in making these two statements, there must be a remedy, within our reach and capable of being applied with more or less difficulty. The remedy must be that high-minded men, loving truth, caring for the country, desirous of promoting its best interests without any thought of making a profit by the transaction, should take a practical and active part in politics. It is said that, in the United States, nearly all the more respectable citizens are ceasing to take any real interest and any public part in political elections. Now this, if true, is very shocking. And any one can see that it would be a terrible calamity, if it came to be so among ourselves.

We fear that the same tendency is growing here in Canada. Clergymen and other professional men are often heard to say that they care nothing for politics, that they have never voted in their life, and so forth. Now, we can quite understand the reasons for such abstinence. No man can quite enjoy the personalities, the abuse, the vulgarity which too often distinguish political meetings and political controversy. We can quite understand a thin-skinned man shuddering at the thought of presenting himself as a candidate for the suffrages of his fellow citizens. But we would respectfully ask those who, on such grounds, keep away from all political meetings, whether they are justified in their abstention. It is undoubtedly pleasanter for a man of business to go back at the close of the day to a comfortable dinner, and spend the evening in the bosom of his family than to go and bear the jeers of unmannerly human beings. But still the question of duty arises.

What can one man, two men, many men hope to accomplish? A few men may do a great deal if they are resolute. If they would only watch over the manifestos of candidates and insist on knowing what they exactly meant; if they would resolutely expose humbug and every form of deception; if they would help the people to see more clearly that the end of government is not the keeping of certain kinds of politicians in power, but the promotion of the good of the country, this would be an immense work to perform; and this work may be done in part, if not in all its completeness. Unless something of this kind is done, we cannot see how politics can help going from bad to worse; and ultimately this must mean bad government. We are writing in no hopeless or pessimistic spirit; but we are indicating real and acknowledged evils and dangers; and if there is any other way of meeting and averting them than that which lies in the direction which we have indicated we should like to hear of it.

PARIS LETTER.

IT is not with the labour demonstration of the first of May that the thoughtful public is occupied, but with its international character, and the presence of neither an idea nor a doctrine, but of a concrete fact, or body; living, robust, and powerfully organized. It would be the most lamentable shortsightedness to pooh-pooh the movement; so long as it keeps within the pale of the law, the authorities have merely to look on as neutrals. The European industrial classes are about giving the world a *répétition générale* of their combined numbers, and of their power to control the machinery of every-day life. It will be a field day for their troops. The demonstration over, then will come the occasion to take stock of the new phase of labour agitation; of its power, its means, and its ends. Beyond the incidents peculiar to large crowds, and which the authorities are quite prepared to deal with, there will be no playing at insurrection, so far as concerns Paris or other French industrial centres. The manifestants have no common charter. As for the cry of eight hours per day of work, the international labourists can secure it from to-morrow, if all workers are agreed. It is the story of Curran and his hotel-bed, where he said the fleas were so numerous, that they could have turned him out, had they been only unanimous. The Paris working classes are preparing for the big Self-Holiday in sober earnestness. In their committee proceedings, a singular business air prevails; there is an absence of inflation, of airy doctrines, and of gush. The holiday coincides with the official opening of the *Salon*, or Picture Show—thus all classes will be out of doors.

So Victor Hugo's name is no longer one to conjure with. The subscriptions for the statue to the poet do not come in. Some 200,000 francs are required for the erection of his statue; not more than one half that sum has been collected during the five years that have elapsed since his death. Gambetta's monument in the Place du Carrousel cost half a million francs. The public, perhaps, concludes