

in proportion to the number of words used. Though the conciliatory tone adopted will not be without its effect, one searches in vain for either admission or denial of the alleged attempt of the German officers to assert German control over the whole island. The Prince indeed declares that "the object of Germany's energetic action of repression can, and should only, be for the sole and exclusive purpose of restoring public order, quiet and peace." But just what kind and amount of energetic action was assumed to be necessary for this purpose does not appear. Possibly the key to the whole difficulty may be found in Prince Bismarck's strong expression of surprise that so much sharp exchange of despatches could be possible in connection with a group of islands so insignificant and interests so inconsiderable. It seems not unlikely that this view of the comparative insignificance of British and American interests in the islands, led Prince Bismarck to reckon without his host, and conclude that German control could be established without protest.

THE universal sympathy which would ordinarily be called forth by the sudden death of an heir-apparent to one of the great European Monarchies has, in the case of the late Prince Rudolf, of Austria, been partially swallowed up in the surprise and curiosity excited by the mystery surrounding the tragical event. It is quite possible that the whole truth concerning the affair may never, or not for many years, be known to history. The account first given to the public, attributing the sudden death to apoplexy, or some kindred functional derangement, was naturally discredited, partly on account of inherent improbability, partly by reason of want of cohesion with attendant circumstances. Whether the statements now officially made, attributing the event to suicide, the effect of incipient insanity, will be received with similar incredulity remains to be seen. The tendency in the popular mind to connect the sad affair with disreputable conduct of some kind illustrates once more, and in a very painful manner, the prevailing impression with regard to the moralities supposed to prevail among the scions of the reigning families of Europe. Great expectations, perpetual flattery, and possibilities of unlimited self-indulgence do not create an atmosphere favourable to the development of the noblest personal qualities, and it would be wonderful were the coming monarchs of the world to escape the maelstroms on every hand and enter manhood with unscathed morals. The important question of the effect of Prince Rudolf's death upon the political character of the future monarchy is outside the realm of speculation, pending the determination of the succession.

ST. GEORGE'S SOCIETY.

WE fancy that most people will regret the recent contest for the presidency of St. George's Society; and it can hardly be doubted that the getters up of it were, for the most part, political wire-pullers who used the cry of England and the Empire for the purpose of displaying their animosity towards one from whom they differed in local politics.

If the question were considered simply on its merits, there is certainly no man in Canada who would confer more honour upon the Society by occupying its presidential chair than Mr. Goldwin Smith. That he is the first Englishman in the Dominion, as a scholar, as a writer, as a man of recognized ability, no one would think of doubting. On the other hand, it is quite certain that Professor Smith did not desire this position—or any other. What could it give him, but trouble? Probably also increased expense, for which he would care but little, as he is certainly, already, one of the most liberal supporters of the Society. We believe that we are right in saying that he did not consent to stand until he found that an opposition was being organized on lines which he thought inconsistent with the purpose and meaning of the society.

The only reasonable objection which we have heard to the election of Mr. Smith was the fear lest his being placed in that position at the present moment might lead to the impression that the St. George's Society, or in other words, the representatives of English sentiment and opinion in Toronto, were in favour of Commercial Union, or perhaps even of Annexation. If this had been the real and sole reason of opposition to Mr. Smith, it would have been intelligible and even respectable.

We can, indeed, quite understand that persons who thoroughly respected Mr. Smith and appreciated the value of his influence, socially and intellectually, in this country, should yet hesitate to place him in a position that might lead Americans to suppose that they shared his views as to

the relations between the two countries. But, if this was the real reason, it would have been very easy to represent it in this manner to Mr. Smith and his supporters, and we are assured that he would quite have understood the feeling, and would have left himself in the hands of the Society, leaving its members to do simply what was best for its interests.

But this was not done. On the contrary, a number of anonymous letters were addressed to the city papers, setting forth the so-called disloyalty of Mr. Smith, and his various other disqualifications for the part of president. On this point, we must express our surprise that a paper conducted with such ability and general moderation as *The Empire* should have admitted some of those letters. We had thought that it was generally understood that in papers of a higher class all published letters containing personalities should be signed by their writers; and the sooner this rule is acted upon the better.

Of course such letters can give no concern to Mr. Smith and his friends. They will remember the excellent remark of one who was supposed to be insulted. "O no," he said, "no gentleman will insult me; and no other can." The regret which is felt in connection with some of those productions arises rather from public considerations. It is a pity that such letters should be written and printed.

With regard to the accusation of disloyalty, it is absolutely certain that, with a great many who have taken up the cry, it merely means that Mr. Goldwin Smith advocates a policy which they consider adverse to their own party political interests. Some of his opponents are Imperial Federationists, who dislike him because he says he cannot understand what they exactly want. But some are in favour of Canadian Independence, and yet they call the advocacy of Commercial Union disloyalty.

Now, we have never professed to be converts to Mr. Smith's opinions on Commercial Union. It is a very difficult and complicated question. We hold that a reasonable man may hold, without rebuke, the opinions as to the future of Canada expressed by Dr. Bourinot, the other day, in his lecture at Trinity College, or the opinions of Mr. Goldwin Smith. Both seem to be quite confident of the truth of their theories; but others, who hear both sides, may suspend their judgment.

But even if we were quite satisfied that Mr. Smith was utterly wrong on the subject of Commercial Union, that would make no difference to our appreciation of the valuable services which he has rendered to this Province and its principal city; and it would be absurd to make his opinion of what is advantageous to Canada a ground for accusing him of disregarding the interests of the Empire. We do entirely believe that Mr. Smith is thoroughly sincere when he says that the drawing of the bonds between Canada and the United States closer will tend to promote more kindly relations between the States and the Mother Country.

