

We are not aware that the Leaders of the Liberal Party have of late done anything in the Commons, or out of it, to forfeit the confidence of those constituencies which have hitherto accepted their political creed. The only question of national importance now before the country is that of the tariff. From its location close to the American border the county of Napierville is one that is sure to feel the effects of the trade barriers erected on both sides the line more than many other constituencies, and for this reason would naturally be disposed to regard with favour rather than otherwise the chief feature of the Opposition policy. As a matter of fact the outspoken declarations of the successful candidate and the more cautious utterances of Hon. Mr. Chapleau in favour of reciprocity seem to argue that, to say the least, the Liberal candidate was not sacrificed to any popular resentment against the Liberal policy in this respect. The wonder then grows why, in choosing between two candidates, both of whom declared themselves friendly to unrestricted reciprocity, a strong Liberal constituency should have chosen the one put forward by the Conservatives. If there were any local or personal circumstances, such as the superior popularity and prestige of the successful candidate, the public has not heard of them, as it would pretty surely have done could the defeat of the losing party have been thus explained. Of course, as things now are, the advantages accruing from the possession of the reins of power, and so of the disposal of public money and patronage, count for a good deal in bye-elections and, other things being equal, may generally be relied on to turn the scale. But other things were not, judging from previous contests, equal or nearly so in this case. Moreover the nearness of the general election would go far to counteract the influences under consideration were the prospects of a change of Government considered good. Weighing all these circumstances; weighing, too, the fact that the influence of the Quebec Premier and Government is well nigh supreme in the Province, and could scarcely have failed to secure victory had it been vigorously put forth; putting, also, into the same scale the further fact of the alarming state of the finances of Quebec, as revealed in the late budget, there is, it must be admitted, some ground for the suspicion which has been expressed, that the result may have been permitted or brought about with an eye to future contingencies, Provincial leaders deeming it wise to make to themselves friends of what they would, under other circumstances, regard as the "mammon of unrighteousness." Perhaps we may be able to form a better judgment as to the soundness of this theory when we learn the result of the contest now going on in South Victoria, in which the reciprocity question is fairly at issue. Another Government victory in that constituency might be reasonably taken as showing that the loyal instincts or prejudices—call them which you will—of Canadian electors have responded to the strong appeals which are being made to them, and are in revolt against the plea for unrestricted reciprocity in any form.

PUBLIC attention in Ontario is being fixed to a degree hitherto unprecedented upon the sources of untold Provincial wealth which are believed to exist in the Sudbury nickel deposits. The prominent members of the Toronto Board of Trade, who recently visited the mines to see for themselves, have raised popular expectation to a still higher pitch. When staid business men, noted for soundness of judgment and moderation in speech, vehemently affirm that they believe it impossible to exaggerate the importance and promise of this wonderful storehouse of mineral treasures, those of warmer temperament and less balanced judgment may well be excused for giving rein to imagination. There certainly is left no room to doubt that the metal which has, of a sudden, become so precious, is to be found in the Sudbury district in quantities which are practically unlimited. If the present belief that nickel will be, for the future, unless, and until superseded by means of some new scientific discovery, indispensable for all the naval and other purposes for which it is now about to be used, and if it further prove correct, as Mr. Ritchie and other authorities affirm, that in the Sudbury region we have five-sixths of all the nickel deposits in the known world, there is certainly no conceivable reason why this metal should not become to Ontario what England's iron mines have been to England, a source of immense wealth and development. The all-important practical question just now is how to turn this great gift of nature to the best account. The prompt action of the Ontario Government, in preventing further speculation for the present, is unquestionably wise and

commendable. The vast demand that is certain to spring up in a very short time, if it does not already exist, may be relied on to stimulate the working of the mines and exportation of the metal in some shape, on a gigantic scale. It is obvious that in order that the Province and Dominion may profit to the full by this great natural advantage, the manufacturing process must be carried as far as possible in the Province. If, in any case Government interference with private enterprise in industrial production is justifiable, it surely would be so in this case. The *Canadian Manufacturer* continues to call loudly for an export duty, not only on the crude ore, but on its semi-manufactured form as "matte." It is certainly most desirable, it is almost imperatively necessary that the manufacturing process should be completed in the Province. The question is, will not the enlightened self-interest of those who may control the mines insure this, without either the objectionable export duty, or the Government bonus asked for by Mr. Ritchie? To the uninitiated it seems as if the cost of carriage, on the one hand, and of fuel and other raw material needed, on the other, should settle the question. The first is, of course, wholly in favour of home manufacture, and it is scarcely possible, one would think, that the second could counter-balance it. There is, of course, no reason why labour and the cost of living should not be wholly favourable to manufacture in Ontario. These are questions for capitalists and experts, but they should be decided before Government aid is sought in either of the ways mentioned. At the same time it seems clear to us that, if either an export duty or a bonus of some sort be proved to be a *sine qua non* of home manufacture, the argument, on protectionist principles, in favour of such duty or bonus would be stronger than that in support of almost any form in which a tax for protection is now imposed.

