

most unaccountably, to have built up its case, will, unless some new and unexpected developments should take place, be accepted by the public as equivalent to a failure in the main issue, and Mr. Parnell and his associates implicated will come forth from the ordeal unscathed. The public waited somewhat impatiently while the Attorney-General marshalled his long lines of witnesses, which at one time bid fair to stretch out to the crack of doom, whose testimony recalled vividly in detail the long, black list of most horrible crimes which have been committed in the name of Irish Home Rule. But all this was as ancient history to the expectant multitudes, especially when the prosecuting attorney had frankly admitted that he did not expect to be able to connect the accused Irish leaders directly with any of these outrages. It was but reasonable to suppose that the astute counsel for *The Times* was skillfully leading up to his grand climax. When the evidence of the arch-detective Le Caron had been given and that of Soames, Houston and others was being taken as to the manner in which the letters were procured, and the letters themselves were before the Court, the case looked dark for the defendants, and people began to think the climax was near. But when the astounding fact was elicited that the proof of genuineness rested solely upon the evidence of one unknown man, and that *The Times* manager had not even inquired into the antecedents of this man, or the source from which he had procured the letters, even the best friends of the Thunderer must have stood aghast, or doubted the testimony of their own senses. And now that this man Pigott has, in the merciless hands of Sir Charles Russel, been metaphorically turned inside out, and proved out of his own mouth to be an impostor, blackmailer and perjurer, it is no wonder that those friends are either dumbfounded or indignant, and think the sooner the farce is ended the better.

LOGICALLY, of course, there is no direct connection between the failure of *The Times* case and the merits of Irish Home Rule. If it be assumed, as according to British judicial principles it must be assumed, that Parnell and his associates are innocent until they are proved guilty of complicity with crime, it by no means follows that their cause is just, or their methods right. Much less does it follow that an Irish Parliament on College Green would not be the end of the Union and the beginning of anarchy, civil war and disruption. No doubt, however, something like those conclusions will follow in the minds of many. From being regarded as virtually convicted criminals Parnell, Egan, Walsh and others will take their place as heroes in the imaginations of many of the populace. Next to the astonishment felt at the unpardonable gullibility of *The Times* will be that caused by the extent to which the Government has allowed itself to become identified with *The Times* in the matter. What immediate effect this may have upon the strength of the Government cannot be foreseen, but the shock will, no doubt, be serious. All this is, of course, based on the assumption that the case is virtually ended. Had it not been admitted in court that *The Times'* sole reliance, so far as the source of the letters is concerned, was on the evidence of Pigott, we should expect to see the Attorney-General come to the front again with some unexpected trump card. On the other hand there is Labouchere's attempt at bribery to be explained. Unless this keen journalist's wits deserted with those of *The Times* manager, there are probably other surprises in store, and Labouchere's interviews with Pigott may prove to have been but another incident in a deep laid plot to out-general *The Times* and the Government.

AS was anticipated, the Queen's Speech at the opening of the Imperial Parliament foreshadows, as the chief features of the Government programme for the Session, a Local Government Scheme for Scotland and a large increase in the appropriations for national defence. The former measure could not be much longer delayed. Scotland has waited with exemplary patience for much-needed legislation, but of late her stock of patience has begun to show some signs of coming exhaustion. The Bill to be introduced will probably follow the lines of the English County Council Scheme as closely as a due regard to Scotch conditions and characteristics will permit—but important deviations will no doubt be necessary. The path of the Government will be made much smoother by the promise of success which has attended the inauguration of the system in England.

TOUCHING the two main questions of the insufficiency of Great Britain's present means of defence to insure the national safety in case of war with a combination of

maritime powers, and the direction which the increased expenditure must take in order to afford a satisfactory assurance of such safety, there seems to be little difference of opinion. "There is," says the *London Times*, "practically no escape from the conclusion that our navy is not at present strong enough for the adequate defence of the Empire and its commerce, and that it ought to be made strong enough with as little delay as possible. The City of London has now deliberately adopted this conclusion, and the country at large is of the same mind." This is not a mere newspaper opinion, but is based upon the careful statements of such authorities as Lord Charles Beresford, Lord Brassey, Sir Andrew Clark, and others of the most competent naval authorities in the realm. With regard to the other belief implied in this, viz., that the only adequate defence possible is the navy, there is almost equal unanimity. A rumour has, it is true, been for some time past afloat in well informed quarters concerning the existence of an ambitious scheme for defending London by means of extensive and costly permanent fortifications, and there is little doubt that such a project has been influentially pressed upon the attention of the Secretary for War. But the rumour has called forth strong protests from military authorities, and these have been followed by a semi-official declaration that it is not the intention of the War Department to ask Parliament for money to build a series of forts. The impossible magnitude of such a scheme would condemn it, even were it otherwise desirable. But, as has been pretty clearly established by elaborate argument, the life of the Empire depends absolutely upon its ability to keep open those channels through which its millions derive their food from all parts of the world. So long as her naval supremacy is sufficient for the protection of her commerce from interruption and her shores from invasion, and no longer, Britain is safe. The moment her fleet proves insufficient to protect at the same time her commerce from destruction and her shores from invasion, that moment she is lost. All the fortresses in the world could not save her people from being starved into submission.

