

that so much colour is often given to such misconceptions by the short-sighted and easy-going methods adopted by the altruists in their attempts at "the doing to another as one would be done by."

"GENERAL" BOOTH, of the Salvation Army, has, by a singularly bold and comprehensive proposition, brought to the surface in England some of the real difficulties with which all attempts at the systematic relief of poverty are beset. Under his direction the Salvation Army opened last January, near the West India Docks in London, a Food and Shelter Depôt, where food is supplied at the lowest possible rates, and a night's lodging in a clean and comfortable room given for a penny. No less than 23,500 beds at this price, and 470,000 meals, at prices varying from one farthing to one penny were supplied during the last nine months. Situations were found for a considerable number, who are now earning decent and comfortable livelihoods. Moreover, the Army has five Homes in London, seven in the country, and several abroad, at which fallen women at the rate of 1,000 per year are being rescued, seven-tenths of them it is said, permanently. This work seems to speak for itself, so long, at least, as it is carried on on the purely voluntary principle. But the Army now proposes to extend the work on an immense scale, by establishing no less than ten Food and Shelter Depôts, and ten Rescue Homes. In view of this magnificent project "General" Booth has presented a memorial to the Home Secretary, asking Government aid for the establishment, though not for the maintenance of these institutions. Fifteen thousand pounds is the sum needed. He would like best to have the money bestowed as a free gift. Failing that, he would like it as a loan without interest. Failing that, he would like the free use of Government buildings, and the use of Government stores free, or at reduced prices. The Secretary has promised to consider the proposal, and the papers are discussing it. Even the *Christian World* seems disposed to favour it, though it would evidently be the entrance of a wedge which would open the way for the virtual State endowment of a dozen churches instead of one. The *Spectator*, on the other hand, and with sounder logic, opposes the scheme, basing its objection on negative answers to three suggestive questions,—First, "Is it expedient that the thing be done at all?" This question is applied only to the Depôts, not to the Rescue Homes. Second, "If it is expedient, should it be done by Government aid?" Third, "Supposing both these questions to be answered affirmatively, should Government aid be given to the Salvation Army?"

SUPPORTERS of Premier Mercier and his Government have been returned in all three of the Quebec constituencies in which elections were held last week. Of eighteen bye-elections that have been held since Mr. Mercier came into power fourteen have resulted in his favour. It is said that he will now have on his side forty out of the sixty-five representatives composing the Lower House, and a majority of the Legislative Council as well. It is thus clear that the principles and policy represented by Premier Mercier are decidedly in the ascendant in the sister Province. What is to be the effect, first, upon the well-being and progress of the Province itself, and, second, upon those of the Dominion? The answer depends, of course, upon the character of those principles and that policy. Are they truly, genuinely Liberal? If so, few broad thinkers of either party could help being glad, for the politics of the French Province certainly are sadly in need of liberalizing. The doubt, perhaps the danger, in the case is that the victory is claimed not for Liberalism, but for nativism, which is a very distinct, if not antagonistic, thing. The triumphant party call themselves not Liberals, but Nationalists, meaning, of course, French Nationalists. Is the triumph of Mr. Mercier, then, the triumph of Sectionalism? Is it also stamped by Jesuit assistance and other indications as the triumph of Ultramontanism? If so, whither is the Province drifting, and what is to be the upshot for the Dominion? We do not attempt to answer these questions. We not even assert that the answer must necessarily be unsatisfactory. We are far from meaning to imply that the outlook for Canadian unity would or could be improved by the overthrow of the Nationalist and the re-establishment of the Bleu administration. We merely suggest the questions as worthy of the most earnest and dispassionate consideration of every patriotic Canadian.

THE annual banquet of the Massachusetts Tariff Reform League, held the other day in Boston, derived considerable interest from a letter from the President and a

speech by Secretary Fairchild. The President's letter was somewhat grandiloquent in style, but was clearly intended as a declaration that an unflinching and persistent struggle will be maintained by those for whom he can speak, on behalf of tariff reform. "Temporary defeat," President Cleveland declares, "brings no discouragement." Every "alluring overture" and "deceptive compromise" will be rejected by the pioneers of tariff reform, who are to "regain and restore the patrimony of their countrymen, freed from the trespass of grasping encroachment, and safely secured by the genius of American justice and equality." Mr. Fairchild's address was direct and forcible. Perhaps its most noteworthy point was the distinction drawn between the two kinds of so-called protective tariffs. The one is the old-fashioned one of Henry Clay, "the promotion of the infant industries," the underlying principle of which was that by the promise of an assured home-market certain important industries would in a short time become so established that they could give their products to the people as cheaply as they could be bought anywhere in the world. The other—the modern protective tariff—"the tariff embodied in the platform of the party successful in the late election"—has its foundation in the principle that it is best for the American people to buy and use certain articles which can be produced in this country only when thus produced or manufactured, cost what they may, and that to the promotion of this end all the powers of the Federal Government should be invoked. The distinction is one that protectionists and people will do well to bear in mind in Canada as well as in the United States.

