

to do, in building ironclads to force Bismarck to accept the Lasker resolutions, or prevent England from hanging murderers. If such a calamity was to occur at all, it is a pity that it did not occur at Chicago, rather than at Cincinnati; some of the politicians and journalists of that virtuous city who subsist by pandering to dynamite, might then know what it was to have the explosion at their own doors. The list of killed and wounded is pretty long. If England, or any other power of the old world, had repressed anarchy, or Thugism, with half as much severity, Elijah Pogram would have been moving resolutions in Congress and perorating on all the platforms. But as the American Republic is the repressor, Elijah will be mute.

UNDER the title of "The Harvest of Democracy" Sir Lepel Griffin has poured out the second vial of his wrath on American institutions in the *Fortnightly Review*. So hateful is popular government to the Knight that he does not think it possible for England to be on good terms with France since France has become a republic. It has been remarked by a writer on Roman history that the "lesser houses" of the nobility were always the most aristocratic, and the observation in its general sense is borne out in a most striking manner by the demeanour of Colonial and Indian knights. Sir Lepel Griffin would probably have thought that he was demeaning himself had he made a patient and serious study of democracy in the United States. At all events he has vouchsafed it nothing but a hurried and disdainful glance. He has satisfied himself at once that the true key to American politics is that lively and telling but now almost forgotten squib, "Solid for Mulhooney;" in other words he has been observing not American politics in general, but the influence of the Irish vote in New York and some of the western cities. Nobody doubts that the Irish vote, in proportion to its strength, has everywhere generated great political evils. But the Irish vote is not American society; it is a foreign element, as Sir Lepel himself, when he describes the political feeling of the native Americans towards the Irish, shows that he is partly aware; and it would be rather hard, say, upon the native Poles, to identify them with all the doings of the intrusive Muscovite. Sir Lepel has evidently seen nothing of the rural districts in which are the thews and sinews of the nation: in this he only resembles other travellers who write with the same confidence on the character of a community the best part of which they have observed from the train. His view of the "Harvest" is confined to the blighted ears. Did he not see fifty millions of people living in greater opulence and upon the whole in greater happiness than any other fifty millions on the face of the earth, attached to their institutions, obedient to their laws, proud of their country, busily industrious, sure of the rewards of their industry, and hopeful as to their own future? Did he not see Government well obeyed, law fairly administered, public credit high, and finances in the most flourishing condition? And does he think that these political grapes and figs grow upon political thorns and thistles? Does he believe that an enormous public debt can be paid off by squandering and stealing? Evils there are in American politics and society; evils which he has not noted, besides those which he has noted and exaggerated; and there are evils in British politics and society also. There are even in England now, as in the United States, a Mulhooney and a solid Irish Vote.

SOME worthy people in Iowa, it seems, are so convinced of the transcendent excellence of the public school system that they have proposed to suppress private education altogether by laying a heavy tax on private schools. Their project would combine social iniquity with a shameless abuse of the taxing power. The worship of the public school system among us, like that of the Pope among the Ultramontanes, has pretty nearly reached the extreme limit of reason. Its devotees, among other things, always think of the public school as an abstraction, the same and equally perfect everywhere, at least on this favoured continent. But in fact it differs greatly in different districts, being in some places very good, in others very bad, with every intermediate shade of quality. Much must depend on the individual teachers, who cannot be turned out uniform in excellence from any State machine. But the system itself does not appear equally faultless to all. There are some who have misgivings as to the effects of that intermixture of sexes after eleven which to others seems fruitful of the best results; and even artisans who were very careful about the character of their children, have been known to withdraw a girl from a public school because they found that she was learning to use bad language and was growing coarse in her manners. All, however, acquiesce in the institution, if not as the consummation of human wisdom, as the necessity of a democratic form of government. All submit upon that ground to the apparent injustice of making a man pay for educating the children of others, when