RATHER a nice question in international etiquette is said to have been raised in the correspondence between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Bayard concerning the Sackville incident. Lord Salisbury, it is reported, maintains that a Minister should be permitted to remain at his post until his own Government sees fit to recall him, while Mr. Bayard holds that as soon as he ceases to be acceptable to the Government to which he is accredited, he may be dismissed by that Government. The *reductio ad absurdum* seems to be easily applied to either proposition, and it is probable that, when the correspondence is made public, it will be found that neither is correctly stated. The practice is clearly established that the Minister sent out should be in every case *persona grata* to the Government to which he is sent, and the corollary is easy, that when he ceases to be such the same rule of etiquette demands his withdrawal. But as the Minister is the servant of the Government which he represents, not of that to which he is accredited, it would seem to ordinary intelligence to be equally evident that he cannot, without unpardonable rudeness, be sent out of the country by the latter—"dismissal" proper is out of the question—until the former has either distinctly, or by long delay, refused to recall him.

COMMENTING, in his review of Mr. Bryce's "American Commonwealth," on the immense demand which American oratory makes upon the power of the voice, Mr. Goldwin Smith says, "To make himself heard in the House of Representatives, in a nominating convention, or in one of the enormous halls commonly used for political meetings, a man must have the lungs of Stentor. The consequence is that politics are in danger of being dominated by the mere power of producing a volume of sound, which bears a very slight relation either to wisdom or integrity." The remarks suggest a new field for the application of modern science. Why cannot some inventive genius perfect a simple and handy contrivance for increasing, artificially, the volume of the human voice, without impairing its quality, thus doing for speech what the telescope and the microscope have done in opposite directions for vision? Should it be necessary to call in the aid of electricity the newly invented pocket storage battery might be utilized. This suggestion may be taken as jest or earnest, at the option of the reader, but there is unquestionably a very serious side to Mr. Goldwin Smith's observation. In the presence of the vast audiences to be persuaded or propitiated, which are one of the logical sequences of modern democratic institutions, the process of

natural selection must inevitably eliminate from the list of possible leaders every man, no matter what his mental and moral qualifications, whose power of lung is not greatly in excess of the average.

RECENT educational discussions are evidently bearing fruit in some localities. The Board of Education of the City of New York has just resolved on some most radical innovations. The plan of marking pupils for proficiency in their studies is to be abolished. The teachers of the city, principals excepted, are to be classified in two grades, known respectively as the "maximum grade," and the "standard grade." No teacher will be placed on the maximum grade who has not taught in the public schools of the city at least five years successively. Those who do not come up to the standard grade in the test to be made will be dropped from the roll. This classification will be made under the supervision and direction of the Committee on Teachers and the city superintendent and his assistants. Teachers of the "maximum" grade are to be exempted from the surveillance of the Superintendent. This officer and his assistants are to be required to visit the city schools but once in the year, hence but one examination will be held. Strenuous opposition was offered to the measure, and large numbers of the city teachers, of both sexes, did what they could by petition, and even by "lobbying," to prevent its passage, but in vain. The radical element in the Board had full control, and would not brook even a fortnight's delay. In the absence of fuller knowledge of conditions no trustworthy opinion can be formed as to the wisdom of the new departure. The scheme is a bold one, and not without serious risks. Much will depend on the honesty and skill with which the grading is done, and very much more on the intelligence and ability of the teachers themselves. To sweep away at a stroke all the incitements to study afforded by the marking system is a bold step unless the Commissioners are quite sure that they have a class of teachers who are capable of applying better motives effectively. If the city has a sufficient number of teachers of the right stamp, the freeing them from supervision and hampering control, and giving them an opportunity to do their best according to their own ideas and methods will prove eminently wise. The five-years' test is an excellent one and should go far to secure efficiency and permanence. The experiment will be watched with great interest by educators.

LATE information from China is to the effect that the people in two large districts are starving by thousands. The famine in one of the districts was caused by drought in the other by the overflow of a river. Appeals for help are being liberally responded to in England. The Lord Mayor's Mansion House fund has already forwarded \$25,000 or \$30,000, which though a handsome contribution is of course but a bagatelle in view of the magnitude of the distress to be relieved. An appeal is also being made to the United States and Canada. Here is a grand opportunity for these two peoples to make some atonement to the Chinese for the harsh treatment to which they have been subjected in this Western World.

AN AMERICAN ON CANADA.

UNDER the very modest title of "Comments on Canada," Charles Dudley Warner contributes to *Harper's Monthly* for March the results of his observations during his recent tour on this side of the border. He, indeed, communicates much more than the results of his observations. His remarkably comprehensive article shows also the results of a careful study of the history, constitution, institutions, and people of the Dominion. Rarely, indeed, have we met in a discussion of these topics by a foreign writer, so near an approach to accuracy in statement, or so sound and dispassionate an estimate of the characteristics of our people, and the nature and tendencies of our incipient nationality. Mr. Warner has shown an unusual power of putting himself in the place of those of whom he speaks, and hence has succeeded admirably in understanding and describing them. Every Canadian who would like to see his country as it is seen by a keen-eyed, fair-minded and highly intelligent foreigner, should by all means read Mr. Warner's article. The simplicity and easy grace of the style will make the task a very pleasant one.

Mr. Warner's article is divided into three parts. In the first he sketches briefly but clearly the geographical features, history, political system, and railway development of the Dominion. Not only is full justice done to the vast extent of our territory, but the current misapprehen-