

LITTLE fault can be found with the Bill introduced in the Ontario Legislature by Mr. Craig, for the settlement of the language question in the schools. It is in the main reasonable, though marred, perhaps, with some indications of the weakness of a jealousy of the French. In our opinion there is no need of guarding with so much care against the use of the French as the language of instruction a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. The attempt to prove that there is serious danger of French encroachment has, so far as we are able to see, failed. It is clearly established that, as a rule, French parents are not only willing but anxious that their children should learn English. But it is undoubtedly true, as is claimed by the *Globe*, that the legislation proposed by Mr. Craig follows closely the lines recommended by the report of the Commissioners and laid down in the Regulations of the Education Department. That being so, it is obviously better that the principles on which all are agreed should be embodied in a statute, instead of being simply left to the operation of Departmental rules. It is to be hoped that the Minister of Education and the Government may be wise enough to adopt the proposed Bill, with such amendments as may be deemed necessary. They should have moral courage enough to do this, undeterred by dread of being taunted with having accepted the suggestions of their opponents and borrowed their legislation. They should take care however that the Bill provides for the use of the bi-lingual readers, which are one of the best of the recommendations of the Commissioners.

NEWFOUNDLAND is said to be in high dudgeon at the manner in which her alleged rights have been disposed of by the British Government, in the *modus vivendi* agreed on with France. The question, like all those arising out of the interpretation of old treaties, is a complicated one. It is very likely that the French may have received no more than justice in the light of the treaty; however, the result may conflict with the interests, or gall the *amour propre* of the Islanders. The dispassionate version of the British diplomatists is perhaps more reliable in such a matter than the interested judgment of the colonists. It is to be feared, however, that the none too prosperous condition of the Newfoundland fishermen will become seriously worse under the new arrangement. But the feature of the case which is most trying to the self-love, not to say self-respect, of the Government and people of the Island, is no doubt the fact that they were not consulted, even formally, in the arrangement. This course on the part of the British Government is unusual, and perhaps significant. There is reason to believe that a somewhat similar policy is being pursued at Washington, in the negotiations in which Canada is so deeply interested. True, it is altogether unlikely that Canada will be so completely ignored as Newfoundland appears to have been. (Can it be that the latter is being punished for its refractoriness in refusing to enter into the Confederation?) The formal consent of Canada will no doubt be required to whatever arrangement, if any, is finally reached at Washington, touching the Behring Sea and other Atlantic fisheries. But it is quite clear that a new line of policy is being pursued by the Home Government. Instead of giving a Canadian a leading place in the negotiations, as on former occasions, it is known from Mr. Tupper's own statements that he was present at Washington in no official capacity, but simply as a source of information. True, these negotiations are now being carried on directly through the British Minister, and not, as on former occasions, through commissioners or delegates. But this fact itself only emphasizes the point to which we are calling attention, viz.: that the Home Government has adopted a new method, or rather fallen back on an older one, in seeking to settle the disputes with foreign nations, in which two colonies are concerned. We do not wonder at this. It is very likely that Lord Salisbury is convinced by past experience of the impossibility of reaching any settlement with either France or the United States, to which representatives of Newfoundland and Canada respectively could assent, and all parties in England are alike resolved not to quarrel with either nation for the sake of the (in their eyes) trivial Colonial interests at stake. Should this view prove correct, the event will show the futility of relying upon British power to uphold the rights, real or fancied, of distant colonies against powerful nations whose friendship is of vastly greater value to her than the colonies concerned. When this is made clear by practical demonstrations a new movement will be given to the forces which are steadily making for Colonial independence.

THE draft report of the Ways and Means Committee of the American Congress, containing the proposed amendments to the tariff, goes to show that the arguments of those who favour an attempt to force Canada into the arms of the great Republic have prevailed with that Committee. It would be useless to deny that the passage of the tariff as proposed would be a serious blow to many Canadian interests, and, above all, to the agricultural industry, which is the backbone of all sound prosperity. Nevertheless, should the blow fall, there is nothing for our statesmen and people to do but to meet it like men. If, in these closing years of the nineteenth century, the great nation which boasts of its liberty and enlightenment deliberately piles higher and higher the barriers against a trade with its next door neighbour, which is no less profitable to its own citizens than to those of the country it would injure, there is, we suppose, no help for it. That it will have any political effect in the direction obviously intended we do not for a moment believe. On the contrary, nothing could more effectively harden into adamant the resolve of every high-spirited Canadian to preserve our own political institutions and carve out a destiny for ourselves, than an attempt at coercion of the kind contemplated. We are glad to perceive that our political leaders are not likely to permit themselves to be driven into the suicidal folly of attempting retaliation. That would be to follow a bad example. It would be to offset the injury inflicted by another with an additional injury wrought with our own hand. The path of true wisdom lies in the line of fixing our own tariff solely with a view to our own interests, meanwhile looking diligently abroad for markets to replace those withdrawn from us nearer home. It would be premature, however, to assume that the recommendations of the Committee in question are to become law. There will be a strong opposition in Congress. It will be strange if there should not be a still stronger one in the country. One of the greatest faults, or follies, of the people of the United States is that, owing partly to their defective political system, partly to their absorption in business pursuits, and partly to the disrepute into which their politics have fallen, the better classes of citizens hold themselves aloof from affairs of state, and give the rule of the country almost entirely into the hands of the professional politicians. Even the newspapers give comparatively little heed to what goes on in Congress. That is an evil against which Canadians have great need to be on their guard. But there must be a limit to the passivity of even the American people, and once they become fully aroused to a true view of the situation the national energy will quickly work the reformation needed. Meanwhile Canada has nothing to do but to preserve her dignity and equanimity, and summon all her energies to convert a threatened evil into good, by making it a bond of union, a stimulus to energy and enterprise and a spur to patriotic endeavour.

