

WHAT PRODUCES IVES.

A WRITER in the *National Review* has recently been maintaining that the result of American education is such widespread dishonesty, that a business man among us who does not lie and cheat is considered by his fellows more or less of a ninny. Another writer in another English review gravely informs us that an English friend of his, having received a dollar too much in change at a New York store, was informed when he returned it that "he must be a great fool," and intimates that this is the sort of reception his honesty would have met with anywhere. One of our morning contemporaries, moralizing on all this, apropos of the Ives case, maintains that it is not our education which is at fault so much as our love of wealth, and that we owe the Ives episode principally and solely to the young man's over-haste to get rich. But this really explains nothing. The eagerness to get rich is great in all commercial countries—probably as great in England or France or Germany, in the great cities, as it is in this country. What makes it seem greater among us is the multiplicity of opportunities for making money rapidly. It is this which keeps Americans in that feverish condition about money which has so long excited the wonder or derision of foreigners. Wealth always seems within reach of even "the small people," as the French call them, among us in a way unknown in Europe, and keeps them constantly on tenterhooks of expectation. It was this, too, which so impressed John Stuart Mill's imagination, in observing American ways, that, in the first edition of his 'Political Economy,' he described the Americans by saying that one sex was entirely occupied in "dollar-hunting" and the other in "breeding dollar-hunters."

Young men as fond of money as Ives, and as unscrupulous in striving for it, are probably as numerous in London or Paris or Berlin as in New York. The reason they do not do as Ives has done is, that they do not know how; that is, they have never seen any one else do it successfully. Ives has. He has, ever since he left school, probably given more attention to the career of successful railroad robbers than to any other subject. If he has read Mr. Charles Francis Adams's 'Chapter in Erie,' as he doubtless has, he knows that the foundation of probably the most colossal fortune in this country was laid in a railroad robbery much more audacious than that which Ives himself has perpetrated, and so much more successful that the principal in it, when compelled to disgorge, was able to make "restitution" of nine millions of dollars without being at all pinched, and in fact without ceasing to be a very rich and prosperous man. Ives, too, has seen this same person go on adding railroad to railroad, and million to million, until he has become the greatest "magnate" in the country, the envy of millions, and almost as much talked about as Bismarck, courted secretly by thousands who are now abusing Ives, and recognized in all the money markets as a good man and true, in all great transactions in which he chooses to take a share. If James Fisk, jr., had

lived, he would probably have furnished an equally edifying example to our young men, and they would doubtless have profited by it. His untimely end deprived us of another illustration of the great truth that, it is not so much your mode of getting money as your ability to keep it, which shapes your reputation.

When a man like Ives, too, first enters on a career of "Napoleonic finance"—that is, begins robbing corporations and overissuing stock and bonds—he meets with comparatively little opposition from the people whom he first comes in collision with or has to make use of, because they are all afraid that he may succeed like others, and become a power in "finance," in which case it would be unpleasant to have his enmity, and might be very advantageous to have his friendship. Consequently, if he has audacity enough, he almost always gets a good "send-off" from the bystanders and the newspapers. It is only when his schemes miscarry, or his "restitutions" leave him penniless, that the world "goes back" on him and denounces him as "a fraud." It is not everybody who can even rob successfully. It requires talent, like nearly every other human pursuit, and the world does not honor people who fail in it, any more than in any other.

GOVERNMENT BOUNTIES.

A CURIOUS and instructive illustration of how the "practical" statesmen attempt to set aside the "dreamy theories" of economists, and at great expense to the people, is furnished by the course of events which has led to a proposition made by the English Government to the other Powers of Europe for a conference on the sugar question. The more important of the Continental governments seem anxious to unite in such a conference; and close examination of their past action and their present position would justify belief that, did they act from public considerations alone, they would soon reach a determination satisfactory to all. But this is exactly what they cannot do, for through the measures of their "practical" statesmen they have become involved in a mesh of legislation and vain seeking after selfish ends, and now find themselves not only deliberately working against their best interests at home, but exciting retaliation and injury abroad. This curious situation is worth a glance, if only to serve as a warning against a similar line of conduct which many would seek to force upon the Government of the United States.

The history of the sugar-bounty policy of Europe need not be recounted here, nor is it necessary to show how the first suggestion arose. The beginnings were small, and were justified as the advocates of a higher duty on tin plate under our tariff seek to justify their demands—as a measure of high public policy. Had this plan of fostering the beet-sugar industry been pursued by a single nation—like France—some benefit might have accrued to that country in its relations with other nations, however costly to its own people the experiment might have proved. But no sooner had the idea been put into practice than other countries adopted it, and even went beyond the original measure,

each new recruit to the bounty-givers seeking to offer to its manufacturers and exporters higher inducements than were offered elsewhere; and, as a matter of course, this step raised bounties all around, since it was preached that the higher the bounty the greater must be the prosperity of the sugar interests. Moreover, as the administration of the bounty system was a matter of some difficulty, and as a somewhat elastic basis for estimating the duties and rebates was adopted (the supposed saccharine strength of the raw sugar and the supposed results after refining), human ingenuity, sharpened by interest and by the prospect of relatively enormous gains, began to improve processes, and, in fact, did bring about such a ridiculous result as to compel the Treasury, more than once, to pay out as bounties on exports a greater sum than was received on the raw imports. Legislation, seeking to correct this anomaly and blundering a long way behind this "enlightened self-interest," only made matters worse, for uncertainty and extensive frauds were the natural results, the cost of which had to be paid-by the people.

