

rialsystem of differential duties, under which the Mother Country and the colonies should agree to exclude from their markets, wholly or partially, the goods of foreign nations, so as to confine those markets to goods produced within the empire, or at any rate to make them, by artificial means, more favourable to British than to foreign goods. This policy has, of course, found favour with those in this country openly pledged to protection, as well as with those who support it under the absurd misnomer of 'fair trade'; and symptoms have from time to time appeared, which looked as if it were making way with the public. For the present that policy has failed. It has found no favour, even with Lord Salisbury's Government, and at a recent meeting of the British Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, held in London, a motion by Sir Charles Tupper in favour of such a policy was decisively rejected, and a motion in favour of a non-protective policy was carried. But then there can be no doubt that such a policy is in the air; that it is an outgrowth, though not a necessary one, of what is spoken of as Imperial Federation, and that it connects itself with the wave of national as opposed to cosmopolitan feeling, which has played so large a part in the history of the last half-century. There is equally little doubt that in the case of Canada such a policy derives much support from the protective policy of the U. S. When Canada repels and is repelled by her next neighbour, she looks for an outlet for her produce in the Mother Country, and seeks to tempt England by offering reciprocity or exclusive dealing. To accept such a policy would, in the opinion of British Free Traders, be suicidal and fatal to her non-protective policy. What is even more important—it would be fatal to the future relations between Canada and England, and between both of them and the U. S., for Canada is destined by nature and by geography to trade with the U. S., and any legal obligation to the Mother Country which may have the effect of preventing her from so doing would be sure in time to be felt as an intolerable grievance, and would embitter the relations of all three countries.

"Free commercial dealings between Canada and the U. S. to the exclusion of the Mother Country would be grudgingly assented to at home, and would, no doubt, create a bitter feeling in the United Kingdom. But if the United States and Canada were both to relax their protective policy, and to invite trade with the United Kingdom as well as with each other all people in the British Islands would no doubt hail with delight the prospect of bringing the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada into closer and more harmonious relations by means of unrestricted commercial relations."

Here is a chance then, for the two great offshoots of Britain in America to benefit themselves, each other, and the Mother Country by shaping their trade policy on broad and generous lines. Perhaps Free Trade in Canada never had as good a chance as at present. The young men of the country are beginning to take it up enthusiastically, and the wave that is setting in in that direction should not be ignored, but "taken at the flood which leads to fortune."

FIDELIS.

The silver-leaved birch retains in its old age a soft bark; there are some such men. —Auerbach.

A SONG.

Oh, use thy charms for other hearts,
This heart to grief is wed;
Oh, breathe thy love for other souls,
This soul has long been dead;
Oh, let thy lute forever rest,
Or wake for other ears;
On other lips thy kisses press,
For others shed thy tears.

I could not ask thee, love, to share
My bitter cup of woe,
I could not bear to see thine eyes
With tears of sorrow flow;
No, no, my love, 'tis best that I
Should live and die alone,
Than take a happy heart to share
A misery like my own.

A. MELBOURNE THOMPSON.

OTHER PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS.

Idealists have been fighting an impossible battle since the world began. Reality has been ever a silent but unanswerable protest against visionary aspirations. Time fashioning the crudities and vagaries of mankind, has produced from the dead level of mediocrity a certain standard of opinion. Civilization with her handmaid conventionality has ruthlessly crushed the spontaneous excrescences of imagination. The chill whisper of doubt has stayed the ardour of the warmest enthusiast: on the whole it has gone hard with the philosophers of things to be. Granting that the Children of Light (we do not use the phrase in the somewhat limited sense of Matthew Arnold) have had, from the very nature of their existing surroundings, almost insurmountable difficulties in this life, it seems strange that their efforts for purer light have almost invariably aroused antipathy in those around them.

Strange perhaps, but not inexplicable. He who points upward also glances downward. The man who searches for light protests against the existing darkness. He who is dissatisfied with himself is of necessity dissatisfied with others. The idealist then, is an unconscious aggressor and society protects herself against him with what weapons she may. The most deadly of these is calumny.

"Be thou as pure as ice, as chaste as snow," writes Shakespeare, "thou shalt not escape calumny." It might also be said, "because thou art as pure," for calumny is the dark shadow which follows virtue, and many of us are blind to all but the shadow. Perhaps it is but natural, for the darkness comes from our own souls.

Calumny is no respecter of persons; swiftly and silently it works its way, with a subtle suggestiveness that carries all before it. Is it not possible to conceive a small motive for a great action? Assuredly, answer the unknown throng, incapable of greatness in action or in motive. What is nearest to ourselves is most probable, they murmur, an argument deduced from unconscious self-analysis. And heroic actions are reduced to fitting proportions, and stainless lives are shattered because their very stainlessness is a lasting reproach.

The mission of calumny is to suggest rather than to convince. Look into your own soul, it whispers, what do you find? Well, so it is with the rest—ex uno disce omnes. A horrible creed forsooth, that which would grasp a world's infamy from the consciousness of its own corruption.

There are some very old lines which carry with them a certain solace to those to whom they are addressed:

When calumny most fiercely stings
Let this be your consolation,
That only on the sweetest things
Do wasps commit their depredation.
But after all, it is not so much the actual harm done to the calumniated as the general tendency towards calumny, which is worthy of discussion.

The "blameless" Bellerophon was not the first of the calumniated, nor was Antea, wooing in vain, the first who sought refuge in calumny. Is it innate in man, and if it is so, why? These are questions which no verbiage about race development and advancement can answer. The bombast of rhetoric may whitewash the lives of imperial murderers, but it can never explain why the infinitesimal unit should wish to lower and degrade his fellow. It is simply engrained in the worst side of human nature, that side which idealism tends towards blotting out, and it follows as a natural consequence, that it is directed against those whom self-development has placed beyond it.

"Throw lots of mud and some of it is sure to stick" is, in homely phrase, the motto of many of us who are by no means denied the rights of citizenship. It is true that calumniators on a large scale are usually abhorred. It has been said that Italian audiences have listened to Othello, sympathizing the while with Iago, but to the majority this philosophic traducer will appear "the inhuman dog" that he has been painted. No! It is the petty, trivial forger of calumnies who thrives and prospers, seemingly for all time.

Calumny has never been enrolled amongst the abstract virtues, nor even amongst those qualities concerning which opinion has become modified. There was a god of war, when to be warlike was man-ennobling as well as man-slaying. There was a goddess of love in an age when "Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know," was in reality the lesson of life. But there was (unless indeed it were the unknown god's) no shrine or temple dedicated to calumny. And yet silent and subtle, it has grown with our growth, lived with our lives. Gathering to itself a world's sterile bitterness, it has infused into the heart of man the thought that the wholly good is impossible, that there is a dark spot in the noblest dream of idealism.

Yes, it is indeed the most deadly of all weapons, for life is not so radiant with happiness that men should care to darken the lives of each other. When everything else has failed, and the narrow heart is conscious of the truth and beauty it hates—calumny is left. When the strenuous efforts of a lifetime seem at last to have gained the success that is their due, calumny whispers—this shall not be. To calumny nothing is sacred; it is the mildew of life. We cannot close better than with the cynical encouragement of Basile: "Calomniez, calomniez, il en reste toujours quelque chose."

There is something solid and doughty in the man that can rise from defeat, the stuff of which victories are made in due time, when we are able to choose our position better, and the sun is at our back.—Lowell.