

upon; the half-dozen meetings held by Col. Vincent when he was in Canada affords no evidence of the opinion of the country as a whole. The averment made by Col. Vincent may safely be denied. Considering that a Conservative representative meeting in England has endorsed the scheme, there is more reason for saying that the people of England are in favor of it; yet no one believes that this is true Col. Vincent is credited with an intention to move in Parliament in favor of Fair Trade; if he should carry out the promise made in his name, any motion he may make will scarcely reach a vote, and if it does the result will be a demonstration of weakness.

MINING IN QUEBEC PROVINCE.

The miners and mine-owners of Quebec have much reason to stick together, and to look after their interests and their rights, since not much consideration for either has been shown by the Government of that province. The annual session of the Mining Association of Quebec is being held this week in Montreal, assembling on the 18th instant, on the morning of which officers were elected and routine business transacted.

An excellent variety characterized the selection of subjects for papers read before the association. None is more timely than that by Sir Wm. Dawson and Professor W. C. Carlyle, entitled *Technical Education in its Relation to Mining*. We in Canada have suffered in reputation and in pocket heavily by rule-of-thumb mining, and it pays us to employ technical skill rather than bury money hopelessly in the ground on the strength of the opinion of a charlatan or an illiterate novice. In a like direction is the paper of Dr. R. W. Ells of Ottawa, on *The Value of Geological Knowledge to the Mining Engineer and Prospector*. We give the titles of the other papers read at the meeting, so far as we have received them: *Platinum, its Mode of Occurrence and Uses*, by Mr. J. T. Donald, Montreal; *Mining Luck*, by Captain Robert C. Adams, Montreal; *Assaying by Electrolytic Methods*, Prof. B. J. Harrington, Montreal; *The Collection of Mining Information and Statistics by the State*, Mr. E. D. Ingall, M.E., Ottawa; *The Occurrence of Asbestos in Templeton*, Mr. C. Circkel, Templeton; *British Columbia's Mineral Wealth*, by Mr. W. H. Lynch, Danville, Que.

THE DRY GOODS TRADE.

It is agreeable to hear, at last, from dry goods importers, that "business is good," and to discover that, after much disappointing delay, caused by mild weather and poor country roads, the demand for goods, which everyone felt must come, has really begun. Colder weather and sleighing in many districts have brought this about. It is now possible for farmers to market their produce, and the resulting activity begins to be felt, both by retail dealers in the country and by importers in the cities. Many shop-keepers have been busy stock-taking and balancing. Let us

hope that they found a fair increase of capital on the year.

Wholesale dealers tell us that orders are coming to hand in increased volume. There is an active demand for flannelettes, shirtings, cottonades, and indeed all descriptions of staple cottons, values of which are very firm all round. Materials for spring dress goods are selling already fairly well, and a good enquiry is heard for printed delaines. The printed satteens appear to be much in favor for the coming spring, while prints are only in moderate request. Sewed embroideries for making up underclothing find steady enquiry.

Along with leather makes of gloves, especially kid, we find taffeta silk gloves in active demand; also lace mitts for the coming season. The sale of hosiery is quite equal in volume to last year's spring trade, if not greater. Parasols are being already looked after, and much attention is being paid this year to the handles, which are carved, polished, natural, celluloid, and silver mounts of extremely varied designs.

There has been a large sale of ladies' blouses in a variety of fabrics, the favorite materials being flannelette, satteen, challie, surah, pongee, and bengoline. Windsor ties, to match the blouses, are also in demand. Payments are moderately good, with promises of more remittances next month or in March, and on the whole the prospects of the spring trade for 1892 are regarded as very favorable.

ENGLISH OPINION ON CANADIAN POLITICS.

What is thought in England of the recent disclosures in Quebec finds expression in an editorial article by the *London Economist* of December 26th, under the title of "The Mercier Incident." The *Saturday Review* also has an article holding much the same view, if possible more strongly expressed. Describing the accusation against M. Pacaud and the Quebec Ministry, the first-named journal goes on to say:

"The ministry, according to the Lieutenant-Governor, used their share partly in paying private debts and partly in subsidizing members of the Legislature favorable to their side. This was, of course, a definite charge of corruption, and a royal commission was issued to investigate the facts. The commissioners drew up a preliminary report strongly condemning the ministers and affirming the truth of the charges, and sent it to Mr. Angers, the Lieutenant-Governor, who thereupon, for the honor of the province, felt compelled to act. He had two courses before him, one of which was at once legal and constitutional, while the other, though certainly legal and in accordance with one remembered precedent, was a little outside the usual constitutional methods. Mr. Angers could, had he pleased, have called the Legislature together, and having laid the report of the commission before them, could have waited for them to dismiss the Ministry. This would have been the more usual, and, perhaps, the wiser course; but Mr.

Angers appears to have feared that even under such circumstances the majority would support Mr. Mercier, in which event that gentleman would not only have got off Scot free, but might have prevented any appeal to the people upon the Royal Commission's report. He would have remained Premier and his advice as to the time for a dissolution must have been accepted as final. Mr. Angers, perceiving the awkwardness of this position, resolved to exercise a reserve power which it is admitted resides in him, as it resides in the Queen, but which has never during the present reign been exercised in any way. He dismissed the Mercier Ministry from power, and summoned their opponents to take office and arrange for an immediate dissolution. The Liberals naturally condemned this action as high-handed, and Mr. Mercier, in a letter full of furious insults to the Lieutenant-Governor, calls upon his party to regard him as the victim of oppression, and, on behalf of a violated constitution, to replace him in power. The constitution, however, has not been violated, any more than it was when Mr. Gladstone abolished purchase in the army by royal authority alone. Mr. Angers has used a prerogative undoubtedly belonging to him, and it is for the Legislature, that is ultimately for the electors, to decide whether his use of it has been wise or injudicious. If they approve his act, the matter will drop, and if they disapprove it, he must resign, as he could not by any possibility perform his duties satisfactorily with Mr. Mercier acting as his Premier. The question is, however, remitted to the electors, and the breach of the constitution, if any has occurred, has been too purely formal for serious discussion. The cry has only been raised for party purposes, and to conceal the true issue which will be placed before the electors.

"We trust the latter will make no mistake about that issue, for it is simply whether corruption is or is not to be a disqualification for office."

"The electors must check and punish such customs whenever they are discovered, or they will become habitual, and they will be in the position of employers whose servants think that to defraud them is hardly wrong, and will certainly never expose them to punishment.

"We must add that we think the electors in some colonies, and especially in Canada, are partly responsible for the corruption which begins to prevail. They are well aware that their Ministers are poor, they know how severe a tax on them canvassing has become, and yet they will not give them salaries sufficient to place them beyond reach of a permanent temptation. That is, on the most ordinary business principles, great folly, more especially as it could be amended in part by preventing canvassing. If the colonists plead poverty, we have only to reply that they are not too poor to pay one Minister liberally, and that even one, if they trust the distribution of contracts to him alone, would be an effective safeguard. They throw away ten times the sum in encouraging him to make wasteful contracts, or to allow scamped work to be accepted as good. One railway contract with a firm,