

Now that the English Parliament is in session and all grievances have a chance of an airing, how does it come to pass that Mr. Parnell is still vapouring away on this continent? The place for this great patriot is in the House at St. Stephen's, for he has found by this time that the people of the United States are blessed with a practical turn of mind, which will not allow them to waste their talk and money about an agitation in which they have no interest. Perhaps Mr. Parnell is not in a hurry to go back; it will be awkward for him if he should be asked to repeat, or apologise for, the peculiar bit of history he gave anent Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough.

This from *The World* differs somewhat from the teachings of Mr. Parnell on the same point:—

"All honour to the Duchess of Marlborough for the immense personal trouble she is taking, not only for the society of Dublin, but for the poor of the whole country. She attends the meetings of the committee herself; and her whole mornings, after late night entertainments, are taken up with answering letters and attending to cases applying for relief. At a meeting held at the Castle on Thursday, it was proposed to devote a certain portion of the money subscribed to the Relief Fund to a separate Seed Fund. It is feared that potatoes given now for seed will be all eaten; and that, if such is the case, the result will be worse famine another year. The loss from the potato crop this year in Ireland is said to be, by statistical proofs, five million and three-quarters pounds sterling."

And the following from the same journal is reassuring, if not very cheering to the friends of temperance:—

"Whatever the general distress in Ireland may be, there is still one bright spot,—the consumption of whisky has not fallen off. A friend of mine, who is on a mission in the west of Ireland, finds it somewhat difficult to respond to the hospitality shown him by the kind-hearted priests in that locality. As he expresses it, 'They all expect you to drink with them, and straight too; and if you don't, they all look on you as a very doubtful spalpeen.' This reminds me of an Irish Home Rule candidate, who, returning one night from a hard day's canvassing, overheard his car-driver say, 'I'm shure he'll git in; he's lift thirteen prastes dhrunk behind him, and niver a feather on himself.'"

It is indeed a pity that philanthropy cannot in these days be separated from sectionalism. A fierce party spirit seems to govern in all civilized nations, and almost every kind of institution is used as an instrument for political purposes. The Archbishop of Paris is President of the French Committee for the relief of Irish distress. The Committee has issued a formal declaration to the effect that it will observe strict neutrality on all questions which divide parties in Ireland, and will discard political pre-occupations of every kind; but, the protest notwithstanding, out of forty-three names on the Committee there are but two or three which are not decidedly clerical. The significance of that is on the surface of the statement, and the result of it must be disastrous to the poor Irish sufferers. Between these upper and nether millstones of clericalism and political agitation they stand a chance of being ground to powder.

The Montreal *Star* undertook, a few days ago, to correct an American paper on the point of shades in Liverpool politics. The paper had stated that Liverpool had always been a Conservative borough, and that the defeat of Lord Ramsay was not a triumph for the Conservative party. Whereupon the *Star* read it a lecture upon the impropriety of writing about matters which it did not understand, and stating in amendment that Liverpool is strongly Liberal in politics. Before the *Star* turns mentor it should be a little better posted, for this time the American paper is right and the *Star* is wrong.

The truth is that Liverpool has been for long, and is now, a Conservative stronghold, and all that the Liberals could hope to do was to make a good fight. Lord Ramsay made a bid for the Irish vote, but he could not carry it as a whole. It is true that the city has an enormous Irish population, but some are Orangemen and others are Liberals, and the Orangemen in England are always Conservative, and the Liberals are only Liberals when they find that it suits their purpose. On the whole, considering the reduced Conservative majority, which was 3,500 for Lord Sandon as against Mr. Rathbone at the last general elections, but only 2,221 for Mr. Whitely as against Lord Ramsay in the late by-election, it was a victory for the Liberals.

"The Board of Trade returns for the month of January must remove the last doubts of the most sceptical as to the reality of the great trade-revival which has been in progress for five months. Rarely have we the opportunity of witnessing a movement so sharply accentuated and exposed to so few variations as in this instance. Rarely have we seen 'a new departure' taken so suddenly, sustained so splendidly, and finally demonstrated so abundantly. No revival from depression—it had been said—was possible in the teeth of a deficient harvest. But in this case the bad harvest has neither delayed nor narrowed the tide of confidence and enterprise. Four months' trade-returns have borne uniform testimony to the magnitude of the change. There has been an increase in the exports of last month over the corresponding month of 1879 of close upon three millions sterling, while the growth in the imports is double that amount. Exports are a better test of expansion than imports at a time like the present, when short supplies of food-stuffs at home have necessitated a very large extra import from abroad. The most prominent increase under the head of exports is still in iron and steel, the amount of which is more than double what it was last year—275,970 as against 128,318 tons. A proof that our home-trade has been generally stimulated is supplied in the announcement just made by the London and North-Western Railway Company that they will immediately begin full time at their works at Crewe, which employ more than 5,000 hands, and which have been on short time for fifteen months. To a like effect is the testimony of the railway-traffic receipts, which do not appear to have been affected by the terrible weather of the last fortnight, even the passenger traffics being well maintained. Last week the advance on the London and North-Western upon the corresponding week of 1879 was £20,000, and that of the North-Eastern £15,700. Figures like these and good dividends have taken up market-values and encouraged speculation. The market was surprised by the Midland dividend—6¼ against 5¾ per cent. last year—and the announcement sent all railways 'booming' again, to use Brother Jonathan's latest slang. Doubtless it will be found that the Midland, like the North-Eastern, has been exceptionally benefitted by sales of old stores, for which, in the advancing market, high prices have been obtained. It would be unwise, then, for investors to infer that further advances in dividends are likely, because there is not much probability of a repetition of such 'windfalls'; and although traffics are increasing and seem likely to increase, the heavier the traffic the larger the working expenses. Everything still points to early enhancement of the value of money. There has been, since we last wrote, an advance of fully one-half per cent. in rates; and the same influences that have caused this continue steadily at work. It is not to be regretted that money should become dearer; on the contrary, it shows that a healthier state of things begins to prevail. There is still an immense supply of capital available, as may be judged from the fact that the South Australian loan for £3,294,600 was tendered for nearly five times over last week, the tenders amounting to £14,995,700. Masses of money will be taken from the market by this loan, the New York Central and the Prussian Four Per Cents syndicates' operations, and the growth of enterprise will steadily operate in the same direction. In the process of action and reaction, demand and supply, expanding credit will, in the absence of any untoward incidents, sustain the confidence which will ultimately overcome any temporary depression likely to be induced by advancing rates."

The foregoing paragraph is from an English paper, and may be taken as an indication of the hopefulness based upon ascertained facts, which now inspires the mercantile community of England. Whether the National Policy has done anything for us or not, it is certain that we must share in the returning prosperity. We have passed through times of most dreadful depression, but in all Europe and in all America there are signs of trade revival, and Canada cannot help but get some share of it.

I do not see why the demand for a commission to enquire into the affairs of Ireland should be so determinately ignored. It seems to me that the editor of *Truth* is perfectly right when he says:—

"'We do not,' say the Irish, 'ask you to pledge yourself to any particular course; all we assert is that the state of Ireland is unsatisfactory, and we ask