

plated such an arrangement as is now reported to have been made with Cuba, not only with Cuba but also with Brazil, the Board of Trade of Georgetown, Demerara, entered a mild protest, suggesting that a British sugar colony ought to have the preference. This year the market of the United States, in which the sugars of British Guiana had previously found a ready sale, did not offer the usual inducements, and the prospect of revived demand in the future was not bright; the British West Indies being denied the benefit of the most favoured nation clause in the commercial treaty between the United States and Great Britain. Commerce, when left to itself, obeys laws of its own; but the true solution of the West India question, so far as Canada is interested, is to be found in the suggestion of the Georgetown Board of Trade. A commercial arrangement, founded on an acceptable basis of reciprocity, would involve no political complications and would be beneficial to the trade of both countries. Politically, neither has anything to gain by a union which could only add to their mutual weakness. Any rational desire which can exist in the West Indies for a closer union with Canada must have for its object increased facility in the exchange of products. Neither country can afford any political protection to the other; and the ligature by which the two would be united would be so attenuated by the distance to which it would be drawn out that it would give way under the slightest strain. But by reciprocity in commercial exchanges Canada and the West Indies might mutually benefit: it is here and here alone that they can have anything in common. The only rational reply to an overture from Jamaica for annexation would be a proposal for commercial reciprocity.

LESS than a year ago the leading politicians of Quebec avowed the conviction that the hostile parties ought to lay down their arms and unite in a Coalition for the common good. We may thank the Jacques Cartier Commission for lifting the veil and giving us a clear view of the negotiators. M. Mercier, whose moods were somewhat fitful, prayed for extrinsic aid to enable him to crush the *canaille* and the fanatics of both parties (*à écraser la canaille et les fanatiques des deux parties*). Of a frame of mind akin to this, but usually divested of the destructive element, coalitions are born. The disorganization of the Bleus constitute a double danger, now threatening one party and now the other; and it is impossible to say on whose head the final stroke may fall. The revolt of the Castors caused the Bleus to look for extraneous support. A menace of disqualification hung over the head of the Provincial Premier. M. Tarte, seeing that disqualification would involve the loss of all the labour that had been expended in preparations for a Coalition, hastened to Montreal to avert the double catastrophe. There he entered into consultation with politicians who counted for something in the opposing camp: M. Mercier, M. David, and M. C. Langellier, some of whom would be available in the proposed Coalition. M. Tarte had taken the precaution to get the sanction of the supreme authority in Québec, the Episcopate, to the formation of a Coalition on a given basis. He entreated M. Mercier, M. David, and M. C. Langellier not to press for disqualification, and he settled the basis of the Coalition in accordance with the episcopal authority with which he was armed. M. Langellier, who was to be the chief of the Liberal section, reduced these conditions to the following written form; and it was perhaps deemed sufficient that his handwriting should attest their authorship without his signature, for he did not sign the paper which he drew up and left in the possession of M. Tarte:—"Maintain as they are the laws which give exclusive control of the religious and moral books in use in the schools to the ministers of religion who have the spiritual direction of the schools. Maintain the composition, the present powers and attributions of the Council of Public Instruction." Two days after the consultation in Montreal disqualification was abandoned, and M. Langellier, after paying a visit to M. Tarte's house, in Québec, handed to M. Tarte the above declaration of submission to the demands of the Episcopate. Armed with the document M. Tarte went directly to the bishop under whose authority he was acting, and whom the commission would not permit him to name. By this time, and perhaps encouraged by the success he had met with, the bishop had resolved to ask for something more: he dictated and M. Tarte wrote: "Uniformity of books. Withdrawal of the \$100 per 2,000, chosen by the Department, which will send the books itself. Never, at any time, to present [to the Legislature] a law without first submitting it to the Council" of Public Instruction. When this had been written down, M. Tarte, not wishing to take any step without spiritual advice, asked the bishop if he had anything else to suggest. The (arch?) bishop repeated, what he had said before, that there were men in the ranks of both parties of doubtful principles, and that the project of an alliance, founded on the declaration of M. Langellier, would be an immense benefit. M. Mercier was to stand in the background, at

least for some time; and the Bleus were to have a majority in the Cabinet. The evidence of M. Tarte was given under oath, and the written, though unsigned, declaration of M. Langellier is strong corroboration. Mutual distrust smothered the Coalition in the womb. But the incident is exceedingly instructive. It shows, in the clearest way, with whom rests the ultimate authority in Québec; and that the rebellion of the Castors came near being compensated by an accession of strength from the opposite party.

