

Accordingly, instead of obtaining the advice of scientific economists, the House went through an elaborate process of inquiry to find out the opinions of farmers; and as a result of all the labour and expense, the country has the gratification of learning that 54 farmers thought this, and 114 thought that, and 26 thought something else, with many other tabulated statistics of similar value. Now, we have sincere respect for the farmers as a class; but our respect would have prevented us from inflicting the insult of catechising them on a subject on which they make no profession to be especially informed. The opinion of a farmer on a question involving the complicated action of economical and social laws, is probably as valuable as that of the average merchant or manufacturer, if none of them have qualified themselves for giving an opinion by previous scientific study of the subject. Without such study, the vote of any class of men, even if unanimous, is as worthless in discovering the mysteries of national economy, as it would be in deciding the truth of the Darwinian hypothesis, or in settling the controversy between homœopathy and allopathy in medicine.

In the whole history of Canada there is no record of a political condition so calculated to make honorable men blush for their country, as that in which the Province of Quebec is placed at the present moment. It seems as if all the safeguards of constitutional Government had here proved utterly ineffective in securing a just or economical administration of public affairs. The passions of political partisanship not only corrupt the popular assembly, but have extended their infection into the upper chamber, and even into the gubernatorial residence. It is sufficiently alarming that an irresponsible council should have the audacity to break down the one effective defence of popular Government, by tampering with the supply bill, and that they should be supported in their audacity by the Lieutenant-Governor; but it forms a more mournful outlook still, when this political trick has the design and the effect of displacing one of the most incorruptible ministers ever entrusted with public affairs, and throwing the Government of the Province into the hands of a clique who have not even the restraint of party principles, but are simply receiving and disbursing the public revenue with the view of keeping to themselves as much as possible in its passage from receipt to expenditure. Notwithstanding the clever budget speech of the Provincial Treasurer, no intelligent man is blinded to the fact that the expenditure of the Province has been regularly in excess of its revenue; and yet the representatives of the people, in such a serious crisis, betray their sacred trust not only by throwing away some of the most valuable assets of the Province, and by sanctioning all manner of unnecessary grants, but even by voting a large increase to their own sessional allowance, and to the income of ministers. Who is responsible for the continuance of the present Government in Quebec? Undoubtedly those men in the Province who usurp the name of Conservatives. But we have a higher conception of the great historical party which distinguishes itself by this title, and in the name of true conservatism we protest against its being identified with the administration of affairs in Quebec. At all events we have a right to demand of the Conservative party in Canada whether that is what Conservative Government means.

The famous Bill to restrict the immigration of Chinese into the United States is but an outcome of the general principles which the American people have adopted for the restriction of their internal and international trade. The policy, which protects capital invested at home from the competition of foreign capitalists, is but legitimately applied when it endeavours to prevent the depreciation of home labour arising from the entrance of foreigners into the labour market. But this policy is a game which may be played by more than one, and within the last week or two the Chinese have shown that they are not disposed to accept with tame submission the breach of treaty, as well as of international courtesy, implied in the legislation of the United States. It is safe to say that the conscience of the civilized world will not disapprove of any reasonable retaliation which the Government of China may adopt for the insult to Chinese nationality inflicted by the Government of the United States.

The progress of the United States in the solution of its economical problems becomes of increasing interest to us in the solution of ours. From the beginning the science of National Economy had the disadvantage, in American eyes, of having been first taught by Englishmen, and of having moulded the legislation of England before that of any other country. Then the rapid development of the nation's wealth relieved it from the pressure of economical problems. Even when the great civil war forced on them a financial problem of almost unparalleled difficulty, Mr. Lincoln and his supporters were too intensely absorbed in the main issue of the conflict, to take any serious interest in the subordinate question as to the justice or prudence of the methods adopted for raising the required revenue. In fact, the necessity of a heavy taxation in order to the success of the war enlisted the entire loyal population in the defence of the war-tariff, all the more that that tariff was the object of disloyal attack from the Northern democrats, who were in sympathy at once with Free Trade and with the Southern Secession. But these various influences, combined in their hostility to economical justice, have for years been losing their force, and there are numerous indications that the equitable principles of Political Economy will control ere long American legislation.

The science is now represented in all the leading universities of the United States; and the rising intelligence of the country is made aware of the fact, that Free Trade is not a mere crotchet of a few economists with the insular prejudices of Englishmen, but a doctrine on which all scientific economists, American and European alike, are agreed, as demanded by national justice and prudence. Moreover, the necessity for an enormous taxation is diminishing every year, in consequence of the surprising rapidity with which the war-debt is being reduced. Last year a surplus of \$100,000,000 was applied to this reduction; and already it has become evident that the high tariff, demanded by the war, is no longer a necessity. The Commission, which has been recently appointed to revise the tariff, may be thoroughly under the control of the privileged classes; but it will require to make some show of reducing