The great number of laws which Continental Europe has adopted in the vain hope of placing the sugar interests upon a working basis, would fill an enormous volume, and would constitute a monument to the folly of the "practical" when divorced from the reasoning of political economy. Were we to judge by the production of beet-root sugar only, the bounty policy would undoubtedly be accepted as remarkably successful. But this would be to overlook far more important results that have followed these bounties. Beet-root sugar is now a more important factor in sugar markets than is the cane product, but this preëminence has been attained by enormous and almost fatal losses to the cane-growing colonies of the very countries that have sought to foster the beet industry, by great loss of revenue to the national treasuries, and at fearful cost to the taxpayers. Producing for foreign markets, the increased production has proved a heavy burden, for foreign markets have been closed not by successful competition, but by the artificial stimulation of a domestic sugar industry which is itself seeking vents for its product. Now, when all the sugar that is wanted, and perhaps all that is at present needed, is produced, and when the governments which have granted bounties have apparently good reasons for congratulating themselves upon the success of their policy, we find them discussing a conference that is to undo all that has been done—that is, to abolish all bounties on the production and export of sugar, and destroy the network of legislation which has been formed in vain effort to solve the contradiction, how the industry may live and thrive normally and on its own footing, when almost entirely maintained by too liberal subventions from the public treasury: vain effort, because no such artificial arrangement can be anything but mischievous to all interests other than the sugar.

Now, what we are showing with regard to the results of bounties to the sugar interest—and what might be shown with equal effect as to the bounties to merchant ships—is merely an illustration on a small scale of what the protective tendencies of Continental Europe are producing on a large scale through

high and prohibitive tariffs. So long as each nation seeks to enter other markets with its own productions, while at the same time excluding foreign products from its own, it is useless to expect other than perpetual friction, a continuous series of retaliatory measures, each one constituting a grievance to the injured party, and each one doing violence to many interests both at home and abroad. And there are signs that the end is nearer than is commonly supposed when these grasping Powers have overreached themselves, and when their so-called commercial policies are in reality more injurious to their own manufactures and their own trade than to those of their competitors. What this end will be cannot be forecast, but it will be either conciliation and reciprocity, or force, and there are indications that recourse may be had to the latter before its alternative can be tried. Austria and Hungary, hard hit by the revocation of a commercial treaty with Rumania and by the new Italian tariff, have again united commercially, but a quibble over the duties to be imposed on petroleum delayed the negotiations for months and threatened to break them off. It should be remembered that Austria-Hungary in 1878 increased its tariff with the avowed purpose of inducing its neighbors to purchase concessions through reciprocity. The result, as shown by Mr. Phipps of the English diplomatic service, was as follows: "As soon as the one autonomous tariff came into operation, the example was followed by one Continental State after another, each imposing higher protective duties. All stability of duties came to an end, and all calculations of exporters and importers are now defeated by constantly recurring modifications of the customs tariff, every change in the tariffs of neighboring States reacting on each other's policy." The result was, that instead of securing concessions, Austria invited reprisals, and now stands alone commercially, "reduced to the position of a State which consumes its own products, and which is an isolated and close commercial State."

The union of Austria and Hungary under one tariff is a step towards reciprocity. On the other hand, France demands that her colonies in China shall accept her general tariff, or be regarded as aliens; Russia is about to raise greatly her duties, although she has now a tariff more protective than that of any other nation in Europe; and Germany is threatening reprisals for the injuries received from Russia by tariff modifications already made. Here is not material for a peaceful solution of the difficulty. The sugar conference may result in an agreement, but it is far more likely to end in a disagreement. However favorable to the meeting the governments may be, they are too prone to listen to the demands of vested interests which any action on their part must disturb. Surely it would be madness to introduce into this country a system of bounties when we have before us so striking and forcible an illustration of their mischievous effects.

NORWEGIAN POLITICS.

