

is fraught with evils which must become obvious on a little reflection, and which are becoming serious in Canada.

AMERICAN scholars may well be congratulated on the success which is attending the explorations in Icaria, recently commenced under the direction of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Within six weeks after commencing operations the excavators unearthed the Temple of Apollo, finding within it an altar, sculptural representations of Apollo in relief, marble seats, vases, and other objects of archaeological interest. The foundations of other classical buildings have been discovered in the same neighbourhood, and a thorough examination is now to be made, with every prospect of the most interesting results. The existence and operations of this school at Athens are a pleasing proof that the people of the United States are not wholly given up to the worship of money, or the pursuit of the grosser and more superficial pleasures which it is potent to procure. The nation seems to be passing from the first, or material stage of its wonderful progress, and is rapidly developing the scientific, the artistic, and the scholastic spirit.

THE discovery seems to have been made almost simultaneously in England and the United States that the respective coinages of the two countries are lamentably defective from the artistic point of view. Mr. Holman Hunt, in the course of a recent lecture in England, held up a penny and a sixpence, and exclaimed, "Think what a paltry people we shall appear to posterity with such miserable specimens to be judged by!" The present designs in American coins are thus classified by the *Christian Union*: "Good, a few; antiquated and over-conventional, many; atrociously bad, several." A bill has been introduced in both Houses of Congress empowering the director of the mint to cause new designs and models to be prepared and adopted. The bill seems to meet with general approval, men of taste being unanimous in the opinion that the coins at present current are, on the whole, as specimens of the art, unworthy of the Republic and of the age.

THE question of reform of the House of Lords is evidently one that will not down. The desire for reform—or perhaps we should say the conviction of its necessity—is not confined to the Liberal Party, or even to iconoclasts outside the sacred pale of the Peerage. Lord Rosebery's defeated motion was supported by some Conservatives and by a number of Unionist-Liberal Peers. Lord Salisbury has declared himself ready to consider any definite scheme of reform placed before him in black and white. As a result, two new proposals are now before the country. Lord Dunraven has introduced a Bill which propounds a definite scheme, the particulars of which have not yet come to hand. Mr. George Curzon and Mr. St. John Broddick, each of whom is the eldest son of a Peer, have elaborated a comprehensive plan in the pages of the *National Review*. This scheme, like that of Lord Rosebery's, involves reduction of the number of hereditary Peers, and enlargement of the non-hereditary element. The restriction would be effected by making a term of service in some Parliamentary, diplomatic, or other public capacity, a condition of the issue of a writ of summons to any one succeeding to a Peerage. The *ex-officio* members of the Upper House—namely, the Bishops—would be reduced to twelve, and the number of life Peers increased by the addition of fifty to be nominated by the Crown, fifty to be elected by the Commons, and a certain additional number to be chosen by the colonies. Whatever may be the fate of any particular scheme, there can be no doubt that the various proposals represent, to use the words of the *London Mail*, "a stream of tendency which no wise statesman will despise and no prudent politician will ignore."

THE election of General Boulanger, by a majority of nearly 100,000, marks a new stage in the singular Boulanger excitement in France. It is very likely that the meaning of this triumph, apart from the humiliation it inflicts upon the French Ministry, has been greatly exaggerated. That it means war with Germany, or, as the *St. James's Gazette* seems to forebode, possibly with England, which is said to be the object of M<sup>me</sup>. Boulanger's special dislike, is highly improbable. There is, it is true, a large element of uncertainty in the problem, dependent mainly upon the kind of man this General Boulanger may now prove himself to be. Unless he disappoints the general expectation, outside his excited partisans, he has neither strength nor capacity for leading a great nation in a great crisis, and has probably discretion enough not to attempt it. But the public can now only await developments. If he is really a Napoleon in disguise the world will find it out all too soon.

ONE of the results of the recent changes in the political situation in France is the consent of the Chamber by a vote of 290 to 170 to take into consideration the principles of M. de Lesseps' proposal of a Lottery Loan for the Panama Canal. The Government stood aloof from the discussion, and the resolve to consider does, of course, necessarily imply the passage of the Bill. But the decision of the Chamber to discuss the measure which the former Government refused to admit, is a striking proof of the influence of M. de Lesseps and his admirers. This influence may inhere largely in the pressure brought to bear by the French investors, who have already contributed vast sums to the enterprise, and who must now either consent to regard all previous investments as wasted, or aid the bold and determined projector in securing the immense sums still necessary, according to even the most sanguine calculations, for the completion of the project. To invoke the aid of the lottery, in the sacred name of charity, as the French have long been accustomed to do, is bad enough; the proposed resort to it in aid of a great industrial enterprise must be, if done with Government approval, even worse in its effects upon the public morality.

THE news of the sudden death of Mr. Matthew Arnold, which occurred at Liverpool, on Monday, was received with feelings of genuine regret not only here but everywhere throughout the English-speaking world. Though it cannot be said that he ever enjoyed anything like popularity, his authority as a man of letters was generally, though perhaps unwillingly recognized. At the time of his death he was the subject of some very severe criticism by the American press, which bitterly resented the tone of his article on *Civilization in the United States*, in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*. Mr. Arnold was only in his sixty-sixth year when he was so suddenly stricken down.

#### SCOTTISH HOME RULE.

LAST week we briefly directed attention to another of the mischievous consequences which are flowing from the Irish Home Rule movement. We have now a "Scottish Home Rule Association," with a body of office-bearers, and a colonial secretary who has been so obliging as to send out a circular soliciting subscriptions in the colonies for the purpose of forwarding the good work of freeing Scotland! It is necessary that this mischievous scheme should be exposed without delay. When we come to examine the circular of which we have spoken, although frequently provoked by its contents, we are somewhat reassured by noting the names of the "office-bearers," or rather by recalling the many great Scottish names of the present day which are "conspicuous by their absence." The president is the Marquis of Breadalbane, a comparatively young man to be the leader in such an enterprise, and of whom we have never heard that he possesses any qualifications that would fit him for the part of a Scottish Parnell. The only other name in the list of which the world has any special knowledge is that of Professor Blackie, chairman of committee, who has spoken some wise words and a great many very foolish and flighty ones, in his tolerably long life; but who, as a practical man, has about as little influence as it is possible for a man of his unquestionable abilities, versatility, and geniality to possess. Dr. C. Cameron, M.P., and Sir John Kinloch are the vice-presidents, and they do not add very greatly to the strength of the body which they represent. Our courage rises as we survey the leaders of the opposing host.

When we turn from the representatives to the programme of the society we are divided by emotions of wonder, amusement, and indignation. We are reminded of the facetious Englishman's translation of the sentiment of a somewhat similar movement which had an evanescent existence about twenty years ago. He said it might be summed up in the phrase: "Scotland for the Scotch and England for us all!" But indeed we take leave to doubt whether the present movement is directed by men who are, to use a significant Scotch word, canny enough to project anything so practical and sensible. On the contrary, they seem rather like spoiled children who, because they cannot have more than their own share of the good things that are going, are ready to destroy their own share along with that of the rest, in order to spite their competitors.

These are generalities: let us come to details, with such patience as we may be able to command. The "Honorary Colonial Secretary"—that is to say, the gentleman who has been appointed to see that money can be collected for this cause in the colonies—sends forth a circular letter, "so that our countrymen may be informed of the struggle that we are making to secure our political freedom." This is charming. We are afraid that, if any Englishman or Irishman should appear at the next banquet of the St. Andrew's Society and hint to the assembled Scots that they had been