

cluded that if he permitted such public advocacy by one of his own officers, he could not escape responsibility for the act. The upshot was that Mr. Myers was asked to resign, and on his refusal to do so was dismissed from the office he held. This follows the precedent of 1849, when all public officers who signed the Montreal Annexation Manifesto were dismissed. By crying persecution, Mr. Myers claims a martyr's crown where no crown is due.

In denouncing "Republican protection as a fraud, a robbery of the great majority of the American people," the platform of the Democratic convention adopted at Chicago puts the trade issue squarely between the two parties. The platform also raises the constitutional point that Congress has no power to enact a tariff for any other than revenue purposes. This question, always open, is not likely to be settled by the Presidential election, though the question of the tariff, apart from the constitutionality point, will be. The silver problem is slurred over, after the style of the Republican platform. The ground is taken that gold and silver shall both be treated as of equal value in the payment of debts, but the necessity for equal intrinsic values is not admitted. An amendment in favor of "free coinage of gold and silver to be of equal intrinsic and exchangeable values" was voted down. Free coinage was objectionable, but equal intrinsic value of the two metals used to pay debts is a necessary part of an honest currency. The Presidential election will not settle the silver question in a way to remove the danger which depreciated silver occasions, and whoever the next President may be he will be expected to throw his influence on the wrong side.

#### THE NEW TAXES IN QUEBEC.

Direct taxation has come at last to Quebec, in forms which reach every kind of trade and real estate, where the latter is sold, transferred, assigned or exchanged in quantities above the value of \$5,000. This exception of amounts not exceeding the value of \$5,000 is the road prepared to enable the *habitant* to escape the new Provincial burdens. In this way, popular approbation of the new taxes is to be obtained, or at least popular condemnation of them averted. The farmer will look on the new imposts, which he will have the pleasure of seeing others pay, with a great deal of satisfaction. This is the weak point in the measure. And yet the exemption, regard being had to the circumstances, is not wholly unreasonable: the cultivator pays so much to the Church that he has very little left for the State. In Ontario, the death tax exemption is fixed at twice the Quebec figure, but in both cases the effect if not the object is the same.

The taxes on real estate have the same effect as would have the revival of the mutation fine (*lods et ventes*), which was an incident of the feudal tenure, the extinction of which cost the country a large sum, in the form of a Parliamentary appropriation. In the mode of the levy they will

not be distinguishable from the taxes on registration, which have long existed in some European countries, but which have never been extended to Great Britain. The registrars will be the collectors, in most, perhaps in all cases. When on a change of owners, the property goes to the nearest of blood relations, the tax will not be less than one per cent.; it will increase with remoteness of consanguinity up to the maximum of 8 per cent., and to 10 per cent. when the property goes to a stranger. Gifts for charitable purposes, far from being exempt, will pay the highest taxes. This is a wise and just provision. Roman Catholic Quebec has probably learnt the necessity of putting a check on donations of this kind. Protestant Ontario has of late been seized with a controlling enthusiasm to set up all sorts of costly charities, not seeing the latent danger which lurks in the movement and which is sure to be developed as time rolls on. The universal effect of such a policy is to add immensely to the evils which it is sought to cure.

The revival of the old mutation fine, in the form of a tax on registration, will come at irregular periods, once in a lifetime, as a minimum, and as often as the property may change owners. Traders and manufacturers will be subjected to an annual tax. An individual manufacturer will pay according to his capital, at the rate of \$50 on \$50,000, \$100 on any excess of \$50,000, and \$150 on a capital exceeding \$100,000. It seems doubtful from the wording of the resolutions, whether additional amounts of capital will be charged at these rates. This will operate as a balance against bonuses and an antidote to protection. How far we are from putting all taxes on land, as some Socialists propose, may be seen from the fact that neither Government ventures to touch a hair of the farmer's head. Tobacco and cigar manufacturers will be required to pay a license fee estimated on their rental: \$100 when the rent is \$300 or under, and graduating up to \$500 on a rental which exceeds \$800. Trade will be universally taxed in the form of license fees. The pettiest trader in the smallest hamlet will have to pay \$10 a year. The scale of payment accords with the size of the place. In cities or towns, other than Montreal and Quebec, where the population exceeds 5,000, the license fee will be \$20 a year. In Montreal the wholesale trader will pay \$100; in Quebec, \$80; in other towns and cities having a population of more than 5,000, \$50; in other places, \$30. A retailer in Montreal will pay according to rental: \$30 on a rental under \$400 a year, \$40 on a rental over \$600, \$60 on a rental varying between \$600 and \$1,000, \$80 on a rental of more than \$1,000. In Quebec the scale is lower: \$20 on a rental up to \$400, \$25 on a rental between \$400 and \$600, \$30 on a rental of over \$1,000. Obviously, these figures are framed with the notion of making those pay who can.

Nothing would be easier than to take exception and point objections to these taxes; but it is necessary to raise the money in some form, and if anything better or less objectionable can be substituted,

it will probably be suggested in the discussion to which the measure must be subjected in the Legislature.

#### PRESIDENT HARRISON'S CANADIAN MESSAGE.

At length President Harrison's so-called retaliation manifesto has been sent to Congress. The ground is taken that the rebate of Welland Canal tolls allowed by Canada to vessels which afterwards proceed to Montreal, but denied to such as go to an American port, is characterized as discrimination against the United States, and in direct violation of Article 27 of the Treaty of Washington. But the President does not point out any specific mode of retaliation. He states the facts and interprets the treaty from the American point of view, and concludes that it would seem appropriate that "Congress, if the view held by the Executive is approved, should with deliberation and yet with promptness, take such steps as may be necessary to secure the just rights of our citizens." But he leaves it open to Canada to send to Washington a further communication on the subject, which, if forwarded within the time suggested, he thinks, will undoubtedly anticipate any final action by Congress. It is evident, therefore, that the President does not regard the matter beyond accommodation.

It is clear that there has been some misunderstanding on the subject. It is unfortunate when the representatives of two nations differ about facts with which they have dealt, and it is especially so when their recollections or understanding about what was agreed upon are totally at variance. Mr. Blaine and Mr. J. W. Foster affirm that "it was understood that the Canadian commissioners, who were members of the cabinet, would see to the withdrawal of this discrimination." But the Canadian commissioners did not understand anything of the kind. What they understood was that they would see that the complaint made by the United States should be taken into consideration by the cabinet of Ottawa. If a definite conclusion had been reached on so important a matter, it ought to have been reduced to writing; from the neglect of this precaution the misunderstanding has arisen. The natural explanation is that the misunderstanding alleged is real; that one party received one impression from what was said, and the other another, and that there was neither bad faith nor misrepresentation on either side.

The question, What will be done? remains to be answered. The canal policy of Canada was deliberately adopted, in the belief that it did not conflict with the Treaty of Washington, and that opinion, so far as we know, is still officially maintained by the Ottawa cabinet. If the Americans were so sure of their rights, it is remarkable that they permitted them to remain in abeyance for years. The facts suggest that, in their own minds, the alleged discrimination was not in undoubted conflict with the provisions of the treaty. A case of this kind calls for impartial interpretation of the instru-