

than one sense) imposing collections of figures within at least a measurable distance of completeness?

THE SAULT STE. MARIE CANAL.

THE tongue-valiant politicians of the United States have been quieter since the passage of the Retaliation Bill, and the beard of the British lion has been hanging peacefully from his chin. President Cleveland's intimation that the subject will be treated in a manner consistent with the dignity of two great nations will tend to dampen still further the ardour of vote-hunting patriots, and the Canadian Parliament may be trusted to maintain the dignity of our own position as conservators of our undoubted rights. Blustering patriots on this side may make the most of the Government proposal to build a Canadian canal at the Sault Ste. Marie, as a means of rendering our lake navigation quite independent of any Retaliation Bill, but the Ministry will no doubt claim that it is also a sound commercial speculation, for the American canal is often overcrowded, and the growth of lake traffic will in a few years provide work for another great artery of trade. Only those who have seen the American locks in operation during the busy season can form any idea of the magnitude of the business between Superior and her sister lakes.

THE BOOM IN REAL ESTATE.

THE idea is gaining ground among certain staid and prudent people in our fair city that the real estate business in Toronto is being a little overdone. So far as the thickly-settled districts are concerned, it is difficult to believe that this idea has any solid foundation. The highest prices realized are indicative of a brisk, healthy demand, but there is no sign of inflation, and indeed there are few parts of the city where real property can be said to have reached a high level. In some of the remoter suburbs, perhaps, land is bringing its full value—probably more—but everything tends to prove that Toronto is destined to be a great city, and that at no distant date. There may now and then be a temporary lull in her prosperity, but, so far as human foresight extends, her future is assured, and her expansion will be rapid and far. It is certainly well that Torontonians should bear in mind the past history of Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, but it is far from desirable that they should become imbued with want of confidence in the prospect ahead. What would they think if a state of things prevailed here correspondent to that in Kansas City? K. C. is of much more recent date than Toronto. Its history extends over less than four decades. It has an enterprising and rapidly-growing population, but its future can by no means be regarded as a matter of certainty. In hardly any material respect will it bear comparison with Toronto. Yet, marvellous to relate, land on the principal business street has within the last few days been sold at \$6,000 per foot—nearly three times the price of the costliest business sites in St. Louis and San Francisco. This certainly looks like inflation, and that of the wildest and most amazing kind. But we shall have abundant time for reflection before we reach any such conditions in Toronto.

AN IMPROVED METHOD OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

THERE are disadvantages attending the separate legislative powers of the American States and the Canadian Provinces, but there is at any rate one large and patent advantage—a wide range of experiment in domestic legislation. The relative values of prohibition, local option and high license will soon be tested with a completeness that can leave little to desire. The abolition of capital punishment has had at least a partial probation, and now comes the State of Pennsylvania with the first attempt to substitute death by electricity for modes of despatch more or less bloody or barbarous. Such a new mode of "shuffling off this mortal coil" will be quicker than even the guillotine, and unlike the other Happy Despatch, will be altogether painless. When Professor Tyndall received accidentally a dangerously powerful charge, he knew nothing, he tells us, till he recovered from its effects, and it required some little reflection to tell him what kind of experience he had gone through.

MR. PARNELL ON THE RAGGED EDGE.

SHOULD the horrible charge brought by the London *Times* against Mr. Parnell turn out to be well founded, the cause of Home Rule for Ireland—indeed the cause of Ireland generally—will have been thrown back for at least half a century. The English radicals have hitherto stood by their Irish allies through good and evil report, and have been held up to contumely among their own countrymen on the score of their association with traitors and murderers. But even the most advanced phase of English radicalism will stand aghast at this stupendous revelation—assuming it to be a genuine revelation—and will wash its hands of Irish patriotism for a generation to come. During the last year or two Mr. Gladstone has proved that he can swallow a good deal on the chance of regaining political power, but even the G.O.M. will be compelled to draw the line somewhere. His reputation, great as it is, would be irretrievably shattered were he to continue to maintain an alliance with a leader who deliberately and in writing sanctioned the programme of assassination and the resultant murder of Burke and Cavendish. All this, of course, runs upon the assumption of Mr. Parnell's guilt—an assumption which, in the present incomplete state of our knowledge on the subject, would be unjustifiable. Mr. Parnell himself denies the charge in the most explicit terms, seemingly with all the righteous indignation of a true man. It appears inconceivable, too, that one notoriously cautious and discreet by nature, and whose surroundings during the past ten years have been of a kind to develop those qualities to the fullest extent, should have been so foolhardy—to use no harsher term—as to put such diabolical sentiments in plain black and white. On the other hand, circumstances have an ugly look. The *Times* is not a paper given to working up fictitious sensations. It is on all hands acknowledged to be the leading journal of the world, and its reputation is of a kind which it cannot afford to imperil. Financially speaking, it represents millions, and such a charge as the one it has brought, if unfounded, would subject it to consequences hardly less formidable