THE new tithe bill introduced by the British Government in the Commons aims at two things—putting an end to the resistance to the payment of tithe, and substituting a lump sum for an annual payment. The first object it proposes to reach, partly by substituting the County Court for a distress warrant as an agency for the recovery of the tithe-rent charge, and partly by the substitution of the owner for the occupier, as the person from whom it is to be collected. The *Spectator*, in a lengthy article, makes amongst others the two points that the non-payment of tithe "inflicts gross and wholly undeserved hardship on the clergy," and that it "puts in peril a very large fund in which the State has a reversionary interest." The force of the last consideration is admitted even by Mr. Gladstone, and other Liberals, who hold that the tithe as a national property should be preserved intact, whoever may have the usufruct of it. To abolish the tithe peremptorily would be simply to make a present of its value to the landlord, who would be sure to raise the tenant's rent in proportion, were the latter freed from the tithe-rent charge. But when we come to the first of the *Spectator's* two arguments, it is not so easy to assent to the view expressed, or to deny that the clergyman who consents to accept or collect the tithe under the circumstances that are widely prevalent in Wales, makes himself a party to an act of gross injustice, not to say dishonesty. Mr. George, the accepted Liberal Candidate for the Carnarvon boroughs, in a recent speech at Cardiff, made some astounding statements bearing upon this point. He affirmed that in the agricultural district where he resided there were thirty parishes, and the condition of these parishes was a very fair specimen of what it was in the rural districts gener-

ally in Wales. In only two of these parishes was there anything approaching a congregation, and even in these two parishes the majority of the parishioners were Non-conformists. Taking the remaining twenty-eight parishes of that district, he believed the average congregations came to about ten. There was one parish in that district with an especially large tithe. The rector who preceded the present rector was a married man, and his wife was the only member of the congregation. The next rector was a bachelor and he had no congregation at all. These thirty parishes are in West Carnarvonshire, and comprise nearly one-third of the parishes in the county, but are not worse off than a great number in the remaining two-thirds. Mr. George maintained that it is not an exaggeration to say that there is not a county in Wales where many more than thirty parishes may not be found exhibiting a state equally deplorable. But taking only this number, which constitutes a moderate average for the thirteen counties, and we have nearly 400 out of the 1,210 State churches of the Principality in this lamentable condition—nearly a third of the whole number. The tithe rent-charge, exclusive of glebe and parsonages attached to these almost empty churches, would amount to between £40,000 and £50,000 a year, assuming each parish living to average from £100 to \$125. It is admitted that there are many single parishes under £100, but there are many others very considerably above that figure, so that the average was thought reasonable. Whether the hardship inflicted on the married rector above described, or on his bachelor successor, by the abolition of the tithe, would be wholly undeserved, is at least open to question.

"WHAT can the man do that cometh after the King?" During many long and eventful years one of the gravest questions in European politics has been, "What will follow when Bismarck steps off the stage?" That event has happened. Bismarck no longer rules the destinies of Germany, and of Europe. An untried man sits in the seat of the great Chancellor, but the reins of empire are no doubt in the prentice hands of the young Emperor himself. Whether he is about to play the role of the young Phaëthon, and threaten all Europe with conflagration, time alone can tell. It is the fashion just now to presage all kinds of disasters from the unregulated self-will and impetuosity of this fiery son of the House of Hohenzollern, but is it not just possible that he may falsify those prognostications of evil after all? More depends upon the spirit and intention of even an Emperor than we are willing to admit. What the real motives of William III. of Germany are, no one knows, perhaps, but himself. He has generally been credited with nothing but imperious self-will and inordinate ambition. But just now he is being sneered at, by some of the sapient correspondents, as one whose brain is filled and muddled with vain dreams of something not unlike Christian Socialism. The two characters are about as incompatible as any that can be conceived. It is certainly difficult, as well as uncharitable, to believe that the impulse, or the deep design—call it which we please—which has led to the calling together of the Labour Convention now sitting in Berlin, is wholly selfish and unworthy. Is it not possible that the Emperor's nature may be, after all, just and generous at bottom, and that his eyes have been to some extent opened by the opportunities for knowledge and the sense of responsibility which have come to him in the course of eighteen months of intense bodily and mental activity? There can be no doubt that one of the causes of the hardness of heart and judicial blindness of monarchs, especially those who have a large measure of absolute power, is their ignorance of the real condition and the real feelings of their subjects, and of the great mass of humanity at large. If not absolutely shut up in a darkened cage, like the Czar of Russia, the only glimpses of the outside world they are suffered to get usually come to them through media which colour, refract, or distort every object. Emperor William, has, no doubt, more actively and persistently striven to make himself acquainted with the outside world, as it is, than any other monarch of modern times. Suppose, then, that his narrow and selfish ambitions are gradually giving place to broader and nobler ones; that not only is he sincerely in earnest in seeking to ameliorate the condition of the toiling masses, but that he even is beginning to cherish in reality the noble aspiration of which he is sneeringly accused, that he dreams of bringing about European disarmament, and permanent peace, even at the cost, if necessary, of erecting Alsace and Lorraine into neutral territories, who shall say that all such ideas are utterly vain, or that he must fail through lack of diplomatic skill? Such a dream would, of course, be enough to