CAN it be possible, as intimated in some of the papers, that there is still in existence a law of the Senate of the University of Toronto, forbidding the discussion of political subjects by any literary society connected with the institution, and that there is some danger that the debate on the question of Commercial Union, in the Mock Parliament, a few evenings since, may expose the students who took part in it to censure under this medieval statute? If so, no time should be lost in seeking the repeal of such a law, and a genuine Reform party in the students' Parliament might find in agitation for this liberation a useful field for the application of its principles. What is needed in these days is more genuine discussion of large political questions instead of less. Especially is this true when those questions, like the one above mentioned, involve really important principles of political economy. It might be well if Canadian public men would adopt more widely the practice of English parliamentarians, by addressing audiences all over the country during recess, on the larger problems of the day. Here, discussions of that kind are limited for the most part to electoral contests such as that being now carried on in South Victoria. But the heat of such party conflicts is by no means favourable to dispassionate argument. It is true that Sir Richard Cartwright and a few other members of the Opposition are now presenting in a series of addresses to various constituencies the reasons they have to offer in support of their views. This is well and it is needed only that the Government leaders should adopt the same course in order to give to the public a much needed education in regard to the great questions of the day, in Canadian public life. The more the people are trained to think and reason on the merits of the opposing views, the less danger will there be of their being subject to influence by those baser arguments on which the lower classes of politicians are too much accustomed to rely.

THE question whether the manufacture of sugar from the beet root can be profitably carried on in Ontario is one of great importance. With present habits and at current prices, sugar is one of the most expensive of all our table and culinary necessities, or luxuries, as the case may be. Its successful manufacture from the beet root would mean not only a very large saving of money now sent out of the country, but the employment of a large number of men in the fields and factories. Bulletin LVII. on Sugar Beets, just issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, is, therefore, a valuable document, showing as it does the result of a series of experiments in beet culture in various districts of the Province. The general conclusions reached by Professor James, of

Guelph, and Mr. W. Skaife, of Montreal, are to the effect that while there is great room for improvement in the methods of cultivation, as affecting both the amount of sugar and the degree of purity, sugar beets of fine quality may be grown in many parts of Ontario, with proper care. Mr. Skaife says:—

The general appearance of the samples, together with their net weight and analyses, seems to point to the general conclusion that the yield per acre in the Province of Ontario would be higher than in Europe, while the percentage of sugar would be as high under intelligent cultivation.

The next question to be decided is, we suppose, whether the cost of labour and other conditions of manufacture in the Province are such as to admit of the raising of the roots and the manufacture of the sugar at a cost below that of the imported article, with or without the high duty now paid by the latter.

IT is hard to treat seriously the question raised by the petition of the people of the West coast of Newfoundland, asking to be divided from the Eastern part of the Island, and organized as a separate colony, with a view to subsequent union with Canada. There may be, it is true, considerable force in some of the reasons given in the petition to show that there is little in common between the inhabitants of the two parts of the Island, separated as they are from each other by a great wilderness, and having in many respects divergent, though surely not necessarily, as the petitioners allege, antagonistic commercial interests. But there is an optimism verging on the absurd in the argument that "the creation of a new province and its incorporation into the Dominion of Canada would be pleasing to the British, French and Canadian Governments, and would tend to the speedy and happy solution of the vexatious questions so long in dispute between England and France as regards the French shore question." By what magic of persuasion or terror of arms the Canadian Government would bring about a settlement with France of a dispute which England has hitherto been unable to arrange, it is not easy to conjecture. The supposition that Canada would be willing to add to her chronic vexations arising out of the Atlantic and Behring's Sea fishing questions, others of a similar character with France, argue a belief that either her national simplicity, or her lust for territory, must be wonderful. When there is added to this the probability of incurring the permanent enmity of the Government and people of the sister colony, or what would be left of it, it becomes pretty clear that the object of the petitioners is not likely to be speedily accomplished.

THE Parnell struggle continues to occupy a large—looking from this distance one feels disposed to say a surprisingly large—space in English papers and cablegrams. Notwithstanding the bull-dog ferocity with which the discredited champion holds his place in the thickest of the fight, it is becoming daily more evident that he is fighting a losing battle. The clergy is arrayed against him in almost solid phalanx, and the clergy in Ireland, especially when it represents a moral idea which appeals with peculiar power to the best instincts of Irishmen, is a host not easily vanquished. Evidently, too, and naturally, the zealous and belligerent faction which supports Parnell is largely composed of the worse rather than the better elements of the population. These may make the noisier shout, until fatigue and hoarseness come, but the weightier and more reputable classes who are with his opponents will probably show better staying powers. Meanwhile, and this is the important fact for other parts of the Empire, the Home Rule party is, for the present, hopelessly divided, and consequently comparatively powerless. If, as Mr. Gladstone is reported to have said, "Home Rule is saved," its salvation is pretty surely postponed to an indefinite, if not a far off future. Meanwhile what will be the attitude and action of the three British parties which now make up the Parliament? It is scarcely possible that the fact, if such it be, that the Tories are supporting Parnell's candidate in the pending election can have any political significance out of the constituency. It is almost inconceivable that any alliance or concerted action could take place between the Government and the Parnellites, save on terms of compromise that must be fatal to one party or the other. Further, waiving all questions of political principle and consistency, the first clear indication of such an understanding would almost certainly be the signal for the return of the Liberal-Unionists to their old allegiance. The overthrow of the Government would speedily follow.