

the great chasm between the 110,000 or 120,000 white settlers now in the Northwest and the half million that a sanguine politician may think ought to have now been there. Or, to use another illustration, one might have a strong and perhaps well founded faith in free trade, or a revenue tariff, but this faith must have a singularly powerful influence upon his reason or imagination if it could convince him that the difference between say a fifteen or twenty per cent. tariff, the lowest probably which any responsible political leader would have deemed practicable in Canada, and that at present in operation, could possibly have prevented, or even very greatly reduced, that exodus which is unquestionably the chief hindrance to Canadian growth. Politicians and orators, on both sides of the House of Commons, might do well to consider whether over-statement does not weaken rather than strengthen the force of their arguments. It is pretty evident to the average non-political Canadian that the country is far from being so prosperous and hopeful as the Government's ardent supporters would have us believe, and equally far from being in so desperate a plight as the opposition orators would persuade us. It is very much to be wished that the best minds in both parties would, leaving for a time the heights of party glorification, and coming down to the level of statesmanlike investigation, devote all their energies to the patriotic task of finding out exactly what are the hindrances to Canadian growth, and to what extent it is possible to remove or lessen them by wise legislation.

THE idea of affording relief to the distressed in over-populated districts by a system of emigration, with Government assistance and control as one of its chief factors, seems to be making headway in the Mother Country. One of the latest converts to the scheme is Mr. Chamberlain, who announces that he has come to the conclusion, after investigation, that real relief to the Highland crofters was "absolutely impossible without migration, or a scheme of emigration accompanied by a scheme of migration." That readjustments of the population of a country and of the world become necessary from time to time, no thoughtful student of history, or observer of current events, can doubt. The difficult point in regard to this, as to many other questions of great interest, is whether such movements should be left wholly to the operation of voluntary forces and agencies, or whether Governments should intervene with such information and assistance as are beyond the reach of those whose future wellbeing is at stake. With regard to pecuniary assistance, Mr. Chamberlain's argument seems conclusive. When a certain part of the population of a country has been brought to a distressed condition through no fault of their own, it is clearly the duty of the rest of the population to come to their aid. And if migration or emigration on a large scale affords the most hopeful, or the only possible means of permanent relief, why should not the aid take that shape? Who can doubt that the great movements of population which have been one of the wonders of history during the last decade might have been productive of vastly better results to all concerned, had the streams of emigration been under more intelligent control? Yet, on the other hand, arbitrary interference in such cases is clearly undesirable and would soon become intolerable. Perhaps the experiments now being tentatively made by the British Government on a small scale go as far as is at present feasible or safe. Should these prove clearly successful there is little doubt that the plan may be hereafter operated on a much larger scale.

THE London County Council is evidently entering upon the work of Municipal Reform with great courage and energy. A resolution passed at one of its meetings is designed and adapted to deal a telling blow to the "sweating" system. This resolution is to the effect that any person or firm tendering for a contract with the Council shall be required to make a declaration that they pay such rates of wages and observe such hours of labour as are generally accepted as fair in their trade. This is certainly a new departure in what most will admit is the right direction. If the course indicated is pursued with tolerable steadiness its influence will reach far beyond even the wide circle of those who may have direct business relations with the Council. It will put the broad brand of disreputability on the practice against which it is directed so plainly that respectable individuals and firms will be constrained to follow the Council's example in their contracts with employees of labour. It has been too commonly assumed that the Council or Board, or whoever may represent the capitalists, has nothing to do with the relations existing

between contractors and sub-contractors and the labourers they may employ. The Ottawa Government has, it is true, but recently followed an established custom, which seems, at first thought, to be of the same nature, in refusing to award contracts to the lowest tenders in cases in which the Chief Engineer reports that the sum named in the tender is lower than the least possible cost of the work. But this discrimination is probably designed rather to protect the Government and the public from delay or loss than to guard the interests of labour. It is well that so influential a body as the County Council of London, in so conservative a country as England, has made an innovation which distinctly recognizes the moral responsibility of the principal in a transaction to refuse to be partaker of any gain resulting from taking advantage of the necessities of labourers, or to permit such advantage to be taken by those with whom he may have business contracts. True, the principle thus admitted has a very wide reach, but the fact that it may involve new trouble and responsibility does not prove that it is not righteous.

LORD SALISBURY, in a recent speech, gave an admirable definition of what a foreign policy should be. "My definition of a foreign policy," he said, "is that we ought to behave as any gentleman would behave who wishes to get on well with his neighbour." Were neighbouring nations to act on this principle, there would be very much less danger of complications and wars than there is under the existing state of things. The trouble is that for the successful working of the policy it is necessary that the neighbour, too, should be a gentleman and like-minded. In the case of nations an additional element of trouble is found in the differences in the codes of etiquette and ideas of right and wrong that often prevail. But, after making all allowances, it is yet in a very wide and important sense true of nations as of individuals, that "it takes two to make a quarrel," and that if either would carefully observe the rules of polite and friendly intercourse in the spirit, as well as in the letter, conflicts would rarely occur. The evil is, as the *Christian World* puts it, that too often "when a Government has a little difference with its neighbour, it points a revolver at its head and demands 'an apology or your life.'" Especially, a cynic might add, if it is pretty sure that the neighbour has not an equally effective weapon ready for use. This is generally the meaning of the "spirited foreign policy" which we so often hear spoken of with admiration. Lord Salisbury's excellent ideas on the matter ought to reassure those who have been ready to suspect him of being somewhat tainted with Jingoism.