IN the County of Peel Local Prohibition has met a defeat. During the present campaign under the Scott Act there have been three victories. Alternations of successes and defeats may be expected so long as the present fit of enthusiasm lasts. Thirty years ago a similar movement extended to several States of the American Union; but in most cases the period of prohibition proved transitory, and in the State of Maine, where the law was not repealed, drunkenness was very far from being suppressed. Where the use of alcohol was lessened, other and more dangerous narcotics too often took its place. The American experiment in prohibition is far from justifying the belief that man is about to undergo a change of habit such as the world has so far had no experience of. It would be difficult to find a nation which has not from the earliest times sought solace in some narcotic as a means of dispelling care and allaying pain. The eight hundred millions of men who use tobacco never consumed so much as at present; the four hundred millions who are addicted to the use of opium are, it is to be feared, receiving accessions to their numbers; intoxicating hemp, in its various forms, still counts over a hundred millions of devotees, and betel a hundred millions. From wine to opium, the road on which many are now travelling, is a change for the worse. De Quincy had the courage to defend the use of opium by way of preference; but his experience, as told by himself, would deter ninety-nine persons out of a hundred from adopting a choice which opens a way to the inconceivable horrors he depicts. So far as the substitution is being made in the United States and Canada, a fatal custom of the Chinese is being followed, with results which any one can get a glimpse of by finding a proxy to open for him the door of a San Francisco opium den. The millennium is not to be brought about by the restraint of law; if evil is ever to be banished from the world, it will be by means of a moral change. Prohibition does not give the moral strength necessary to resist injurious excess in that of which the moderate use is harmless or beneficial. That is not its method; it substitutes external restraint for the more vigorous virtue of self-control; and when opportunity returns, the power of resistance if originally weak is found to offer no safeguard against temptation. Besides prohibition does not and cannot fulfil its promise; but it can and does make an injurious change both in the quality of the drinks consumed and the character of the persons by whom they are dispensed. Prohibition will run its course in municipal by-laws, but the extent to which it will prohibit will be limited; the good it will do will be balanced by the more injurious substitutes for what it restricts the use of; and, when its deficiencies and failures become patent, the great panacea for the cure of intemperance will be abandoned in despair. Then may be tried the experiment of building up the moral stamina which can make possible rational enjoyment without the penalty of injurious excess.

THE Ontario millers are not satisfied with the present duties on flour, and they have resolved to petition the Government for an increase to \$1 a barrel. They complain that the duty on as much wheat as will make a barrel of flour is greater than that on the barrel of flour when it is manufactured, and they have repeatedly asked for a re-adjustment. There is, of course, a question of fact to be decided: do the duties really discriminate in the way the millers allege? It has been a puzzle to many why, if they do, Sir Leonard Tilley, with his well-known mode of dealing with such complaints, has not decided upon re-adjustment. The fact seems to be that Sir Leonard, having promised the farmers a certain measure of protection, which many of them in their delusion believe to be real, he cannot re-adjust by reduction. The millers, in this state of the facts, petition for an increase of the duty on flour; and just because the Minister of Finance objects to reduce the duty on wheat, there is some danger that he may propose to increase the duty on flour. Such a movement would be, not only in the wrong direction, but it would aim to increase a duty which ought never to have been imposed, and which ought to be abolished with the least possible delay.

MR. VAN HORNE, Chief Engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway, has predicted that the road will be completed from Montreal to the Pacific Ocean by the 1st September next. Mr. Schriber, the Government Engineer, more cautious, puts the date at November, 1885. According to these