News comes from Norway that the temperance movement is making extraordinary pro-

gress there. It is not many years since "getting drunk" was held to be a perfectly legitimate amusement, and the man who at festal gatherings refused to drink was regarded as a sneak and a churl. To drink a guest under the table was looked upon as an excellent joke, at which no reasonable man could take offence; and if the intended victim could turn the tables on his hospitable host, it was a stroke of exquisite humor, which furnished no end of amusement. It was the crucial test of manhood to be able to "take aboard" a great quantity of liquor without being intoxicated. Lord Dufferin relates, in his 'Letters from High Latitudes,' that in Iceland, where the old Norse customs still prevail, he "got sober" three times in one night, while his Icelandic hosts showed no effects whatever from their potations.

The temperance movement, which has especially taken hold of the peasantry and the laboring population in the cities, is now working a great change in the sentiments of the Norsemen on this subject, and their habits are showing a corresponding change. The consumption of alcoholic liquors averaged, ten years ago, six litres annually for each individual; in 1884 the official statistics showed a reduction to three; and if statistics were obtainable for the last two years, a very large reduction even from this figure would probably be observed. Within a few years 650 total-abstinence societies, with a membership of 73,000, have been formed, besides a number of Good Templar lodges and Blue Ribbon societies, which all unite in fighting the drink evil. Prohibition is, for the first time in the history of Scandinavia, beginning to attract attention as a possible political factor, and an address to the Storting demanding a law prohibiting the manufacture and importation of alcoholic liquors obtained in a short time the signatures of 65,000 men and women over twenty-one years of age, although it was not by any means generally circulated. In the province of Christian-sand a similar address obtained 35,000 signatures. Twenty or thirty members of the Storting are also members of total-abstinence societies, though they were not elected as representatives of this idea. In short, we may look with confidence for a prohibitionist party in Norwegian politics in the near future; and in Sweden and Denmark there are indications that similar forces are at work.

From the point of view of mere political expediency, a prohibitionist party could scarcely be welcomed at the present time as an un-mixed good. The Liberal Peasant party, which, after the constitutional crisis, came into power under the premiership of John Sverdrup, three years ago, is on the point of splitting into two hostile camps, and, by its internal dissensions, reinstating the Conservatives. A radical group called the "Pure Left" is opposing the Ministry, and has twice left it in a minority in the Storting. According to the very principle for which the Liberal party fought during the many years it constituted a majority in opposition, the Sverdrup Ministry ought, therefore, to have resigned, or at least effected a reorganization without the two Ministers, Jacob Sverdrup and Sörenssen, who were responsible for the defeated measures. This is what the Pure Left demands, and the Pre-

mier's hesitation to comply with this demand is undermining his popularity, and may lead to his defeat in the impending election. That he has furnished a curious illustration of the absolute and consistent parliamentarism which was the chief plank in his own political platform, is undeniable. The law introducing trial by jury, which, after twenty years of arduous fighting, this Ministry has just succeeded in passing, was, singularly enough, repudiated by Mr. Sörenssen, the Minister of Justice—the very man who was selected to expound its merits before the Storting. Yet Mr. Sverdrup refused to discipline him; and he himself did not see the propriety of resigning. Jacob Sverdrup, the Premier's nephew and Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, recently introduced a law dealing with congregational councils, and intended to effect a radical change in the discipline of the Church; but he obtained scarcely a handful of votes in its favor. According to all precedent, he ought, of course, to have resigned; but he yet retains his portfolio, and apparently has no intention of giving it up.

It will thus be seen that parliamentarism is not yet securely established in Norway. It has been stabbed in the very house of its friends. No one will wonder, then, that Björnstjerne Björnson, to whose eloquence and fearless agitation the Ministry largely owes its power, has now turned against it. And John Sverdrup, Björnson's friend, has retaliated by virtually depriving the poet of the paltry salary or stipend of 1,600 kroner which the Conservatives, Björnson's political enemies, honored themselves by bestowing upon him. It will be remembered that two years ago, when the question of conferring a "poet's salary" upon the novelist Alexander Kielland was debated in the Storting, a large number of members refused to favor this measure, because Kielland had attacked the clergy, and might therefore be supposed to be hostile to Christianity. This debate, with its result, deeply grieved Björnson; and last year he and Ibsen sent a petition to the Storting repeating the request that Kielland be granted a stipend equal to their own, because of the absence of international copyright laws, and on account of his recognized eminence in letters. Björnson declared that if such stipends were granted with the implied condition that the recipient must be an orthodox Lutheran Christian, then he was in exactly the same position as Kielland, and should regard the vote on the petition as indicating the Storting's attitude towards himself. If he were to continue to draw his "poet's salary," it must be without any condition restricting his spiritual liberty. If he could not thus draw it, he would renounce it. The Storting, being placed in this dilemma, dodged the question, granting Kielland 1,600 kroner for one year, not as "poet's salary," but as compensation for the loss he suffered by reason of the absence of an international copyright law. When the grant was to be renewed, however, they rebelled, and, repeating their former arguments, rejected it by a very narrow majority.

Of course, a single word from the Ministry could have reversed the result. But John Sverdrup obviously intended to flog