

the measure, viz., that which looks to Mr. Blake as its leader; but the principal Conservative lawyers are apparently ready to co-operate with the Government in passing it.

The Insolvency Law is passing through Committee, but its numerous and complicated clauses do not apparently excite much attention.

Two good amendments have been made to the Banking Law. One forbids a bank to become the purchaser of its own stock—unless to get payment of a debt: a wise provision, and designed to guard against abuses in the administration of a bank not unknown amongst us. The other orders that the amount of loans or discounts to directors shall be published in the monthly returns to the auditor. This, too, is useful, and will guard against an evil which might threaten the very existence of a bank.

Progress is making with the Pacific Railway,—though we can scarcely say that the direction is a satisfactory one. The very first thing to be done is undoubtedly to connect the head of Lake Superior with the Province of Manitoba. Then we have a very accessible and feasible route to the North-West all summer,—and that, after all, will be the principal season for travel for many years to come. It is, therefore, to be regretted that instead of this being made the first work to be prosecuted, another portion of the road, whose benefits will be of a sectional character, has been chosen. The contract has been let to one who was a member of the Legislature—another unfortunate selection. Of course, the gentleman resigns his seat. But when a member of the Legislature obtains a large Government contract, the question must arise: What has preceded it? And what understanding is there as to the future? For, if entering Parliament is a means of obtaining these contracts, a class of men will be attracted who are the very least to be desired. We have had too much of these arrangements in the past, and the country has not been a gainer, but a loser, by them. We thought the present Administration was to govern the country on better principles. It should never be for-

gotten that it was not on constitutional questions that the Ministry came into office, but purely on a question of honest and economical administration.

There are signs that the Liberal party, now in the ascendent, is not a unit in its policy. That party never was celebrated for adhesiveness, either in the old land or here. Its members are generally men of independent opinions and habits of thought. It always, when in power, resolves itself into a few sections, more or less well defined; and though under a master-mind like that of Gladstone, in England, it may hold together for many years and achieve wonders in the way of legislative reform, there is always a tendency to fly off at tangents on the part of many of its members. They do not run well in harness, and they give a world of trouble to their leader. Such men as Mr. Bright, Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Forster, all men of great vigor of character, often have a way of their own, and *insist* upon having it. A Liberal leader in England has not such a host of country squires at his back as a Conservative has. These, if there are only enough of them, make a leader's task very easy; for they do not think much,—they want to take life easily. And they have the old feudal spirit strong in them, which makes the squire the humble attendant on the knight. Here we have no such *class*; but we have abundance of men of the same temper, and these are Conservatives by instinct. The little cloud of division in the Liberal party arises chiefly among the younger men. There are enough of these to make a respectable following for a man like Mr. Blake, whom they all look up to as leader. There has been a certain amount of chafing under another *quasi*-leadership, partly represented by a person, and partly by a newspaper. Occasionally this yoke has been galling. In the nature of things it was not likely to be quietly submitted to, and, in addition, for some time back, there has been an evident *rapprochement* between this leadership and the hierarchy of a Church that in these times has pronounced Liberalism to be its mortal foe. This kind of agreement cannot long continue; the alliance is too unnatural.