No one can doubt that a cordial friendship between England and America is of the highest importance, not only in the interests of all English-speaking peoples, but also in those of human civilization; and the difficulties of the "Irish vote" must never deter us from working to bring about that desired result. Mr. Smith may be mistaken in imagining that the realization of his theories would help to remove the irritation occasioned to the larger power by the thought of a hostile nation lying all along its northern frontier. He may be mistaken, and he may not. But whether he is or not, it can hardly be doubted that he is sincere in believing that he is serving both England and Canada; and it is absurd and ridiculous to speak of such a man as a "traitor" or "disloyal."

Those who remember the chivalrous and patriotic course taken by Mr. Smith, in opposing the Irish Home Rule movement first in this city and afterwards in England, where he was welcomed as a fellow-combatant by the best men in the land, and was entreated to offer himself as a candidate for some of the principal constituencies in England and Scotland, will scout the idea of such a man being disloyal to the land of his birth, a land of which he has proved himself a worthy and illustrious son.

We could not suffer this incident to pass by without comment; but the best thing we can wish, for all parties concerned, is that it may soon be forgotten.

THE FORTHCOMING LABOUR CONGRESS.

HISTORY ten centuries ago was the record of the strifes of monarchs and the schemes of courtiers. Five centuries ago it was the record of the strifes of Parliament and the schemes of ministers. The history of to-day will be a record of the strifes of the working classes and the schemes of demagogues. A long telegraphic despatch from

New York this week gives the *Herald's* forecasts of the proposed International assemblage of wage-earners to be held at Paris this year. Whatever may be the schemes there mooted, whether the convention affects anything or not, still it will be regarded as one of the most significant of the social and political phenomena of the day. If, as is proposed, representatives of the enormous masses of labouring men all over the world meet at Paris, that nidus of revolutions, and on a date suggestive of revolutions, their deliberations will be keenly watched. The *Herald* talks of "universal brotherhood," "reorganization of society," and so forth. It is doubtful if such impossible ideals will be seriously considered. The world at large has seen so many visions of reorganized societies that it is not likely this convention will again try to conjure up the phantom. The names of Campanella, and Morelly, and Barbeuf, Louis Blanc, and St. Simon, and others, with their unattainable systems of social perfectibility, are warnings against further theorizing. What probably the convention will consider are questions relating to the relationship of employer and employed, the efficacy of combination, the present system of taxation, the proper limit of legislation in matters relating to wages and labour, the value of co-operation, proletarian parliamentary representation, the insuring of the lives of employes, and many such kindred problems, with all their many ramifications. If the convention succeeds in throwing a drylight on such subjects, the year 1889 will be memorable perhaps in history five centuries hence, when newer problems will have arisen, such, perhaps, as the brotherhood of nations instead of the brotherhood of wage-earners.

LONDON LETTER.

HARDLY anyone was in the Academy on the morning of the private view. In the great gallery perhaps were a dozen people (amongst whom I saw Hardy, the novelist, Calderon, and Horsley), so that there was space enough to move about in among the wonderful scenes which, in a bewilderingly delightful fashion, encompassed one on every side, all the more delightful that after a wander around Dutch villages you can the next moment turn into an English lane with its dear familiar landmarks, all the more bewildering that from the grave nobles of Rembrandt's time you can look at the portraits of certain well-known nineteenth century folk, with whom, by the bye, you will most probably be coming face to face. No early Italians to disturb one's peace of mind, a great variety of work, capitally arranged—what more can the picture-amateur desire?

I chanced by good luck to go round the exhibition with some one who centuries ago, he said, had seen the Leslies, Eggs, Phillip, Mulready, Maclise at the Academy, and who in consequence lingered in front of them, pointing out their perfections with an affectionate, loyal hand, perfections which existed still to his old eye, as they existed when, as a young man, he had tried to imitate the composition, attitudes, and colour, which to me were too often unnatural and extravagant. He showed me at once, what I hope I should in time have discovered, the grace and refinement of Leslie's work, pointing out the care and feeling, frequent charm and truth of expression, resolutely refusing to acknowledge the faults upon which I, with my harder modern sight, insisted. "You say you can see all this for yourself in the Leslies in the National Gallery and the Kensington Museum," he began, "but you are disappointed with these. Why? It is only that you are so accustomed to the ones you have looked at so many times you have forgotten their faults. These are neither worse nor better. Surely the rare qualities, which no one can deny, should overbalance those inequalities which are so easy to discover that any fool can point them out. Look at Sterne and the chaise-vamper's wife. Ill-drawn? Pooh! that's a small matter in this case. But no one reads *Tristram Shandy* now-a-days: they read Rider Haggard instead. No one cares for art, or takes the trouble to understand it." So my objections melted, like snow, before the honest, warm praise of work which to an uncritical glance seems occasionally so lacking, till by the time we had examined all Leslie's pieces I was in a fit condition humbly to listen to commendation of Maclise's "Hunt the Slipper, at Neighbour Flamborough's" (there is an expression on the Vicar's face so natural and fine that as I looked I almost expected it to alter), of Egg's "Come, Rest in this Bosom," of Dyce's "Jacob and Rachel"—to listen without a word of contradiction. There were others, worse than I, who hurried past these canvases with averted eyes (most of the newspaper young gentlemen who write on art did virtually the same next day), but I think I chose the better part, and cannot look upon the time as wasted, when during it I