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### Comments on the Customs.



A QUEER IDEA OUT OF CLEVELAND'S HEAD.—In his letter of acceptance Mr. Cleveland says, "Unnecessary taxation is unjust taxation," and it is not likely he will say anything truer during the present campaign. But how funnily this idea must strike our own rulers, who regard unnecessary taxation as the source of the country's prosperity. If the unnecessary taxes were eliminated from the N.P., that hollow mockery would collapse and come to the ground quicker than Professor Williams' smoke-balloon ever did. It must also puzzle the Canadian Ministry to observe that Cleveland, in this and all his other utterances, is speaking as the champion of the people. The notion that the people have any particular rights in connection with taxation is one which must be new to Minister Foster and his colleagues, to judge by their fiscal performances. Injustice to the masses is altogether a secondary consideration at Ottawa. The

chief end of statesmanship down there is to make and keep things pleasant for the rings and combines, in the steadfast hope and expectation that they will reciprocate by "coming down handsomely" when election funds are wanted. To the people at large, including a decided majority of our legitimate manufacturers, "Protection" is robbery. To say that the system makes wages high or keeps them up is to lie, either wilfully or ignorantly. All it does is to make a few favored individuals richer by making all the rest of the people poorer. When a Government takes from the people

one dollar more than is necessary for the economical management of public affairs, it has ceased from its functions as a Government and gone into the business of highway robbery. This plain truth is finding its way to the brain of the people with great rapidity on the other side of the line just now, thanks to Cleveland's message, which turned the country into a debating society. Canadians are partaking of the benefit of the discussion, and we confidently await the day, soon to dawn, when Intelligence will reject the astounding superstition under which monopoly is now battering upon honest labor.

THE NEW N.P. FOR CANADA.—Mr. R. W. Phipps is one of those who have already seen a ray of light on this subject. The complications likely to arise out of the Fishery Question set him a-thinking, and in a letter to the London *Times* he recently suggested that free trade between Canada and the United States would not only avert future evils, but would prove a highly beneficial thing in every way to both countries. It is something when a Protectionist of Mr. Phipps' standing so plainly discerns the truth that prosperity is to be found in the direction of freedom—not in restriction. Common sense emphatically endorses this dictum, but common sense and Protectionism have nothing in common. Mr. Phipps still clings to the fetich so far as trade with the world beyond this continent is concerned, though it would overtax his admitted powers, we opine, to show why free trade with the world would be evil if free trade with the United States would be good.

VERSE for a ballad for young lady vocalist, suggested by some of the selections rendered at the Agremonte concert :

Oh, kissie, kissie, sweetie sweet,  
 Oh, moonlight love, oh, turtle dove.  
 Oh, love loves love when lovers meet,  
 Oh, yum, yum, kisses—heavens above !

\* \* \*



OR some days past we have been awaiting with breathless anxiety the deliverance of the *Empire* on the case of Mr. Sol White, ex-M.P.P. for Essex, but "he cometh not, she said." Mr. White is a true-blue Conservative, who has for a long time been a shining light of the party in the Western Peninsula, and now that he has declared flatly, squarely and roundly for Political Union with the United States, it seems to us that a few words of comment in the way of gently lifting his scalp from his devoted head would be in order, if the *Empire* and other Conserva-

tive organs wish to keep up their reputation for loyalty. They have never had a fairer chance, and a few black dabs of ink would show up well on a White subject. Perhaps, however, when the ex-member delivers the lecture he proposes to give on Annexation something scathing can be run into the local notice. Meantime the silence of the organs must be attributed to the fact that they are dumb with amazement that Mr. White has never been a Grit.

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IT would appear that one of our Canadian judges has for more than half a century been carrying on the Jekyll and Hyde scheme. While he posed before the public as a respectable member of the bar and bench, he has in reality all this time been—a poet ! The fact has leaked out in the preface to a poem which the learned author has just published anonymously and for private distribution only—a little thing he wrote about fifty years ago, and a decidedly good and brilliant thing, too, to judge by the extracts printed in last Friday's *Mail*. The reviewer of that journal attributes the eccentric conduct