

authority for trying the Gottenburg system, is doubtful, and it may be questionable whether it is desirable to make the first English experiment of that plan on so large and costly a scale. Any town in Canada which gave it an honest trial would confer a benefit on the whole community. In our Ontario Legislature discussions on all subjects seem necessarily to assume a party complexion. That happy time when "none are for the party, and all are for the State" has certainly not dawned upon Canada. If there are offices to be filled, if there is a contract to be given away, "party" comes first—at least, if we are to believe the Opposition: and as the Opposition, whoever may be in power, always makes the same accusations, we probably may assume that the same practice holds good on both sides of politics. It is not satisfactory to be told that it is a necessary concomitant of Responsible Government. We do not believe so. It is usual, as we all know, but not necessary; and the day may come when the efficiency of the public service will be really the first consideration with public men.

From the Lower Provinces once more comes a rumour of a Legislative union of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, a scheme which is ventilated annually by one or other of the Governments concerned, and almost invariably by that one which is oppressed with some little domestic difficulties. We can safely say that when these three Provinces agree to merge their respective entities and become one consolidated Province, the rest of Canada will think that they have done a very wise thing. Such a union should have preceded Confederation, but it is not too late to consummate it now. The great difficulty in the way is the choice of a capital. Looking merely at the map, of course Moncton, Dorchester, or Amherst, seem the most suitable places; but does it ever answer to create a fictitious capital? The establishment of the seat of Government at some point arbitrarily fixed upon is almost invariably a chronic inconvenience ever afterwards. Cannot St. John and Halifax—for Fredericton and Charlottetown are out of the question—submit their rival claims to an impartial judge and bind their respective Provinces honestly to accept the decision?

Whatever the individual opinions of each of us may be concerning the relative merits of Protection and Free Trade, it must be admitted that the contest which was supposed to have been decided several years ago is now recommencing. A new generation of assailants is attacking the doctrines which for some time past it has been, in England, considered preposterous and heretical to impugn. Words have failed English writers in which adequately to express their contemptuous pity for those benighted heathens by whom the full glories of the Free Trade system have been but imperfectly appreciated. But now the whole question seems likely to be reopened, Protectionists and Incidental Protectionists arguing that, just as it was once assumed that the English Constitution was the one system of government to which all na-

tions, kindreds and people might, could, and should, conform themselves, so it has been too hastily assumed that Free Trade, because it suited England, was therefore equally suited to every other country. Among the impugners of the received opinions there comes forward now Sir Anthony Musgrave, formerly Governor of Newfoundland and British Columbia, and lately appointed Governor of Jamaica. His article in the *Contemporary Review* will, no doubt, be closely criticised. Not having space to devote to political economy we will do no more than quote two short paragraphs which may interest Canadians. "I think," he says, "that in accordance with this general tendency to push the application of abstract principles to extremes, the admirers of commercial liberty have overlooked the fact that there are limits and circumstances within which alone healthy growth and beneficial action may be expected from perfectly free and unprotected trade." "In America and the colonies men dimly perceive that in some way Protection does generally do them good, though they are unable to explain scientifically the reason why or to refute the arguments by which it is endeavoured to show that they are quite mistaken. They do, as Mr. Greg says, 'scent' the unsoundness of those arguments, but they do not discern where the error lies."

#### QUINGUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE Church now brings before us the crowning grace of the Christian religion. Man does not, in his natural state, love his fellow man, except from motives of interest or of close relationship. He even regards those who are not thus connected with him as being so many natural rivals and enemies. Man's highest love is the love of self, varied by a variety of subordinate affections which minister to his self-love. In pagan times human nature was conspicuous in showing contempt and cruelty to the slave, hatred of a political or literary rival, aversion to the foreigner, disbelief in the reality or possible attainment of human virtue and human disinterestedness. Love of mankind would seem a foolish thing to feel in a society, the recognized law of whose life was selfishness, and whose vices culminated in a mutual hatred between man and man, between one class and another, and between different races.

But when Christ came, He gave what was, in reality, a commandment altogether new: "That ye love one another, as I have loved you." And how can love be measured but by observing the degree in which it involves the gift of self? Love must give that which costs us something, or it is not love at all. It is always, and everywhere, the sacrifice of self. It is the gift of time or of labour, or of income, or of affection; it is the surrender of reputation and of honour; it is the acceptance of sorrow and of pain for others. The warmth of it varies with the greatness of the sacrifice which expresses it and which is its life; and therefore the love of the Divine Christ is infinite. "The charities of his earthly life are but so many sparks from the

central column of flame which burns in the self-devotion of the Eternal Son of God." And He who stepped down from Heaven to the humiliation of the cross has opened in the heart of redeemed man a fountain of love and compassion.

The exercise of this highest Christian grace of charity is very appropriately brought before us previous to the Lenten fast; as the disuse of the luxuries of life ought always to be employed in furnishing additional facilities for the practice of one branch of this exalted virtue.

In the Epistle for the communion office, the apostle Paul has given us such a summary of the "more excellent way" in the exercise of charity, as is no where else to be found. In it he shows that almsgiving does not embrace the whole extent of the Divine grace he describes; but that this grace extends its influence to every part of human conduct. He teaches that charity suffereth long the provocations of others; and that it envieth not superior advantages in others. It vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; knowing that it has nothing but what it has received from the common Lord. It doth not behave itself in any way unbefitting our character, circumstances, and position; but dictates a delicate respect to what is morally and religiously fit. Seeketh not her own, and therefore is not selfish; nor is easily provoked, forming the only cure of an evil temper. Thinketh no evil, is not suspicious; and yields not to evil surmises, much less does it indulge in that most detestable of all vices, slander. Rejoiceth not in iniquity of others, though an advantage might be gained by it, or an enemy be humbled; but rejoiceth in the diffusion of truth and holiness throughout the world. Beareth all things, putting their worst features out of sight. Believeth and hopeth all things, putting the most favourable construction on all doubtful things; and, as if to crown the whole, this consummation and perfection of all the virtues and the excellences of Christianity, charity, endureth all things, patiently sustaining all events, however afflictive may be their character, knowing them to be, either directly or indirectly, from Almighty God Himself.

#### LENT.

FROM the earliest ages of the Christian Church a fast before Easter has been the universal practice. Previous, however, to the seventh century, there was great diversity in the period of its duration. In the second century it was thought that the practice was founded on that passage in the Gospel referring to the fasting appointed for the days when the Bridegroom should be taken away; and the forty days of our Lord's temptation were also spoken of. In the middle of the third century, Origen distinctly refers to forty days fasting previous to Easter. The primary object of the institution was, no doubt, to perpetuate in the hearts of every generation of Christians the sorrow and mourning the disciples felt during the time when Christ was taken from them. And sorrow for the death of Christ should natu-