THE demand now being made on behalf of American actors for protection against foreign competition is surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of nativism, or protection gone mad. It is well nigh inconceivable that a shrewd and ambitious people can deliberately legislate with a view to shutting themselves off from contact with what is best in art and artists from other countries, thus not only depriving themselves of the luxury of seeing the impersonations and listening to the interpretations of the master actors of the day, but, at the same time, taking away from native histrionic talent its best models and its strongest stimulus, and foredooming the nation to mediocrity in this department of art. And if in this, why not in every other field of intellectual activity and production? Yet it is thought to be by no means improbable that this selfsame suicidal thing may be done by the forthcoming, if not by the present, Congress. If those who persist in measuring themselves by themselves are not wise, what terms will do justice to the unwisdom of such a course?

A FARMER correspondent of the New York *Independent* makes and supports by statistics a statement which, if true, affords matter for serious thought to political economists, and to all other students of social and political problems. He asserts that the small farmers, as a class, are disappearing from the United States, and large estates being steadily built up by aggregation. He, for instance, says: "In 1880 the Bureau of Statistics in this State (Indiana) found that for eight years preceding that time there had been a steady annual increase of real-estate mortgages in Indiana, amounting to more than \$12,000,000. A majority of these mortgages were laid upon farms. I have repeatedly asked county recorders whether they recorded or cancelled more mortgages, and have invariably received for answer that the number recorded far exceeded the number cancelled. In Kansas and other Western States, I am informed, the condition is far worse than it is here." Speaking from his own observation he says, "To reach a similar conclusion in a different way one need only look in his own neighbourhood. I could show you many large estates which have been built up by absorption of smaller ones. I cannot think of a case where a large estate has been broken up and sold to small purchasers." Speaking theoretically one might predict such a result as the natural, if not inevitable, outcome of the modern methods and spirit, and especially of the use of labour-saving machinery, which, in its very nature, must be better adapted, economically, to large than small operations. But whereto all this is tending is a question which, none the less, demands anxious consideration.

EVIDENTLY some of the better class journals of the United States do not feel exactly proud of the energy and pluck displayed by their Government in the Hayti affair. The facts of the case as impartially summarized by the *Beacon*, of Boston, which, though anti-Democratic, defends the action of Secretary Bayard in the affair, are:

an insurrection and revolution in Hayti; a declaration of blockade by the Government; the transport of armed men from one Haytian port to another by a merchant steamship of the United States; and the seizure of that vessel by the Haytians. On the failure of the Haytian authorities to restore the vessel on demand, followed the despatch of United States warships, the entrance of one in belligerent style into the harbour of Port au Prince, and the surrender of the captured vessel under the compulsion of shotted guns and men at quarters. Technically the United States was right. There was no efficient blockade as required by the law of nations, and the merchant vessel transgressed no international code. Her seizure was therefore illegal. On the other hand, as the *Beacon* admits, the captain and officers of the seized vessel can deny that they knew they were carrying armed insurgents only at the expense of their reputation for intelligence. The prestige of the the United States would hardly have suffered in the eyes of the nations, and its finances would probably have sustained the shock, had it waited until the little trouble in Hayti was over and a settled Government again in charge. To an anticipated view of this kind the *Beacon* sneeringly replies, "We may even find that our performance seems, to Englishmen, whose Government so scrupulously respects the rights of small and weak nations, to have been harsh and cruel. We must try to bear up under their reproaches, and, while being duly ashamed of our conduct toward Hayti, learn to appreciate the philanthropic sentiments which control the governments of Europe in their scramble for territory in Africa and in the islands of the Pacific." But then should it not have been a part of the mission of the freest and most democratic nation under the sun to set such an example of forbearance and magnanimity before the Old World despotisms as would have humiliated them by contrast? Whereas now it is the little negro Republic which complains bitterly of having been humiliated.

DURING the current month a series of events of no little importance will take place in England, in the election of the county councils, which are to commence in April to work under the new Local Government Act. The Act is, it is true, not so much an innovation as the extension of a system already in use. Country places are henceforth to have elected councils, as towns already have. The elections and the proceedings are to be similar to those of the town councils. The county councils, which may average about eighty members each, will have very considerable powers. To them will pertain the administrative business hitherto done by magistrates in quarter session. They will have the making and levying of rates, borrowing of money when needed, the erection and maintenance of public buildings, the management of lunatics, appointment of coroners, payment of compensation for injuries by rioters, power over bridges, roads and footpaths, granting of licenses for music and dancing, the alteration of the areas of poor law unions, and many other important functions mentioned in the Act. The county police force is to be under the control of joint committees of the county councils and justices of the peace. The provision of the Act which is viewed with most suspicion by the more democratic is that which makes it the duty of each council, immediately on its organization, to choose a certain number of aldermen, who are to hold office for six years, while the elected members themselves retire at the end of three years. Some of the papers are already warning their readers that this part of the arrangement will require serious watching, else it may be made the means of placing great power in the hands of the local clergy and squirearchy, both parsons and peers being eligible for aldermanic honours. But the burning question at the forthcoming election will relate to the matter of licenses, the proposed control of these having been withdrawn from the county councils, when it was found inexpedient or impossible to carry the compensation clauses of the original Bill through Parliament. The publicans will naturally feel that their fate in the future will be to a large extent in the hands of the councils, and will be likely to bring their full influence to bear to secure councillors favourable to their views.

IT is so far satisfactory to find that the responsible representatives of the English East Africa Company are prompt and emphatic in their denial of the charge of complicity in slavery on the part of the agents of the company in Zanzibar. The matter is one in regard to which public opinion in England and throughout the British Empire is, we are proud to know, extremely sensitive. It is unfortunate for the Company that public suspicion should have been aroused. Nothing but the clearest proof of inno-