

British statesman attempts to bring it into "the domain of practical politics," he will lift the curtain upon the concluding act in the drama. When England withdrew her troops from Canada, burnt the bedding, and ran the cannon down into old iron, she gave a distinct intimation that future relations would not be of so close and intimate a character. Canada accepted the position, and, when it appeared necessary, broke with the Free Trade policy in which England glories. We may endeavour to retrace our steps and return to the good old commercial ways, but appeal for permission to send legislators to the House of Commons from Canada would be taken by the English people as a huge joke, perpetrated by a small and far-distant country.

Whatever our future may be as to political relations, there can be no doubt as to the financial condition we are rapidly bringing about. It is almost incredible that a people endowed with ordinary common sense and business ability should allow themselves to be led open-eyed into bankruptcy. In 1867 our debt was \$75,728,641; in 1879 it was \$147,481,070. During that period our yearly expenditure has increased from \$13,486,092 to over \$25,000,000—we have paid more than \$8,000,000 as charges on our indebtedness. This is not reckoning the condition of the Provinces—every one of which is heavily in debt, except Ontario. Quebec will have to get aid from the Dominion Government in some form or other soon, or resort to direct taxation. It is more than probable, well-nigh certain, that changes in our political relations with other countries are a very remote contingency, but if we continue at this breakneck pace we shall not be long in finding the slough of repudiation.

Now that the great army of assignees is about to be disbanded and turned upon the labour market of our business world, it has occurred to me to suggest that shareholders in insurance, banking and other such institutions should try to get some of them as directors. They would have time to attend to their duties. As it now stands in our larger cities directorships and presidencies are confined to a few, and they the very busiest of men. A man, by a turn of good fortune, or by business ability and industry—it matters nothing which—has become wealthy, and at once he is in great demand as a director. His hands may be full, but he takes a little more work, or undertakes an office that ought to mean work; he becomes president, perhaps, but has no time to look closely after the affairs over which he is supposed to preside; he is compelled to accept statements on trust, when the importance of them demands a careful examination, and the stockholders lose their money and complain. If enquiry was made as to the number of offices held by some of our business men, we should wonder at so few failures. Why not use some of the assignees this way? they have learnt to look sharply after their own affairs at any rate.

The *Times* in a recent issue says: "Italian policy, even when it is formally cautious and reticent, has often to be reckoned with rather as a disturbing than a tranquillizing force. It is all the more to be regretted that this should be so, because Italy as much as any country in Europe needs peace and the prosperity which follows peace, and has domestic problems of the highest importance to settle which cannot be fairly dealt with while uncertainty with respect to foreign affairs is allowed to prevail."

The Mansion House Relief Committee announce that they have received since the 11th inst. the sum of £7,861. The total of the subscriptions now amounts to £117,124, of which the sum of £62,402 has been expended. The Committee have received, since the 11th inst., £500 from Calcutta and £1,000 from Madras, India; £1,080 from Kimberley, South Africa; £200 from Greymouth, New Zealand; £700 from Sandhurst, Australia; £200 from Kumara, £306 from the Irish Relief Fund of Sacramento, Cal.; £82 from the Northwestern Branch of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers at Milwaukee, Wis., and £115 from the Irish Relief Committee of New York. This proves that the fountains of charity are not dried up; but it is natural to ask why the Committee should retain fifty per cent.

of the money received. We have been given to understand that the Irish distress has been very great, and that the worst of it is now over. But the Mansion House Relief Committee hold more than £50,000 in hand still. Why? So long as misery is widespread and deep; so long as the cry of the starving is heard, money should be disbursed with a free hand. Better an empty treasury for the Mansion House Committee than empty stomachs in Ireland.

The prospects of the Liberal party in England are anything but cheering. Lord Beaconsfield has long been waiting for his chance to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country for another lease of power; but success would not attend his much-vaunted foreign policy; Jingoism shouted itself down to an early grave; visions of glory departed one after the other, and the lookout from a Conservative point of view was dreary in the extreme. The Liberal leaders had contented themselves with pursuing a policy of criticism and attack, and did much to convince the country that the Premier in whom they trusted had deceived them. But Lord Hartington thought he saw an opening in the direction of a mild advocacy of Home Rule for Ireland and went in to win, but has missed altogether and ruined the chances he had of carrying the elections. It was just what Beaconsfield was waiting for. He knew British sentiment and the value of the Home Rule agitation better than his opponent. The hour that Hartington gave the appearance of a leaning toward the expedient of Home Rule for Ireland, he gave the astute Premier the opportunity for which he had been watching. For it gave him the chance of charging, and with a show of reason, that the Liberal party is anti-national and prepared to consider a scheme which is only a monstrous and impracticable chimera, entertained by a few agitators for personal ends.

Home Rule is not a debatable question. The English sentiment is as decisively opposed to it as it would be to any other proposal which meant the entire disruption of the Empire. Lord Ramsay made a very palpable bid for the Irish vote in Liverpool by intimating that he would favour the appointment of a commission of enquiry into Irish grievances, but he failed to secure a solid Irish vote. On the whole he lost more Liberals than he conciliated Irish. And it will be the same the whole country over. The Home Rule agitation is made out of most miserable stuff; the Americans understood the nature of it when Mr. Parnell had made less than half-a-dozen speeches among them, and Lord Hartington should have estimated it in the same manner. Home Rule is the cry of a few individuals anxious to maintain their present political positions and to increase their influence if they can. But it is by no means certain that even Mr. Parnell and his co-agitators will be able to hold their position in perpetuity; for there is every reason to believe that many of them will lose their seats at the coming elections. The Liberal Leader has in truth committed a fatal blunder in not emphatically and indignantly disclaiming the veriest shadow of sympathy with the impossible theory of Home Rule for Ireland.

The *Saturday Review*, in a cleverly argued article on "One-Sided Free Trade," closes with the remark that "Protection is neither more nor less than a grant in aid of wages"—the protection referred to being that on manufactured goods. Can this be true? Is there no such thing as internal or home competition in manufactures? Must the manufacture of a given article by a given country always result in a close monopoly? Protection, in its effect upon wages, I should rather say, may be the means either of raising or depressing the rate, in proportion as home competition happens to result from it, and to be less or greater than the former competition from abroad—wages being bound up, as they should be, in the realizable price of goods. Cheerful prophets in Canada will expect protection to promote employment and lead to the payment of fair and legitimate wages. For there is such a thing as a fair local wage, however competitive economists may choose to obscure the fact; and trade-strikes are the very worst way of attempting to realise it.