he himself either has none, or if he has, prefers for them the instruction and the moral atmosphere of a private school. But the proposal to abolish liberty of education and to compel a parent to bring up his children in ignorance if he did not like a State school or the State schoolmaster of his district, seems to have been rather too much for the digestion of the people of Iowa, though social and sumptuary coercion is by no means alien to their tastes. To the abolition of liberty of education, however, and a good many other liberties, we may come, unless philanthropic drill-sergeants can be made to feel that there is a moral limit to the prerogatives of the ballot as well as to the prerogatives of kings. The fate of society would be hard if, after emancipating itself by centuries of struggle and suffering from the tyranny of monarchs, it were doomed to fall under the more searching tyranny of crotcheteers.

IN the last number of THE WEEK Mr. Maclean propounded what he conceives to be the true solution of the silver problem. "The relative values of the two precious metals once determined, make all debts payable *half in gold coin and half in silver coin*. Then, should any depreciation of one of them take place from increased production or other causes, it would be exactly balanced by the appreciation of the other." Whether this is a true solution or not, it is the natural expression of bi-metalism, and Mr. Maclean deserves a crown of silver at the hands of the Silver Kings for his ingenuity in devising it. But in the first place, think of the inconvenience of being compelled to take a mountain of silver in payment of the moiety of a large debt. In the second place, is it true that the balance of appreciation and depreciation would always be preserved? Might not the appreciation of one of the two commodities be out of proportion to the depreciation of the other, or *vice versa*, so that the total value of the payment would be altered? Through all the forms and phases of bi-metalism, as through all the forms and phases of paper currency, there seems to run openly or covertly the idea that government can create and determine value by its fiat. But the value of gold is intrinsic; it receives no addition but merely an attestation from the action of government in stamping the coin; it originally owed its existence to the beauty, rarity and convenience of the metal; but to these elements is now added that of immemorial and practically immutable establishment as the standard of the great commercial nations. That this element is moral, not material, makes it none the less real, or less incapable of being changed, actually or relatively, by the fiat of any political power. To call silver, under existing circumstances a precious metal in the same sense as gold, is a fallacy, or perhaps, to speak strictly, a survival. The Silver Kings are levying a heavy tribute on the people of the United States by compelling the Government every year to coin a quantity of silver which nobody wants, and which in fact is an encumbrance and a nuisance. The salaries of all congressmen ought to be paid in it. There is no other chance of giving it currency and appreciation. If Mr. Maclean's proposed enactment were to become law, specific covenants would be inserted in all large contracts providing that the payment should be in gold only, and this would be enough in itself to derange the government determination of relative values. The wealth of Great Britain and of all the great commercial nations is stored in gold, and it is to the last degree unlikely that they will go into convention for the purpose of disturbing the value of their treasure.

AN English journal of fashion the other day presented its readers with an elaborate *ménu* for Lent, in which turbot *à la reine* was the centrepiece of a galaxy of delicious and costly dishes. The writer observed that with such a dinner, after all, one need not complain, and that it was rather a good thing for the health sometimes to take to fish instead of meat. "So easily have we passed through this austere season," was the reflection with which the Paris correspondent of the *Morning Post* once closed his bright narrative of Lenten entertainments. Such is our modern asceticism. Mediæval asceticism did a great work in its day, though it may be summarily consigned to contempt as mere devil-worship and superstition by philosophers who have paid so little attention to history as has Mr. Herbert Spencer. Religion under this form, by her authority and her promises, stimulated and aided the barbarian to rise above his merely animal nature and contend against his own coarse lusts, an effort much harder to him at the outset than any exertion of the chase or war. As respect for the sacred lives and property of the clergy was a stepping-stone to that respect for life and property in general by which it is now entirely superseded, so was fasting on Friday and in Lent the stepping-stone to rational temperance. We, as civilized men, have better inducements to refrain from gorging and swilling like swine, than had those Franks and Saxons who abstained from their barbarous orgies, in devout obedience to the ordinances of the calendar. We have the dictates of a reasonable