

afterwards saw the General himself ; and I can corroborate what Colonel Denison has said as to the simplicity of his habits and his freedom from military ostentation. It was also universally felt that he was thoroughly true to his colleagues and loyal to the common cause.

I had come to America to see the character of a great nation undergoing the test of civil war, which I take, with the possible exception of a plague, to be the severest test to which national character can be subjected. Everybody knows what civil war was in France in the time of the Armagnacs and Burgundians, in that of the League, and again in that of the Revolution. In the present case, so far as I could see, the test was well borne. There was a remarkable absence, for the most part, of bloodthirsty and truculent language, even on the part of those who had lost sons and relatives in the war ; no thirst for vengeance was expressed ; the general sentiment seemed to be a determination to maintain the Union and make the Southerners submit to the law ; if they would submit to the law, it appeared that the door of reconciliation was open. About slavery less was said, in the West at all events, than about the Union and the law. The West, however, heartily went with the East in its determination to restore the Union ; the loss of which meant, among other things, the loss of control over the Mississippi. In England the belief propagated by the friends of the South was that the West was being reluctantly dragged on by the East. I reported at once to my friends in England that the reverse of this was the fact, and that as the combined resources of East and West were overwhelmingly superior to those of the South, the result of the struggle was sure. A large number of farmers must certainly have gone as volunteers to the war from Illinois, where women and boys were doing the work of men, with the aid of improved machinery, the invention of which was stimulated by the scarcity of hands.

The treatment of prisoners by the North, so far as I had the opportunity of observing it, was in keeping with the general tone. Through the kindness of Dr. Duggan, the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, whose acquaintance I had made and whose hospitality I had tasted, I was enabled to go over the large prison camp at Chicago. The prisoners of course looked listless and unhappy, as caged eagles always do ; but they seemed to me to be suffering no other hardship, and the food was certainly good. Presenting myself at the prison hospital for convalescents at Baltimore, I was refused admittance on the ground of recent attempts at escape. But it happened to be Thanksgiving Day, and as I stood in the entrance hall I could look into the dining-room where I saw the table spread with roast turkey and all the good things of the season. Afterwards I called on the Commandant, General Warren, who was so good as to take me down at once to the hospital and permit me to look over it. I looked over it, I believe, thoroughly, and came away convinced that its inmates were being treated with all possible humanity and kindness. It was said in England that Confederate prisoners were dying in heaps, of maltreatment, in the Northern prisons. I can oppose to such statements the evidence of my own senses with regard to the two prisons which I saw.

The humanity of the North was all the more creditable because it was the universal belief that thousands of Northern soldiers were all the time undergoing the most cruel ill-treatment at the hands of their Southern captors in the Libby prison and in the prison camp at Andersonville. As to the hideous mortality and the other horrors of Andersonville there can, unhappily, be no doubt. I went on board the first ship that arrived at Annapolis with exchanged prisoners, and a more pitiable sight I never beheld. The men were absolute skeletons. I should hardly have thought it possible that life could linger in such frames. Where the blame lay, is a much controverted question which I cannot pretend to decide. For my part, I believe that slavery has always been the parent of inhumanity. The resources of the South were, no doubt, running very low, though the prisoners and deserters from their army under Lee appeared not to be ill fed, and they were lavish of shot and shell. By the North, at the time, the alleged cruelties were generally coupled, whether rightly or wrongly, with the name of the only one, I believe, among the Southern leaders who, when the wreck came, did not stay by the ship. General Grant, as is well known, has often been accused of having ruthlessly refused to exchange prisoners because the enemy was more in want of men than he was.

The military hospitals of the Northerners seemed to me admirably arranged, and evinced in every detail the tenderest care for the wounded. But their contents after the battles on the Rappahannock were a sight which would have cured a Jingo of his love of war. I had no love of war to be cured of, but I came away hating it more than ever. Yet it is at its best when men are fighting in such a cause.

