

The Week.

AN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL OF POLITICS, SOCIETY, AND LITERATURE.

TERMS:—One year, \$3.00; eight months, \$2.00; four months, \$1.00. Subscriptions payable in advance.

ADVERTISEMENTS, unexceptionable in character and limited in number, will be taken at \$1 per line per annum; \$2.50 per line for six months; \$1.50 per line for three months; 20 cents per line per insertion for a shorter period.

Subscribers in Great Britain and Ireland supplied, postage pre paid, on terms following:—One year, 12s. 6d.; half-year, 6s. 6d. Remittances by P. O. order or draft should be made payable and addressed to the Publisher.

All advertisements will be set up in such style as to insure THE WEEK's tasteful typographical appearance, and enhance the value of the advertising in its columns. No advertisement charged less than FIVE lines. Address—T. R. CLOUGHIER, Business Manager, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto. C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Publisher.

WITHOUT doubt, French-Canadian Separatism is a factor that makes most strongly against the welding of the several provinces of the Dominion into a nation. The Province of Quebec is a wedge between the Maritime Provinces and Western Canada, splitting them asunder. For it is a foreign province having laws and institutions peculiar to itself, the seat of a people speaking another tongue, who pride themselves, not on being British citizens or citizens of the Confederation, but on being scions of old Christian France, implanted and growing into a new France on American soil. The Province of Quebec is their country, not the Dominion of Canada; though it is probable they will continue to lend support to the Confederation while it in turn affords shelter to their growth as a nation, or does not run contrary to any national aspiration. But is such an union, in which a foreign people that regards its fellow provincials as "neighbours" only, with whom it is, indeed, "its duty to live in harmony," but against whom and the Power to which both owe allegiance, in every question arising between the mother countries of the two peoples it invariably and naturally sides with France, a foreign Power to the rest of Canada,—is a political union of this character a likely basis for the erection of a nation, one in heart and aim?

As Mr. Goldwin Smith justly remarks in his letter to the *Mail*, the parallel sometimes drawn between the present case and the obstacles which the American Confederation encountered and overcame in its early stage is a false one. The whole eastern seaboard of the Union was not, as is the case with Canada, cut off by the district inhabited by its alien population; and the rest of the Union was not, as is again the case with Canada, divided into three other naturally independent districts by geographic features as strongly marked as the ethnographic obstacle to unity in the East. But though Manitoba and the Northwest are cut off from Ontario on the one hand by the wastes of Lake Superior, and from British Columbia on the other hand by the Rockies, while all three districts are in close and natural connection with the United States to the south, this geographical obstacle to the consolidation of the Dominion, being already in part overcome by the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, may not in the long run prove so serious an obstacle as the existence in our very midst of a nationality hostile to Anglo-Saxondom. The United States undoubtedly have an attractive power over the separated Provinces, and therefore a retarding and to some extent a disintegrating power; but the influence of Quebec cannot but prove destructive sooner or later, unless its current can be diverted to the good of the whole.

In pursuing this "national" policy, the French-Canadians are making themselves a power indeed, but a power which will not be allowed to continue, imbedded like a thorn in the flesh of this Anglo-Saxon continent. Fostered by the protection of British laws, French-Canada has grown strong; but she is hardly as robust as her sons imagine. If the protection of those laws were withdrawn, the fabric of French institutions and ideas, now flourishing under special privileges accorded by treaty, would be overwhelmed by a Power under no obligation to continue those privileges, and the flood of Anglo-Saxondom rushing in would sweep away everything hostile to Saxon ideas. The establishment of a Latin nationality, especially in the very heart of North America, would not be brooked patiently by the disciples of the Munro doctrine. This, it is probable, the better informed among the French-Canadians are well aware of; they know, at any rate, that while French institutions are safe under the British ægis, all beyond that is a "misted sea." We may therefore expect that for the present they will strenuously hold by the British connexion; which, however, does not insure the continued duration of the Confederation. The British Provinces are likely to grow at least *pari passu* with the French, and being already some three to one in population, they will probably settle matters as suits them best, when they see fit.

