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All articles, contributions, and letters on matters pertaining to the editorial department should be addressed to the Editor, and not to any person who may be supposed to be connected with the paper.

CURRENT TOPICS.

In his speech at the Auditorium last week Mr. Dalton McCarthy is reported to have said that it was impudence to ask Great Britain to enact a tariff to suit a colony which practically refused to do anything for her, and that if Canada's tariff were lowered 10 per cent. all round it would do more to establish preferential trade than any attempt at making a regular bargain. The first sentence is the statement of an obvious fact which has often been insisted on in these columns. If we do not wholly agree with the second it is only because we feel sure that no persuasion or action on the part of Canada can possibly induce the Mother Country to tax the food of the artisans in what Mr. Parkin happily calls "The world's workshop." Certainly a reduction of 10 per cent. in favour of British products would be a better, because more practical, proof of our loyalty, than all the assurances we could give in the face of the present hostile tariff. The fatal objection to such a policy is that it would almost surely provoke other nations with which

we do a large trade to discriminate in turn against Canada. Indeed, as we have before said, and we have seen no convincing denial, it is altogether unlikely that Great Britain would or could permit a colony to adopt a policy of discrimination, even in her favour. If it would be inconsistent with treaty obligations for her to discriminate in favour of her colonies, as seems to be admitted, it would be equally so for her to permit her colonies to discriminate in her favour. But it is both refreshing and hopeful to hear a supporter of the Government of Mr. McCarthy's high standing admit that now is a good time to begin to lower our tariff walls.

At the time of the passage of the resolution by the British Board of Agriculture, scheduling Canadian cattle, we said that we saw no reason to doubt that the action, however mistaken it might prove to have been, had been taken in good faith for the protection of British herds. At the same time we pointed out that assuming, as many were disposed to do, that the deputations which had in a manner forced this action upon the Board were actuated by a selfish desire to exclude Canadian cattle from competition in their markets with their own productions, their course was very shortsighted from the protectionist point of view; that, in fact, it proceeded in just the opposite direction from the ordinary policy of protection in that it forbade the importation of what might be called the raw material of the trade while admitting the finished product free. We observe that the Dundee Courier is now taking precisely the same ground. It urges that the action of the Board may put a stop to the "stocker" trade, and, by forcing the Canadian farmer to go into the dead-meat business, bring him into direct competition with the British farmer in the production of beef. A strong presumptive case seems to have been made out in favour of the Canadian contention that the cases upon which the action of the Board was based were not cases of genuine pleuro-pneumonia, and that Canada is still entirely free from the pest. It is, therefore, not unlikely that the ban may be removed at no distant day. But while it is, of course, desirable to have the largest possible liberty of action, it is to be hoped that Canadian farmers will take the hint and in the future fatten a much larger proportion of their cattle on their own farms than heretofore. With free corn, which the strongest N. P. Government could not afford to refuse to their demand, it is hard to see what there would be to prevent our farmers from making a moderate profit from the fattening process itself, at the same time that they would be both reinvigorating their farms, instead of impoverishing them by the sale of the fodder, and doing away with the cruelty which unavoidably attends the transportation of the living animals across ocean, arousing the hostility of the mercifully disposed. We assume that the problem of the safe transmission of meats may now be considered solved.

The unseating of one of the members of the Imperial Parliament for South Meath on the ground of clerical intimidation is of good omen for Ireland, no matter which party pays the penalty. It is intolerable and degrading, whether in Ireland or in Quebec, that the terrors of the next world as well as of this should be invoked in the desecrated name of religion to deprive the superstitious of their political franchise and their manly freedom. We are sure that neither Mr. Gladstone nor Mr. Blake, nor indeed any of the great leaders of either party in Great Britain, would care for a victory purchased at the cost of the manhood of the voters. It is to be hoped that the case in question and others now on trial in Ireland may be the means of putting an end to such abuse of the powers of the clergy. Should it appear that Home Rule representatives owed their election largely to the use of such influences, no further proof would be needed of the unfitness of the Irish people for self-government even in local affairs.

The so-called Australian ballot system seems to have given much satisfaction to honest men of all parties in those States in which it was tried during the recent Presidential election. Defeated Republicans as well as triumphant Democrats approve of it. An influential Republican paper says that those who oppose it in the interests of any party will soon find that they are making a great political mistake. If the possibilities of the pension list are exhausted the party in power will have to take a hint from Canada, and institute a system of wholesale purchase of constituencies by promise of railroad subsidies, post-office and other public buildings, harbour improvements, etc.

Some influential American journals are protesting energetically against the exasperating slowness with which the wheels of their self-governing machinery revolve, in contrast with the celerity with which every mandate of the people of Great Britain makes itself felt at the seat of Government and in the administration of public affairs. For instance, the recent verdict against the Salisbury Government was, as a matter of constitutional usage having all the force of law, immediately followed by the assembling of Parliament to give effect to the popular will. The new Government was in a few days established in office and made responsible for carrying on the business of the country on the principles which had been endorsed at the polls. In a few weeks, or at farthest months, Parliament will have assembled and bills will be brought before it in accordance with what is understood to be the decree of the nation. Mark the contrast in the United States. "The Presidential nominations take place in June; the Presidential campaign lags lazily along until the middle of September; the popular election takes place in November; the official election by the Electoral College takes place some time in December; the President is inaugurated in March; the Con-