RECENT despatches from both Samoa and Germany indicate that the task of the Conference which is shortly to meet in Berlin will not be a very difficult one. With the change of German Consuls at Samoa the objectionable policy of the German commanders there has been changed. The proclamation of martial law and the claim of right of search have been withdrawn, and the conduct of the German officials has become less domineering and aggressive. This change is, no doubt, in strict accordance with the commands of the German Chancellor. It is both explained and emphasized by the instructions given to the new Consul, Herr Steubel, and the severe strictures made upon the course of his predecessor, Dr. Knappe. Referring to Dr. Knappe's proposal to annex Samoa, Prince Bismarck repeats distinctly the view he has before expressed to the effect that to seek to bring about a change in the political situation in Samoa without the consent of England and America would not accord with treaty arrangements. Knappe's action on the question of annexation is, it is alleged by the Chancellor, incomprehensible, because his experience and instructions ought to have shown him that his desire to annex Samoa was opposed to the policy conducted by the Chancellor in conformity with the Emperor's intentions. All question of German annexation being thus removed, and all arrogant pretensions thus frankly withdrawn, it would seem as if nothing could remain to prevent an agreement being quickly reached by the three Powers interested. Although those who are disposed to fear the German Chancellor, even when making the most friendly overtures, may cynically suspect that the unfortunate Dr. Knappe is more the scape-goat than the culprit, it is still clear that the situation is changed for the better. The three commissioners appointed by President Harrison are thought to be singularly well fitted for the mission. Perhaps the chief source of curiosity and possible anxiety will henceforth arise from the unwonted moderation and reticence which have marked the course of the British

Government in the matter, and which have so aroused the ire of the Australians, and are so suggestive to suspicious natures of some secret understanding with Germany.

TWO peculiarities of American politics have been strikingly illustrated since the inauguration of President Harrison. In the first place, the United States is perhaps the only great nation in the world in which reputation and experience in public affairs are not deemed indispensable qualifications for members of the Cabinet. President Harrison's administration contains not more than two men whose administrative ability has ever been proved in any public position. The various Ministers, or "Secretaries," may prove themselves statesmen of the first water, but to both President and people their fitness for the high positions to which they have been called must be at the outset largely matter of faith. In any case their want of knowledge and experience of public life cannot but be a serious hindrance to their usefulness during their apprenticeship, and may lead at any moment to awkward complications. Such a *faux-pas* as that made by Mr. Wanamaker, the Postmaster-General, in the speech in which, soon after taking office, he described Bismarck's heavy foot as crushing the people of Alsace-Lorraine, would hardly have been tolerated from the Minister of a European State. The fact of the comparative isolation of the American nation, and the knowledge that the President in person, and the Senate, together pretty nearly exhaust the Executive authority, conspire to prevent such mistakes from attracting the attention that would otherwise be given them. The mode of selection is, nevertheless, not one to be envied or imitated. The unusual character of President Harrison's selections may perhaps be accounted for by the consideration that it was almost impossible for him to appoint well known public men to the positions without giving mortal offence to powerful political rivals and their friends, and so injure the party.

THE other peculiarity referred to is the outcome of the method which requires appointments to offices of all grades in the Civil Service to be made by the President personally. The spectacle which presented itself a little while ago of a great pilgrimage of thousands and tens of thousands of office-seekers and their friends from the four corners of the Republic to Washington, to interview the President and press individual claims to office, or to the patronage influence which is almost equally prized, is probably unique in the history of the world. When one reflects for a moment on the utter impossibility that the President should be able to know personally anything of the merits of one in a thousand of the applicants, the absurdity of the system is set in a strong light. And then to think further that each one of these thousands of appointments, which the President, after consultation with the local politician who may be lucky enough to get his ear, may make, has to go to the august Senate for ratification! How a people so intensely practical, so surpassingly clever in business and invention, can have so long continued so cumbersome a system, is one of the marvels of history. The machine must surely sooner or later be crushed by its own weight. At present it is a curious political phenomenon.

CONSIDERABLE surprise, not unmingled with uneasiness, was caused by the report, a few days since, that Behring Sea had been declared, by proclamation of the President of the United States, a closed sea, and a warning issued to all persons against entering its waters for the purpose of taking seals or other fur-bearing animals. The full text of the proclamation is, however, quite reassuring. The language of the document puts forth no such arrogant and inadmissible claim. The proclamation evidently leaves the question of jurisdiction just where it finds it. All the prohibitions and warnings of the Act recited relate to offences within "the limits of Alaska territory, or in the waters thereof," and are declared to apply to "all the dominion of the United States in the waters of Behring Sea," or, as described in the proclamation itself, "the waters of Behring Sea, within the Dominion of the United States." The language of this last clause is, it must be confessed, ambiguous; a suspicious person might think it to be studiously so. It may be adapted and, possibly, designed to create uncertainty and apprehension in the minds of foreign fishermen, and so tend to deter them from entering the sea in the pursuit of their calling. But it is very clear that the proclamation makes no attempt to define the jurisdiction of the United States, or to assert any distinct claim beyond the limits assigned by the law of nations.