

of everything like manly truthfulness and a real care for the suffering poor of Ireland since the day he landed in New York. It has rarely been the evil fortune of a public man to work his way into the contempt of the public so quickly as Mr. Parnell has done. It is his own fault entirely. He has played the *role* of an agitator, has maligned the living and the dead, has flung criminations about in a reckless and vulgar fashion and forfeited the confidence of all reasonable people. He will receive welcome of a kind in Canada, but enthusiasm about him there is none. Nothing that he can now do or say will help him back to public favour.

M. Girouard's bill for the legalisation of marriage with a deceased wife's sister ought in all reason to be accepted. Why the English House of Lords should have been so determinedly opposed to it is a riddle to everybody outside the sacred precincts of Conservative ecclesiasticism. The bishops have an idea that they are bound to uphold all the laws and precepts which once pertained to Judaism. Anyone who has looked into the matter knows that the laws on the question contained in Leviticus have no bearing whatever upon the subject in these days. The Mosaic law relates to primeval marriage and regulates representation in the tribe. It never contemplates individual immortality in another world, only the perpetuation of the tribe. But if in this matter England is pledged to antique legislation, surely Canada need not also bind herself to what is so manifestly unreasonable. It is a practical question, and should be dealt with apart from mere sentiment. The interest of large numbers of children clearly demands that M. Girouard's bill be accepted by Parliament.

A certain Mr. Wharton Barker, of Philadelphia, has written a letter to the Hon. George Brown in order to convey, as he says, "my deep sense of the need of a permanent and satisfactory adjustment of the commercial relations between your country and our own." It may be a good and valuable thing to get Mr. Barker's "deep sense" put into words, but it will occur to many to ask, Who is Mr. Barker? Whom does he represent? Why did he address Mr. Brown in particular? and did he or Mr. Brown, or some other man, get the letter printed and distributed throughout Canada? A letter in the Montreal *Herald* tells that he—Mr. Barker—"is one of the Executive of the International League of the United States, and a member of a large banking firm in Philadelphia." The latter is quite thinkable—even believable; but what is the International League of the United States? It may be that I shall appear to my readers as being profoundly ignorant of the leading institutions and men of the United States, but here is the honest confession: I never heard of this League of which Mr. Barker is so eminent a member. The proposals contained in the letter are so good and fair that one would like to know whether they may be taken as representing the opinion of any very considerable number of the influential men of the United States.

Mr. Barker argues a renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty out of court as being impossible, and boldly declares for "a commercial union of the Dominion and the United States." Not a word of argument is needed, on the part of Canadians, to prove that such a union is the very thing of all others needed. Its advantages to the Dominion are so obvious, and the demand for it is so general, that American orators and letter-writers need waste no time in attempting to show us the benefits which Canada would derive from such an arrangement. The only question is, Will the States consent to it? We have asked and asked again, and can hardly be expected to ask once more, until there is reasonable prospect of getting a favourable answer. If we have lost confidence in the Government of the United States, that Government has itself to blame. We know that it may promise and never fulfil. The Legislature may say Yes, and the President ditto, and the Senate say a decisive No. The Government of Great Britain is understandable; when committed to a bargain with an outside party it may be depended upon for an honourable consummation. But in the United States there are so many grades of authority, and there is an unreliable supreme power, that we never can know when a matter is finally settled.

The Rev. Mr. Webster saw a ghost—or thought he did—which for his purposes amounted to about the same thing. Said ghost was moderately reasonable—for the second and third times it appeared at about the same hour, and sent forward certain premonitions of its appearance which the reverend watcher could not mistake. A little difficulty arose from the fact that the visitor from the spirit-land could only communicate its thoughts by means of signs in Greek—though why a spirit should make signs in Greek rather than in Latin or French or English is not very apparent; but the clerical awakist was equal to the emergency, and read off an unutterable message. That was the pity of it. The ghost was not reasonable. If it had said something which might be said again, by way of revelation, Mr. Webster might have had, at least, one large and paying audience. But an unrevealable communication is not worth very much in these days, and the sooner Mr. Webster gets back to his ordinary work and gives up the habit of taking supper the better for himself and friends. The audience of forty or fifty which greeted him at Montreal was not at all encouraging.

The matter of the leadership of the Liberals appears to be left in abeyance for a time. Mr. Mackenzie is nominally at the head of the Opposition, but Mr. Blake is in reality the mouthpiece of the party. A short time now must decide which of the two shall be first in name as well as in power. Nature and culture have already determined that Mr. Mackenzie must be second in any assembly where Mr. Blake has a seat; but, in trusting themselves to the leadership of Mr. Blake, the rank and file, as well as the prominent members of his party, feel that they may be called upon at any moment to support some most insupportable vagaries. He is a *doctrinaire*; a man with an unworkable policy; a man who will not allow himself to be influenced by any low and sordid motives, but is wanting in power to hold himself in calmness and make the best of things.

It is a pity that Mr. Blake is committed to our disastrous railway policy. A strong man at the head of the Liberal party in the House and the country, taking a firm, bold stand against the expenditure of more than a hundred millions for merely political purposes, would command a great and influential following. No one seems to know the why or the wherefore of this Pacific Railway—except that it will be a magnificent thing to have direct communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific—and the trade with China and Japan may amount to something more by and by—and there are fifteen thousand white settlers in British Columbia—but when the question is put, When will it pay?—is it an undertaking which can be justified upon anything like sound commercial principles?—can we afford this political luxury?—there is no answer but a shrug of the shoulders, or some equally deprecatory gesture. Had the Liberals been endowed with sufficient courage and common sense to renounce the whole mad-cap scheme on taking office, instead of being now a small, dispirited party, with a divided head, a lean body, and a broken tail, it would be, at least, a powerful Opposition, with a good deal down to its credit for having saved the Dominion from surrendering its commercial prosperity to a merely political policy. Perhaps it is not even yet too late, and if Mr. Blake could induce his party to reconsider their position, as to this railway matter, and repudiate it, so far as building it to British Columbia is concerned, they will regain their hold upon the respect and confidence of a large portion of the community.

The Witenagemote of Ontario are about to disperse. Why they did not do so earlier would puzzle any one outside the Assembly to discover. They have essayed the usual amount of political midwifery, and if the Provincial bantling is not a very handsome child, he is as good looking as his senior brothers. Two months have elapsed since the Provincial powder announced the presence of that forthfetched symbol of Royalty—the Lieutenant-Governor—in the Legislative Halls. He could not speak, because forsooth, they the Witenagemote had not elected a Speaker. He warned them of this great omission and retired. Then his faithful Commons—or what stands for a Commons—in order to preserve the British Constitution, did elect a Speaker who on the following day, made his obeisance to the Provincial king,