

interest are, coffee, hides and sugar. We have already admitted the two first articles free, and we are taking Brazilian sugar to more than double the amount of our exports to that country.

Mr. Burns, one of the deputation, pointed out the necessity of taking care that Brazil "should not adopt a policy 'towards Canada that it had adopted 'against the United States? namely, taking off import duties but substituting export duties." Is it conceivable that Mr. Burns or the members of the deputation can imagine that the Brazilian Government will confer advantages on Canada that are not granted to the United States. The idea is simply absurd. All that Canada can reasonably expect is that Brazil will not discriminate against us, as our dearly beloved France persists in doing. We have no complaint whatever against Brazil, and there is not the slightest ground for Sir Leonard Tilley making any effort to procure a reduction of duties which fall exclusively on the Brazilian consumer. As to the export duties, the object, doubtless, of imposing them is to obtain contributions from the coffee, sugar and cotton planters, which cannot be procured in a more feasible way. Such duties have been imposed in some of the British Colonies in order to recoup the treasury for the cost of immigration, while in other colonies a direct contribution for the same object is obtained from the planters.

The proposition of the deputation embodied in Dr. Fortin's statement is so vague that we have not deemed it necessary to discuss the grave constitutional question which would most assuredly be raised if Canada were to attempt to discriminate in favor of a foreign country like Brazil against the British Colonies in the West Indies. It would be the plain duty of the Imperial Government to protect the dependencies of the Empire from any such outrage as that which Dr. Fortin's language seems to convey. It is moreover highly improbable that Great Britain would consent to the establishment of discriminating duties against the Spanish colonies which it is highly probable would be contravening the treaty obligations of the Empire. It is well-known that when the commissioners visited the West Indies and Brazil in 1866 the Board of trade felt it right "to call attention to 'the difficulties which may arise, with 'respect to foreign countries, having 'reciprocity treaties with this country, if 'any colony or colonies should make 'arrangements for giving to one foreign 'country advantages which are not given 'to others.'" We have on more than one occasion, in commenting on the absurd

claim that Canada should be permitted to negotiate commercial treaties, pointed out that there is no object whatever to be gained by entering into commercial treaties, except the few cases, such as France, where there has been discrimination established against her, and in those cases the remedy is in our own hands. We have suffered and are suffering from the grossest mismanagement of a thoroughly good case.

THE ONTARIO ELECTION.

The result of the Ontario general election, which took place on the 27th ult., is to give the Mowat Government a decided majority, although by no means so large as in the last Legislature. It is difficult to understand how the election can be looked on as a Conservative triumph, looking to the fact that at the recent Dominion election Ontario gave a Conservative majority. Both of the political parties put forth all their efforts, and the Conservative members of the Dominion Parliament threw themselves heartily into the contest. Just at the last moment Mr. Dalton McCarthy raised a new point in reference to the arbitration. The day prior to that fixed by the arbitration both Governments, doubtless by agreement, passed formal orders in Council appointing the arbitrators, and pledging themselves to abide by the award. Such a step would hardly have been deemed necessary elsewhere, as the fact that the arbitration had been agreed to and the arbitrators named would have been considered binding by men of honor. Mr. McCarthy endeavored to persuade his audience at a public meeting that until these formal minutes had been adopted the arbitrators had not considered the subject, and that in point of fact they gave a hasty decision without proper examination of the evidence. It is notorious that Mr. Chief Justice Harrison had been appointed, possibly by a letter from the Secretary, by command of the Lieutenant-Governor, many months before the arbitrators met, and that he had had in his possession all the evidence, including the cases prepared by the respective counsel, from the date of his appointment.

The antagonism between the Dominion Government and that of the most important Province is a serious calamity, and we fear augurs badly for the harmonious continuance of Confederation. The most singular circumstance connected with the controversy is that the representation of the Province, which of all others has the greatest interest in maintaining

Provincial autonomy, is the one which has been most prominent in interfering with the constitutional rights of Ontario. The time will most assuredly come, although just at present it seems likely to be distant, when the people of the Province of Quebec will deeply regret the course which their present leaders have sanctioned.

THE TIMES AND THE TARIFF.

The above is the heading of a paragraph in the *Toronto Globe's* London letter of the 15th February, which contains a verbatim report of the *Times'* sarcastic reference to a recent speech delivered by Sir A. Galt at Liverpool. Referring to that speech the *Times* remarks that "ever since 1879, when the new tariff was imposed, Canada has been prosperous according to him, and we are asked to conclude from this that the tariff could not have done Canada any harm. Every one knows that in the autumn of 1879, trade all over the world, but especially in the United States, began steadily to recover from the depression which had lasted during the previous five years, and it was therefore rather daring in Sir Alexander to offer such a piece of pseudo-logic as this to a body like the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce. It will be interesting to see what Sir Alexander will have to say when the usual cyclic movement has come to an end and business is dull everywhere. Probably he will attribute the decrease of the prosperity of Canada to the fact that the present tariff is too low, and will again set to work with mistaken zeal to persuade the Canadians to add another row of bricks to the Chinese wall with which they have surrounded themselves."

We have frequently taken occasion to warn those who rely implicitly on a high tariff as a security for national prosperity that a much higher tariff than ours did not protect the United States from that depression which was generally felt throughout the world during the period referred to by the *Times*. The truth is that, whether the duties imposed on imports be high or low, uncontrollable circumstances will bring about periods of prosperity and of depression. We have little doubt that when the period of depression which we may expect before very long arrives, it will be imputed by the violent opponents of protection to the present tariff. While we think the remarks of the *Times* well worthy of thoughtful consideration we doubt much whether anything but practical experience will dispel the illusion which so generally prevails on the subject.