

will be found. Our North-West, as its agriculture develops, will be a powerful factor in the supply of the deficiency for which some European countries have to provide.

The apparently triumphal march of Mr. Howard Vincent through Canada must not be understood as showing, on the trade question, the deliberate opinion of the country, though he is under some temptation to regard it as such, and so to represent it on his return to England. The meetings which he held were just such meetings as Mr. Wiman has before now held in favor of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. But the country is neither in favor of the discrimination urged by the United Empire League nor that suggested by Mr. Wiman. Mr. Vincent has been allowed to have his way, because he did not specially run counter to any political party, and because his movements were not considered of sufficient importance to render necessary a counter movement to try their strength or demonstrate their weakness.

GIFTS TO MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT CONDEMNED.

One practical result of the enquiry into charges of corruption in connection with the Government departments at Ottawa, is that henceforth gifts to Ministers will be forbidden. The House of Commons has declared unanimously that they must cease. The motion made by Sir Richard Cartwright was seconded by Sir John Thompson, and there was not a dissentient voice. The mover very properly stated that he did not intend to make the issue one of want of confidence in the Government, and in this way he secured the success of his motion. The reasons why Parliament should declare its assent to the propriety of the inhibition are strong. There are many cases in which a Minister of the Crown, presiding over a department, has to give decisions which are as much judicial as executive; and so long as a Minister exercising such functions was at liberty to receive gifts professedly from admirers by way of testimonial of their good opinion, persons having or liable to have suits before him might be tempted to subscribe in the belief that their doing so would tend to secure a favorable judgment. The testimonial to Sir Hector Langevin was mainly furnished by persons of this description. Men of this kind are usually of no politics; they would as soon subscribe for a testimonial to a member of one political party as to that of another, their main object being to stand well with the department with which they have business. When gifts to Ministers are made by such persons, under such circumstances, they are no more defensible than were gifts received by Lord Bacon from suitors after judgment had been given. They are in fact worthy of greater condemnation, for in the time of Lord Bacon gifts to judicial functionaries were not uncommon, while in recent times they have been universally condemned. The inhibi-

tion of the House of Commons does not come a moment too soon. Why should it not have gone farther and included Members of Parliament? A Member of Parliament who is in opposition to-day may be in office to-morrow, and a gift to him from a contractor might be regarded as a retaining fee for future services. A victory for railway promoters or contractors, when a struggle for the control of a particular railway, for example, takes place in Parliament, may be gained in opposition to the wishes of the Government, and this has sometimes actually happened. Are Members of Parliament who, being in opposition to the Government, at liberty to take gifts for their services? The case is a practical, not an imaginary one, and the enquiry deserves an answer. An extension of the inhibition to Members of Parliament might seem hard in individual cases, such as that of a late Premier, Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, who has once, if not oftener, been the recipient of gifts from political admirers.

Whatever may be thought of such an extension of the inhibition, there are other things that will before long probably be forbidden to Members of Parliament. There is no rule which prevents Members of Parliament receiving grants of Crown lands and Crown timber. Even Members of Government may grant lands to themselves. This has often been done, both here and in England. In England, a grant of part of the Crown domain to individuals, has long been on an entirely different footing from similar grants in this country. In England, there was through many reigns, extending over centuries, a party, if such it could be called, who was desirous to confine the Crown revenue chiefly to the produce of the domain of the Crown, as a means of rendering the granting of subsidies unnecessary. Frequent complaints were made of the alienation of portions of the domain of the Crown, and several great Ministers were, at different times, impeached, and some of them executed for securing grants to themselves or their relatives. A jealousy of mere alienation of Crown lands could have no place in a country like Canada, where land is greatly in excess as compared with population and capital, and where to secure cultivation of portions of the Crown lands alienation is a pre-requisite. We have passed the time in our history when lavish grants of land made to Ministers of the Crown was a real abuse, and the necessity of stringent regulations or inhibitions has become much weaker than it was once. But it cannot be said that there is no longer any danger at all under this head. Grants of Crown timber to Members of Parliament is still a source of abuse, even if they sometimes take a circuitous route. It has been said in defence of such grants that Members of Parliament are citizens, entitled to equal rights with other citizens. But they are also trustees for the public, in which respect they differ from private citizens. Is a lumberman to cease to follow his occupation when he becomes a Member of Parliament? He leaves the walk of a private citizen by his own act, and if the two positions are incompatible, he must take the consequences. The incompati-

bility would cease or be greatly minimized if the purchase be obtained at public competition. But where the sales are made between the purchaser and the Minister, without competition, and the latter sets the price arbitrarily, and at a mere fraction of what the limit should bring at auction, there is room for grave abuse, and it cannot be denied that abuses can be found in recent administrative acts.

Will the acts to be forbidden stop here? If the stories told about the Red Parlor be true, is there not danger that legislation in favor of particular interests may be virtually, but in fact, bought and sold? Demands for legislation in favor of certain interests are discussed by Ministers with the parties interested. There is no objection to hearing what any claimant before the Government has to say; but there is an objection to arrangements being made in a way that precludes a rebuttal of the statements made in favor of individuals and special interests. If it could be proved that protection buys legislation, through the intervention of the Red Parlor or otherwise, and exacts repayment many fold from the public, an evil of the greatest magnitude, and one most difficult to cure, would have been revealed.

CANADIAN TRADE AND UNITED STATES RECIPROCAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The effect of Mr. Blaine's reciprocity arrangements with Spain, affecting Cuba, and with the South American republics, is considered by Nova Scotians, and not without reason, as menacing to Canadian trade with the countries mentioned. At a meeting of the Halifax Board of Trade, held last week, the Spanish treaty with the United States was discussed, and a resolution carried which asks the Dominion Government to request the good offices of the Imperial authorities towards making such arrangements as will neutralize or at least minimize the detriment which the treaty is likely to do to Canadian trade in the regions named. Such an arrangement is very desirable, if it be possible. This treaty admits the products of the United States into the Spanish islands of Cuba and Porto Rico free, or under preferential duties. The mover of the resolution, Mr. Boak, thinks that if England is not included in this treaty the trade between Canada and particularly the Maritime Provinces will be seriously handicapped, if not almost wiped out.

The Spanish American treaty will not necessarily affect our trade for nearly a year. Whether a new treaty can be made by Great Britain with Spain is doubtful. It is not likely that any such treaty can be made to include Canada, unless we are prepared to give a preference to Cuba as against non-treaty countries. We cannot of course discriminate against the British West Indies and hope to obtain any considerable share of their trade. Spain, if we are not mistaken, has already refused to renew the treaty with Great Britain, and this refusal is not likely to be reversed unless some new feature be introduced. The Maritime Provinces may rest assured