THE objection we would urge most strongly against Commercial Union—an objection which we believe will condemn it with nine-tenths of its present friends, so soon as they realise the fact—is that necessarily, and there seems no escape from this effect, any such arrangement must reduce

this country to the position of a subsidised semi-dependency of the United States. If our present political connexion continued, we should owe allegiance to Great Britain, and yet be as dependent on the United States in fiscal matters as the Province of Quebec is on the Government at Ottawa. We should retain the right of direct taxation, as the Provinces do; but our power over the tariff would be more a matter of appearance than of fact—would, indeed, be in reality no greater than that of the Provinces. To obtain Commercial Union Canada must agree to accept the tax laws of the United States. That is certain, we believe: there is no probability of their moving a hair's-breadth towards the adoption of Canadian tax laws. Nor would it be reasonable to expect them to alter their fiscal system in order to conform to so relatively an unimportant system as ours. They would probably agree to give us representation in some shape; but that must be based on population, and what would be the value of one vote against fifteen, which would be the relative weight of the two parties? What influence has any single State in the Union, of the size of Canada, over the taxation of the whole country? "Rep. by Pop." in this instance—the participation by Canada in the framing of a common tariff for the two countries—would be purely illusory. Our tariff and tax laws would be made for us by the majority of the American Congress.

WE are reminded that "the question has been often asked, and never answered, On what ground, if partial reciprocity showed no tendency to impair nationality, we should expect complete reciprocity to destroy it?" Well, we concede freely that if "all import duties were abolished, and the whole revenue were raised by direct taxation," the increase of commercial intercourse resulting from complete reciprocity would no more "threaten the integrity of the nation," than would "an increase of social, religious, philanthropic, or intellectual intercourse." But surely the conditions of the proposed Commercial Union—a high protective system obtaining—are so widely different from the state of things imagined in this proposition that the illustration is utterly inappropriate and useless. Complete reciprocity is, it is true, an extension of the principle of partial reciprocity; but the extension goes so far that it brings into the problem a wholly new condition, which though of vital importance, the Commercial Unionists apparently cannot or will not perceive. Partial reciprocity involves no interference with the legislative control over the public revenue belonging to the Dominion Parliament, except as regards taxes on the articles included in the reciprocity treaty; but complete reciprocity, under a treaty of Commercial Union, involves the surrender by the Dominion Parliament to the American Congress—(for that is what it comes to in the end, whatever mixed representative body intervene)—of the right to tax the Canadian people. The Dominion Parliament would in fact in this case abdicate a function deprived of which the Legislature of a commercial country like Canada would be a quite superfluous piece of governmental machinery, the power, namely, to regulate taxation and to raise such public revenue as may be needed in the progressive growth of the nation. No Sovereign Power can divest itself of this prerogative and still remain sovereign: even if itself agree to surrender it in exchange for a fixed sum yearly, it sinks to the rank of a subsidised province; and the Power which acquires the right to levy taxes in return for the payment of such a subsidy, exercises a real sovereignty which, however it may be veiled, will on occasion prove that it has not merely "impaired" but wholly devoured the nationality of its victim.

THE reins of Protection would seem to have passed from the hands of the manufacturers in the States into the hands of Labour. Six English weavers, landed at New York *en route* for a manufacturing establishment at Bridgeport, Connecticut, for whose service they had been imported, were ordered back to England on the ground that they had come over in violation of the Contract Labour Law. What would American labour say to the throwing open of the American labour market to Canadian workmen under Commercial Union (for we suppose labour is to be exchanged as well as commodities)? Or would it consent to repeal the Contract Labour Law at the request of the manufacturers? This incident does not look like it.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Nation* regards Commercial Union as likely to be useful as an object-lesson in political economy. There can be no question, he thinks, that Commercial Union would be a great boon to American protected manufacturers, as well as to the commercial and farming classes of both countries; and if the obliteration of the northern customs wall prove a good thing, why not destroy the southern wall, which shuts the States off from Mexico? And finally, he asks, when American manufacturers discover that new markets and increased orders wait upon the removal of obstructive tariffs, will they not have Free Trade? But