

feed, and endeavour to provide for; but the number is fast passing the bounds that even charity can tolerate, and it is the duty of the press, as the Mayor of this city pointed out at a recent meeting of journalists, to raise a protest against a further influx, and to warn those who come here, that they are not to count on harborage. A few incoming poor who are deserving objects of public charity there always must be, but the inflow to Toronto looks like an organization, and an organization not alone composed of those who can't work, and those who are not able to do skilled labour, but of many who not alone refuse to work, but turn up their noses at being asked to do so.

THE latest development in the way of sensation was that one McBride and a number of other ruffians in Buffalo, had decided to blow up several of our Canadian public buildings and carry off the Governor-General. But even a crank like McBride would have cunning enough to know that an announcement of his designs was not the best way to make easy the capture of the Governor; so that we cannot but wonder that so much prominence has been given to the pretentious bluster in certain quarters of the Canadian press. Nevertheless, it is as well we should all persuade ourselves that dynamite is no respecter of nations, and that Canada, no more than any other country, is guaranteed the forbearance of "satanism." By-and-by when some of those countries that are now the workshops of infernal machines to be used in terrifying sister nations, shall have nitroglycerine exploded in their own midst, they may be convinced that it is their duty, and their imperative duty, as it will be that of all the nations to take means of a common defence against a common murder; to frame an international law that will make an attempt against the life and property of the resident in one nation an offence against all the rest, and punishable wherever concocted, and to establish an international police to carry out that law. Republican indifference, converted into generosity towards assassination by the consideration of Irish votes, now cannot steel itself to discountenance the operations of dastardly murder-plotters of the Rossa school, but by and by the liberators will put a few cans of dynamite under the White House, and the case will be altered. Perhaps the sooner something like this happens the better.

#### CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

By the agreement to which the two parties in the Boundary case have at length come, the Privy Council will be asked to decide first whether the award is binding; and if they decide that it is not, they will be asked to settle the true boundary. To settle the true boundary may prove to be in strictness beyond their power as a Court of law, the judgments of which must be founded not on expediency but on evidence; for the evidence may be found to be incomplete or perhaps hopelessly ambiguous. The knowledge of the North-West possessed by British statesmen at the period in question was about upon a par in accuracy with the knowledge displayed by medieval geographers in their general maps of the world. All that can be said is that when in their demarcations they use such a word as "northwards," the reasonable presumption is that they intend to follow some natural boundaries, not to draw a political line the course and territorial bearings of which their ignorance would not have permitted them to trace. But the inclination of the Court will probably be to uphold the award; and in the case of the Privy Council, inclination goes for more than it would in the case of an ordinary Court. The worldly-wise old men who sit there are Counsellors of the Crown as well as lawyers, and in the class of questions which come before them, it not seldom happens that room may be made for considerations of policy by a sagacious use of the powers of interpretation. This has appeared especially in their treatment of ecclesiastical cases. Carlyle with grim merriment describes them as "sitting with the gravity of Roman augurs to decide questions of prevenient grace, supervenient moonshine, and the colour of the Bishop's nightmare, if that happened to turn up." Yet the general motive of their judgments has been practical in the highest degree; they have always leaned to the side of comprehension, and done all that interpreters of the law could do to avert the rupture which the condemnation of any school of theologians must have brought on, and which to them would have appeared the greatest of political as well as ecclesiastical disasters. Of all the heretics who have been brought before them one only has succeeded in getting himself condemned. "The passage, my lords, must have that meaning or none" was the triumphant exclamation of the counsel for the prosecution, who thought he had pinned heresy at last. "Is it not possible that it may have no meaning?" was a reply of a member of the Court.

In this dead season the papers have been filled with the controversy about university endowments. The discussion is, in every sense, academi-

cal, though in some quarters it has been carried on with more heat than becomes the serenity of the academic soul. The adversaries of endowment may rest happily assured that the Chancellor will not press the matter on the Premier, nor the Premier on the Legislature; and that if the Premier did press it on the Legislature, his appeal would be given to the winds by the members of that respectable but not enthusiastically scientific or literary assembly. The time might almost as well be spent in debating the possibility of squaring the circle. That, as a matter of principle, no denominational institution can have a right to veto an increase out of the provincial funds of the endowment of a provincial institution, seems to the "By-stander" as clear as anything can be; and he trusts that this opinion may be stated without casting any imputation on heads of denominational universities, for whose personal liberality, as well as for their ability, he has always felt, and often expressed, the highest respect. He is himself denominationalist in this sense, that he believes character to be worth more than intellect and religion to be essential to character. But as he has said perhaps already too often, it seems to him, that an application on a small scale of the Federal principle would afford a satisfactory solution of the problem. Let us have denominational colleges in a common university. Victoria and Queen's will gain more, even in a financial point of view, by the advantages which they would share if they came to the centre, than they would lose by the process of migration. But local interests are strong and combine with denominational sentiment in resistance to the change. Overtures respecting consolidation, like the attempts of Popes and Patriarchs to unite the Greek and Latin Churches, lead only to a renewal of the fray. The net result will be that Cornell, which is within a day's journey of Toronto, and will soon have an endowment of ten millions, will some day be the university of Ontario.

By the fiat of the new Minister of Education, the question of the Reading Books has been suddenly resolved into its original elements, so that the discussion will commence anew. It seems to be thought that the Minister contemplates something in the way of a fusion of the rival sets of books; if he does he has an enviable task before him. While so much is being said for the publishers and the parents, there is a word to be said for the children. There is little use in setting before them specimens of style, which only a mature taste can appreciate. In respect of style, simplicity is the one excellence to be kept in view. Nor is there much use in trying to make the reading book a machine for inserting into the youthful mind a number of detached pieces of information. The function of a reading book is to teach the pupil to read; and the pupil will learn to read as well with a book which interests, as with one which does not, probably a good deal better. Simple tales, such as address themselves to the feelings as well as to the fancy, fables, and lively accounts of things about which the children care will make the lesson less of a task, and answer the main purpose just as well as dry extracts from a string of standard writers.

O'DONNELL has paid the penalty of a murder which the infamy of the murdered could not palliate. Would that this might be the last in the hideous list of executions! Executions and crimes alike, with the deadly memories which they leave behind them in the hearts of a nation, might all have been wiped from the book of fate, had the British Parliament at the outset laid faction aside and shown a firm and unanimous resolution to uphold the law. Now come, as might have been expected, mutterings of retaliation, and blustering threats of Fenian invasion are heard from Buffalo where some Invincibles have congregated under the presidency of "lawyer Muldoon," who, it seems, however, is in some danger of being "bounced" as not coming up to the level of dynamitic melodrama. "There was a big crowd at Schmidt's to-night, and England was denounced roundly and dire threats were made, while big tumblers of beer raised their enthusiasm." Threats of Fenian invasion were serious just after the war, when thousands of Irish soldiers had been disbanded, and when the American Government, exasperated by the Trent affair and the Alabama, could only be half trusted to do its international duty. There are no disbanded soldiers now and the American Government, in case of need, would do its international duty with alacrity. The really dangerous invasion is that of which the vanguard has effected a lodgement in Conway Street, and which no Queen's Own can repel from our borders. All those who go among the Irish immigrants agree in their account of them and are alike earnest in deprecating, on behalf of our community, any more importations of the same kind. And here is seen, in miniature, the Irish question. What good would the possession of the suffrage do to these unfortunates? What use could they make of political power which would not be mischievous to the commonwealth and to themselves? Those who believe that every human being has a metaphysical right to a vote, would, of course, thrust votes at once upon the