Nowhere were party passions more fiercely excited than at Baltimore, in which freedom and slavery confronted each other, and which had been

threatened by Lee, whose supper had actually once been prepared for him by his partisans in the city, and had suffered from the incursions of his raiders. While I was there a lady who, being passionately devoted to the Southern cause, had repeatedly held correspondence with the enemy, was brought before a council of war and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. This fate she had evidently courted. Yet the strongest sympathy was evinced for her by Baltimoreans of the opposite party, including Mr. Kennedy, of literary fame, and his wife, whose happy guest I was ; and I learned afterwards that by their intercession at Washington her release had been obtained. This incident, and the elopement of another lady of strong Southern sentiments with the trumpeter of a Yankee regiment, convinced me that the breach between North and South, though wide, was not irreparable, and that the Union might be perfectly restored.

That conviction was also produced by seeing the manner in which the armies observed towards each other the amenities of war. As I rode with a general officer about the Northern lines, Confederate riflemen were seen near at hand in the bush, but they did not fire, and the party seemed to feel assured of their forbearance ; nor was there any danger, except at certain points, in getting on the parapet and looking down into the Confederate lines. But I have reached the proper limit of any contribution to a weekly journal.

GOLDWIN SMITH.

THE NORTH-WEST PROBLEM.

THERE can be no doubt that by far the most important and by far the most difficult problem the Canadian Confederation has to solve is that of conciliating and amalgamating its great North-West. Upon the successful solution of this problem depends the future greatness of the Dominion. With the North-West marked out as it is by nature, and by a rapidly ripening destiny, to be the home of millions of the most stalwart and energetic people of the Old World and New, and a vast storehouse of agricultural and mineral wealth, vitally incorporated into the body of the Union, Canada may well aspire to national greatness. With the North-west and, as a natural consequence, British Columbia severed from the old stock, whether to take independent root, or to be grafted into the Great Republic, Canada's hope of attaining a worthy national *status* must quickly fall to the ground.

Does any reader of THE WEEK regard this problem as already settled ? Such a one cannot have studied the situation,—certainly not from a North-West point of view. The bond of union, as at present subsisting, is but a cord of flax. The torch of self-interest, or of outraged sense of right, is already lighted, and its touch, even now, threatens to snap the band like a thread of gossamer. The permanent union of provinces, far apart in space, and diverse in interests and industries, can be assured only by the growth and culture of common interests and sentiments. So long as the older provinces persist in regarding the newer as so much purchased territory, to be made tributary to the industries and revenues of the purchaser, so long the tendencies are in the direction of separation, not unity.

The last sentence touches, I believe, the very heart of the difficulty. There can be no doubt that the prevalent feeling amongst settlers in Manitoba and the North-West is that they are regarded by the people of the older provinces as but tributary adjuncts of Old Canada. There is, it is to be feared, too much ground for this feeling. It can scarcely be denied that the lands of the North-West have been, and are, held and managed, not solely with a view to the rapid development of the country and the best interests of its inhabitants, but largely as a means of enriching the older provinces and reimbursing the Ottawa exchequer. It can hardly be denied that some of the features of the contract under which the great North-West railway is being constructed are conceived with reference to the same unstatesmanlike ends. And it most certainly cannot be denied that the tariff was framed wholly on the same unsound principles.

The three points indicated are the centres around which the rapidly growing disquiet of the people of the Canadian prairies revolves. Had the leader of the so-called Liberal party, when he put forth his well-known manifesto in regard to North-West lands, stopped midway in his proposition, his utterance would have been wise and statesmanlike. "The land for the people" is certainly a motto worthy to be inscribed on the banner of a statesman and a Liberal. "The money for the public" is a sentiment conceived in the spirit of a shopkeeper. The land belongs by nature and in equity to the people who occupy and cultivate it. Any money it represents should also be theirs to aid them in overcoming all the difficulties incident to the building up of a State in a distant, lone and somewhat inhospitable land. No spirited British subjects would at this time of day consent to play the part of colonists in a land, a large part of which was